



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

Department of
Health and Social Services

DIVISION OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES
Director's Office

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April 18, 2013

Dear Tribal Health Leader,

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

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment benefit: The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) has been asked by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to revise language in the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSTD) section of the State plan. While no substantive change is proposed in this section, the state plan will be amended in order to clarify language. This change is not anticipated to affect Alaska Native and American Indian Medicaid recipients or reimbursement for tribal health providers; it will make it easier to ensure that the Medicaid program is in compliance with Federal regulations.

Respiratory Therapy services: The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) has been asked by CMS to revise language in the Respiratory Therapy services section of the state plan. While no substantive change is proposed in this section, the state plan will be amended in order to clarify language. This change is not anticipated to affect Alaska Native and American Indian Medicaid recipients or reimbursement for tribal health providers; it will make it easier to ensure that the Medicaid program is in compliance with Federal regulations.

Clinic Services: The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) has been asked by CMS to revise language in the Clinic Services section of the state plan to reference language in other sections of the State Plan that refer to clinic services. While no substantive change is proposed in this section to comply with CMS's request, the state plan will be amended in order to clarify language. This change is not anticipated to affect Alaska Native and American Indian Medicaid recipients or reimbursement for tribal health providers; it will make it easier to ensure that the Medicaid program is in compliance with Federal regulations.

Inclusion of Frontier Extended Stay Clinics (FESC) in Clinic Services: FESC providers offer observation and treatment services traditionally associated with acute care inpatient hospitals until the patient can be transferred or is no longer in need of transport. Providing these services requires

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additional staffing equipment and facility capacity. FESC fulfills Section 434 of the Medicare Modernization Act. According to the law, FESCs must be located in communities that are at least 75 miles away from the nearest acute care hospital or critical access hospital, or that are inaccessible by public road. However, extended stay services are currently funded through a CMS pilot program and that funding is due to end. The Department intends to amend the State Plan to cover FESC under clinic services to reimburse these clinic services through Medicaid.

Alaska Natives and American Indians may use FESC services and may therefore benefit from the addition of this coverage to the Alaska Medicaid program. The FESC Consortium has been led by South East Alaska Regional Health Consortium, and included members representing Iliuliuk Family and Health Services in Unalaska, Cross Road Medical Center in Glenallen, and the Haines Medical Center in Haines, and the Native Village of Eyak in Cordova. Tribal providers who offer FESC services may benefit from the ability to bill Medicaid for services provided to Medicaid recipients.

Inpatient Psychiatric Facility Services: The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) has been asked by CMS to revise language in the Inpatient Psychiatric Services section of the state plan. While no substantive change is proposed in this section, the state plan will be amended in order to clarify language. This change is not anticipated to affect Alaska Native and American Indian Medicaid recipients or reimbursement for tribal health providers; it will make it easier to ensure that the Medicaid program is in compliance with Federal regulations.

Please provide any written comments or questions regarding this State Plan Amendment within 30 days of the date of this letter to Gennifer Moreau, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, 4501 Business Park Blvd., Suite 24, Bldg L, Anchorage, AK 99503-7167 or gennifer.moreau@alaska.gov. Please also feel free to call if you would like to arrange a meeting or discuss this upcoming State Plan Amendment.

Sincerely,

Gennifer Moreau
Medicaid State Plan Coordinator

Cc: William J. Streur, Commissioner
Margaret, Brodie, Director Division of Health Care Services
Jon Sherwood, Senior Medicaid Policy Analyst
Renee Gayhart, Tribal Programs