



September 1, 2016

Andy Slavitt, Acting Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

Submitted online at medicaid.gov

Re: Comments on MassHealth 1115 Demonstration Project Amendment and Extension Request

Dear Administrator Slavitt,

On behalf of the Children's Health Access Coalition (CHAC), thank you for the opportunity to comment on MassHealth's Section 1115 Demonstration Project Amendment and Extension Request. CHAC is a coalition of providers, advocates, and other stakeholders committed to ensuring that every child in Massachusetts has access to high-quality, affordable, and culturally appropriate health care.

Overall, the CHAC supports the MassHealth 1115 waiver proposal, and the opportunity it provides to enhance the Commonwealth's Medicaid program and bolster the gains we have made in coverage and access for children and families. However, we oppose any efforts to reduce benefits or increase costs for MassHealth enrollees.

In its waiver proposal, MassHealth seeks to eliminate coverage of chiropractic services, eye glasses, hearing aids, orthotics or other state plan services in the Primary Care Clinician (PCC) plan (See Sections 4.4 and 8.3). We understand that MassHealth's proposed changes to the PCC Plan intend to incentive members to enroll in an MCO and one of the new ACO models, yet, we believe these benefit reductions will impose barriers to care for members remaining in the PCC Plan, particularly for individuals with disabilities who have established relationships with their providers. Members and families should not have to choose between seeing their preferred providers and having access to the full range of MassHealth benefits.

The PCC Plan benefit reductions set aside fundamental precepts of the Medicaid Act – categorically eligible individuals are entitled to all state plan services, children and youth under age 21 are entitled to all optional Medicaid services under Early and Periodic Screening Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT), and people enrolled in managed care are entitled to the same services as those enrolled in fee for service. In Massachusetts the categorically eligible include pregnant women, children, parents, individuals with disabilities, the elderly, and other adults. Medicaid members are entitled to all state plan services regardless of their choice of managed care.¹

Categorically eligible children and youth under the age of 21 are entitled to EPSDT services that include all mandatory and optional Medicaid services, whether or not a state has otherwise elected to offer

¹ See 42 CFR § 438.206 (a).



such services.² EPSDT includes all medically necessary Medicaid services regardless of what is in the state plan, and provides comprehensive coverage for dental, vision, hearing, and medical screenings and treatment. Children and youth enrolled in all types of managed care, including PCC Plans, “are entitled to the same EPSDT benefits they would have in a fee for service Medicaid delivery system.”³

We recently have been informed that MassHealth has removed from their waiver proposal application of the PCC benefit cuts to children under age 21. We strongly support this decision, as applying differential benefits to children and youth enrolled in different Medicaid delivery systems violates EPSDT and imposes barriers to care for children and youth, especially those with special health care needs. We further encourage CMS to ensure that the overall proposal to offer fewer benefits to adults in the PCC Plan is not included in the approved waiver.

CHAC appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback to CMS on the MassHealth 1115 waiver proposal. Should you have any questions, please contact Suzanne Curry from Health Care For All at (617) 275-2977 or scurry@hcfama.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics MA Chapter
Boston Children's Hospital
Boston Public Health Commission
Children's Law Center of Mass
Children's League of Massachusetts
Children's Vision Massachusetts
Coalition for Social Justice
Codman Square Health Center
Crittenton Women's Union
Federation for Children with Special Needs
Joint Committee for Children's Health Care in
Everett
Massachusetts Advocates for Children
Massachusetts Alliance for Families
Massachusetts Coalition of School-Based Health
Centers

Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium
Massachusetts Hospital Association
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Massachusetts League of Community Health
Centers
Massachusetts Medical Society
Massachusetts School Nurse Organization, Inc.
Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee
National Association of Social Workers, MA
Chapter
New England Alliance for Children's Health
Parent/Professional Advocacy League
The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts
The Home for Little Wanderers
United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack
Valley

² 42 U.S.C. §§ 1396a(a)(10)(A), 1396a(a)(43), 1396d(a)(4)(B), 1396d(r).

³ Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, EPSDT - A Guide for States: Coverage in the Medicaid Benefit for Children and Adolescents, June 2014. Available at: <http://www.medicaid.gov/Medicaid-CHIP-Program-Information/ByTopics/Benefits/Early-and-Periodic-Screening-Diagnostic-and-Treatment.html>.