

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

714/744 P STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814



December 28, 1984

To: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers

Letter No. 84-56

EVALUATION OF STATE CORRECTIVE ACTION INITIATIVE - MEDI-CAL CARD STUFFER

Re: All County Welfare Directors (ACWD) Letter No. 83-81

The Department of Health Services (DHS) has issued a series of letters dealing with Quality Control (QC) and corrective action initiatives. This letter is to:

1. Provide you with the results of county evaluations of the Medi-Cal card stuffer which was sent with the January 1984 Medi-Cal cards and,
2. Request your participation in a controlled study of the effectiveness of the same Medi-Cal stuffer which is to be sent again with the March 1985 Medi-Cal cards.

Corrective Action Initiative

According to QC reviews, beneficiary failure to report changes in earnings or other eligibility factors to county welfare departments on a timely basis is a significant source of eligibility/share of cost errors. To reduce this type of error, DHS produced and sent a Medi-Cal card stuffer (see Attachment 1) with the January 1984 Medi-Cal cards. This stuffer reminded beneficiaries of their reporting responsibilities and informed them of the various income records which were being matched against welfare and Medi-Cal records.

In ACWD letter 83-81, DHS informed counties about the stuffer and requested them to evaluate whether the stuffer appeared to cause an increase in the number of beneficiaries who reported changes on a timely basis.

The stuffer was intended to be sent only to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) cash assistance recipients and Medi-Cal only beneficiaries. Unfortunately, it was inadvertently sent to Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) recipients in error, generating telephone calls to county welfare departments from confused SSI/SSP recipients. We do regret the inconvenience you were caused by this error.

County Evaluation

Forty counties provided an evaluation of the stuffer. Some counties distributed the evaluation form to all Medi-Cal workers while others selected worker units in specific district offices. Since workers had differing experiences, responses from a single county were not always uniform.

Overall, about one-third of the forty responding counties estimated there was a slight increase in reporting, and over one-half believed a reminder stuffer should be sent out periodically. However, only one-eighth felt the warning stuffer was an effective tool in increasing client reporting, and an additional one-eighth reported that workers' opinions were divided. (Please see Attachment 2 for details.)

Numerous counties provided comments, the main points of which are summarized as follows:

- o SSI/SSP recipients should not have received this stuffer. It prompted many telephone calls to the CWDs.
- o Anything that reminds clients of their prompt reporting responsibilities is beneficial.
- o The stuffer should not be sent in a month in which there are mass changes, e.g., maintenance need changes or Title II cost-of-living (COLA) increases.
- o If the stuffer is sent again, there must be sufficient advance notice to allow counties to obtain statistics from a control month.
- o The majority of the counties felt that the stuffer should be sent periodically even when they indicated that the stuffer did not appear to be an effective tool to increase client reporting.

Future Action

Complete QC data from the January-March 1984 period is not yet available so it is not possible to evaluate whether there appears to have been a discernable impact on beneficiary reporting errors.

Tentative plans have been made to send this same stuffer to AFDC cash assistance recipients and Medi-Cal Only beneficiaries with the March 1985 Medi-Cal cards. In order to conduct a more precise evaluation of the stuffer, we will be requesting that counties gather comparison data in February 1985. An All County Welfare Directors Letter will be issued shortly with the details.

All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers

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We wish to express our sincere appreciation to all counties which responded to our first survey and to those counties which will be responding to the second survey in February and March. Only through cooperative efforts between DHS and the counties can we successfully reduce QC errors and avoid federal fiscal sanctions.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Gary Pettigrew for
Doris Z. Soderberg, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch

Attachment

cc: Medi-Cal Liaisons
Medi-Cal Program Consultants

cg317fb

WARNING

State law and regulation require you to tell your county welfare department:

- Any time you have an increase or decrease in income.
- Any time someone moves into or out of your home.
- Any time you or your dependents begin to receive health insurance coverage.
- Any other changes which might affect your eligibility for assistance.

AFDC recipients must report changes within five (5) days.

Medi-Cal beneficiaries must report changes within ten (10) days.

The State now uses computer systems to match AFDC and Medi-Cal records with regular Social Security payments, unemployment insurance benefits, disability insurance payments and wage records.

**AVOID THE RISK OF LEGAL ACTION AGAINST YOU!
REPORT CHANGES WHEN THEY HAPPEN!**

AVISO

La ley del estado y regulaciones exige que Ud. le informe al departamento de bienestar del condado:

- Cuando Ud. reciba un aumento o disminución de sus ingresos.
- Cuando alguien venga a vivir con Ud. o se vaya de su casa.
- Cuando Ud. o sus dependientes comiencen a recibir otra cobertura de salud.
- Cualquiera cambio que pueda afectar su elegibilidad para asistencia pública.

Los recipientes de Ayuda a Familias con Niños Necesitados (AFDC) deben informar los cambios dentro de (5) días.

Los beneficiarios de Medi-Cal deben informar los cambios dentro de (10) días.

El estado usa sistemas de computadoras para apertar los archivos de asistencia pública y de Medi-Cal con los pagos del Seguro Social, beneficios por desempleo, pagos por incapacidad y archivos de salarios.

**¡EVITE EL RIESGO DE ACCIÓN LEGAL CONTRA USTED!
INFORME LOS CAMBIOS CUANDO OCURRAN.**

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COUNTY EVALUATION OF MEDICAL CARD STUFFER
BENEFICIAL CONTACT

Type of Beneficiary Reporting	Number of Counties				
	No Change	Decrease	Slight Increase	Large Increase	Total
Telephone Contacts	25		13	2 (SSI/SSP)	40
Current Changes Reported (Timely)	28		12		40
Prior Changes Reported (Untimely)	37		3		40

STUFFER EVALUATION

Evaluation of Stuffer	Number of Counties			
	Yes	No	Divided Opinion	Total
The stuffer was an effective tool in increasing client reporting.	5	29	6	40
The stuffer should be sent out periodically.	21	14	5	40