



COMMISSIONER
Chris Traylor

April 23, 2012

To: Community Based Alternatives Providers
Medically Dependent Children Program Providers
Community Living Assistance and Support Services Providers and
Case Management Agencies
Deaf Blind with Multiple Disabilities Providers
Home and Community-based Services Providers
Texas Home Living Providers

Subject: Information Letter No. 12-35
The STAR Program in the Medicaid Rural Service Area Involving Individuals Enrolled
in 1915(c) Waiver Programs

On March 1, 2012, the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) implemented the STAR program in the Medicaid Rural Service Area (Medicaid RSA). A list of counties impacted can be found on page three of this letter. The STAR program provides acute care services, such as office visits to a doctor, prescription drugs, behavioral health treatment, emergency room visits, and inpatient hospital services. Populations mandatory for the STAR program include TANF recipients, pregnant women, newborns, children receiving Medicaid, and individuals who are age 21 or older and receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and are not eligible for Medicare. Individuals who are eligible for Medicaid because they are enrolled in 1915(c) waiver programs, including Community Living Assistance and Support Services, Deaf Blind with Multiple Disabilities, Home and Community-based Services, Texas Home Living and Community Based Alternatives, are also mandatory populations for the STAR program in the Medicaid RSA. Children age 20 and younger receiving Supplemental Security Income may voluntarily choose to enroll in the STAR program in the Medicaid RSA or they may continue to receive their acute care services through traditional Medicaid fee-for-service.

Some individuals enrolled in the 1915(c) waiver programs received an enrollment packet for the STAR program in the Medicaid RSA and may have enrolled. Those individuals were contacted to ensure they understood the STAR program and were given the option to dis-enroll until enrollment becomes mandatory on July 1, 2012. For individuals who did not enroll previously, their enrollment was delayed to allow HHSC and DADS additional time to coordinate efforts and further educate the providers and individuals in 1915(c) waiver programs about this change.

Beginning May 17th, individuals who are enrolled in the 1915(c) waiver programs and are eligible for STAR will receive a packet of information with instructions on how to choose their medical plan and primary care provider. This packet will include enrollment forms they may submit and a phone number they may call in order to make these choices. The enrollment broker, MAXIMUS, will assist individuals with the enrollment process. The primary care provider can be a:

- family practice doctor;
- pediatrician (children's doctor);

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- internal medicine doctor;
- OB/GYN (doctor for women's health);
- clinic; or
- specialty trained nurse.

When the individual selects a medical plan, the individual should ensure any doctors or specialists critical to his medical care are contracted with his chosen medical plan. If an individual does not select a medical plan and a primary care provider by June 15, 2012, the individual will be defaulted to a medical plan and primary care provider, to be effective July 1, 2012. Individuals may change their plan by calling the STAR Helpline at 1-800-964-2777. Plan changes take 15-45 days to become effective. An individual can also change the primary care provider at any time by calling their medical plan.

Verifying Medicaid Eligibility and Medical Plan

There are a variety of ways to verify an individual's Medicaid eligibility, including:

- health plan ID card;
- Your Texas Benefits Medicaid card;
- Texas Medicaid and Healthcare Partnership (TMHP) Automated Inquiry System (AIS) at 1-800-925-9126;
- health plan website;
- contact the plan directly;
- Medicaid Eligibility and Service Authorization Verification (MESAV); and
- for after hour eligibility verification, call the health plan.

Provider Trainings

HHSC is hosting provider trainings through the end of April. There is no cost or registration required to attend these trainings. Provider trainings are conducted in half-day segments in select cities across the state. The provider alert, with the list of scheduled trainings specific to providers of 1915(c) waiver services in the Medicaid RSA, is available at the following link: <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/providers/communications/alerts/alerts.cfm?alertid=880>

Consumer Outreach Meetings

MAXIMUS will be providing outreach meetings for individuals and their families beginning May 2012. Refer to the website link below. There is no cost or registration required to attend these meetings. These meetings provide opportunities for MAXIMUS, to educate individuals who are, or will be enrolled in STAR Medicaid RSA, and their families, about the services and benefits available through the various medical plans/managed care organizations. These events are specifically provided for mandatory enrollees and their families.

Community Outreach Meeting Calendar - [Event Calendar](#)

Communications

Please refer to the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) website for provider alerts and/or information letters. For further information concerning the expansion of the STAR program in the Medicaid RSA, please refer to the following website links:

Information Letter 12-26

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/providers/communications/2012/letters/IL2012-26.pdf>

Medicaid RSA information

[Medicaid Rural Service Area STAR Managed Care Expansion](#)

Comparison Charts

Compare specific services offered based upon your area and the contracted HMOs with the HMO comparison charts provided on the website link. [STAR Health Plan Comparison Charts](#)

Locations of Medicaid RSA

The STAR program in the Medicaid RSA will be in one of three geographical regions: Medicaid RSA Central, Medicaid RSA Northeast, and Medicaid RSA West. See the map at the following website link: <http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/medicaid/MMC/MRSA-Regions-Map.pdf>

Counties in each Medicaid RSA geographical region

[Medicaid RSA Central \(effective 3/1/12\)](#)

Bell, Blanco, Bosque, Brazos, Burlison, Colorado, Comanche, Coryell, DeWitt, Erath, Falls, Freestone, Gillespie, Gonzales, Grimes, Hamilton, Hill, Jackson, Lampasas, Lavaca, Leon, Limestone, Llano, Madison, McLennan, Milam, Mills, Robertson, San Saba, Somervell, and Washington Counties

[Medicaid RSA Northeast \(effective 3/1/12\)](#)

Anderson, Angelina, Bowie, Camp, Cass, Cherokee, Cooke, Delta, Fannin, Franklin, Grayson, Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Hopkins, Houston, Lamar, Marion, Montague, Morris, Nacogdoches, Panola, Rains, Red River, Rusk, Sabine, San Augustine, Shelby, Smith, Titus, Trinity, Upshur, Van Zandt, and Wood Counties

[Medicaid RSA West \(effective 3/1/12\)](#)

Andrews, Archer, Armstrong, Bailey, Baylor, Borden, Brewster, Briscoe, Brown, Callahan, Castro, Childress, Clay, Cochran, Coke, Coleman, Collingsworth, Concho, Cottle, Crane, Crockett, Culberson, Dallam, Dawson, Dickens, Dimmit, Donley, Eastland, Ector, Edwards, Fisher, Foard, Frio, Gaines, Glasscock, Gray, Hall, Hansford, Hardeman, Hartley, Haskell, Hemphill, Howard, Irion, Jack, Jeff Davis, Jones, Kent, Kerr, Kimble, King, Kinney, Knox, La Salle, Lipscomb, Loving, Martin, Mason, McCulloch, Menard, Midland, Mitchell, Moore, Motley, Nolan, Ochiltree, Oldham, Palo Pinto, Parmer, Pecos, Presidio, Reagan, Real, Reeves, Roberts, Runnels, Schleicher, Scurry, Shackelford, Sherman, Stephens, Sterling, Stonewall, Sutton, Taylor, Terrell, Throckmorton, Tom Green, Upton, Uvalde, Val Verde, Ward, Wheeler, Wichita, Wilbarger, Winkler, Yoakum, Young, and Zavala Counties

Sincerely,

[signature on file]

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Center for Policy and Innovation

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Access and Intake