



## **Exclusive Update on Medicaid Transformation**

**Monday, June 8, 2020, 9:00-10:00 a.m.**

*\*Meeting held via conference call*

**Guest speakers:** Debra Farrington, NC Medicaid Chief of Staff and Sarah Gregosky, Chief of Managed Care

**Meeting overview:** NC Medicaid staff provided an update to members of the NC Collaborative on Medicaid Transformation (NC COMeT) on the status of Medicaid managed care in North Carolina, including where we've been, where things currently stand, and what will need to be in place prior to implementation.

### **Meeting Notes**

- In 2015, the General Assembly enacted legislation directing the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) to transition its Medicaid and NC Health Choice/CHIP programs from fee-for-service to managed care.
- Managed care was slated to go live statewide in February 2020 but was suspended in November 2019 due to a lack of funding from the NC General Assembly.
- NCDHHS doesn't know what the new implementation date will be; they first need an appropriate budget and funding. However, they anticipate managed care will happen – it's not a matter of "if", but "when."
- One of the key elements of Medicaid managed care is choice. In North Carolina, there are five Prepaid Health Plans, including Carolina Complete Health – a regional PHP operating in three of six regions. The other plans being offered statewide include AmeriHealth Caritas, Healthy Blue, UnitedHealthcare, and WellCare. The Enrollment Broker will help Medicaid members understand their choices and enroll in a plan.
- The focus of managed care will be on buying health and quality, not the number of services provided. NCDHHS also seeks to address special unmet social needs – like housing, food, transportation and interpersonal safety – through Healthy Opportunities Pilots. NCCare360, the tool used to connect North Carolinians to such services, is now available in all 100 counties.
- When Medicaid managed care was suspended in November 2019, NCDHHS cancelled the open enrollment period for all Medicaid and Health Choice that was already in progress statewide. Medicaid members will continue to receive services as before until suspension is lifted. NCDHHS is continuing to engage counties and stakeholders in the meantime.
- NCDHHS is working on the Member Ombudsman procurement but needs to get a firm managed care start date before a concrete timeline can be set.
- During suspension, NCDHHS is looking across various dimensions to make sure the Prepaid Health Plans will be prepared for implementation when it happens – e.g., conducting readiness reviews, assessing how broad provider networks are (although the cadence of these assessments has slowed due to suspension), making sure the PHPs are clear about any guidance provided by NCDHHS or CMS, etc.
- Once a sufficient budget for Medicaid managed care has been approved, NCDHHS will work to update all of their stakeholder materials, establish updated per member per month

reimbursement rates for PHPs, redo policy and desktop review, determine which counties will go live, restart technology testing, assess internal readiness, and more.

- The Provider Ombudsman process and number has not been posted but will be shared before Medicaid managed care goes live.
- NCDHHS is holding ongoing meetings with different provider associations, including the Advanced Medical Home Technical Advisory Group. They also hired a Deputy Director of Engagement.
- Please stay tuned for future updates!

**Next Steps** – The NC Collaborative on Medicaid Transformation will meet every second Friday of the month from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. to discuss various issues related to North Carolina’s pending move to Medicaid managed care. The next meeting will take place on Friday, July 10. Please mark your calendar!