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May 14, 2024

Dear Tribal Health Leaders,

On behalf of the Department of Health (the department) and in keeping with the responsibility to conduct tribal consultation, I am writing to inform you of a proposed future Medicaid state plan amendment (SPA).

Purpose and content of the proposed amendment:

The proposed amendment intends to maintain the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) related suspension of fee-for-service behavioral health service authorization requirements, approved via 5/12/2024 (AK SPA 23-0007), until the effective date of the forthcoming state plan amendment, outlined in the March 19, 2024, tribal consultation letter.

The continued suspension of these service authorization requirements is anticipated to be temporary, providing the department time to implement proposed regulations modifying service authorization requirements.

Anticipated impact on Medicaid-eligible Alaska Native/American Indian beneficiaries:

The department anticipates this proposed SPA will positively impact Medicaid-eligible Alaska Native/American Indian beneficiaries as the SPA will maintain the reduction of barriers to services between 5/12/2024 and effective date of the forthcoming SPA and aligned regulations.

Anticipated impact on tribal health programs and the Indian Health Service:

The department anticipates the proposed SPA will positively impact tribal health programs as it will prevent increased administrative burden and barriers to care until the forthcoming SPA and aligned regulations are finalized.

Mechanism and timeline for comment

Written comments or questions regarding the proposed amendment are due no later than the close of business, June 12, 2024. If seeking an in-person meeting regarding the proposed changes, please provide a written request within 15 days of the date of this letter. Please direct all written correspondence to Emily Beaulieu, Alaska Department of Health, 3601 C Street, Suite 902, Anchorage, AK 99503 or emily.beaulieu@alaska.gov.

Tribal Consultation Letter – State Plan Behavioral Health Service Authorizations

*Comments received in response to this consultation letter are considered for consultation and not comment on the regulations. Comments on the regulations are not considered comments for consultation on the SPA. **You must do so separately if you wish to provide comments for consideration in both the SPA and the regulations processes.** To locate the regulations, please refer to the State of Alaska web page at the "[Public Notices](#)" link.*

Sincerely,

/s/

Emily Beaulieu
Medicaid State Plan Coordinator