



Important New Information about Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services Medical Programs: An Overview of *Illinois Health Connect*

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (formerly the Illinois Department of Public Aid) has moved to a Primary Care Case Management (PCCM) model for most medical program (Medicaid and All Kids) clients. This model of health care delivery is also known as the “medical home model” and has been shown to enhance primary and preventive care services. The program is called *Illinois Health Connect* and is administered by Automated Health Systems (AHS). Client enrollment is now complete in Cook, Collar Counties and Northwest regions of the state. Approximately 1.3 million of the 1.7 million eligible HFS clients are now enrolled with a medical home. Client enrollment will be completed by mid-November for the counties in the Central and Southern Regions.

Every client enrolled in Illinois Health Connect will have a Primary Care Provider (PCP) or “medical home” where care can be coordinated. Physicians willing to provide a medical home for patients must enroll as an Illinois Health Connect PCP. They can specify how many patients they want in their panel from 1 to 1,800 patients and limit the panel based on criteria such as existing patients, age limits, or gender. PCPs will receive a monthly care management fee in addition to the fee-for-service reimbursements for each visit. PCPs will provide referrals for clients who need specialty care. Primary care physicians who do not enroll will no longer be able to provide primary care to their HFS patients enrolled in Illinois Health Connect without a referral.

While Illinois Health Connect is primarily an outpatient program focusing on providing every eligible HFS client with a medical home, it is important for hospitals and other inpatient facilities to understand the impact that this program will have on administrative processes. Clients enrolled in Illinois Health Connect can see any HFS enrolled specialist who is available to see HFS clients. However, a referral must be obtained from the medical home PCP authorizing the care for the client. Referrals are submitted by the PCP to AHS via internet, phone or fax and then transferred to HFS. The referrals are NOT reviewed for medical necessity or “pre-authorized” by AHS. Patients will NOT require a referral to receive care in the ED or for any inpatient care. Illinois Health Connect patients seen in the ED should be referred back to their PCP for follow-up care. Patients who require outpatient follow-up with a specialist will need to have a referral from their PCP to the specialist. Labs, diagnostic studies, PT/OT/ST will NOT require referrals.

Urgent Care facilities that function as an ED diversion and bill location of service as “hospital” will not be required to have a referral to render care. All other Urgent Care facilities will be required to obtain a referral from the clients PCP prior to providing care. However, PCPs can register a referral up to 14 days after the time of service so a verbal authorization for treatment may be obtained from the PCP, followed by the PCP completing the registration of the referral via internet, phone or fax.

Because clients can change PCPs once a month, the clients PCP will NOT be listed on the client's HFS medical card. Specialists, hospitals, and emergency medicine providers will be able to identify the PCP for patients through the HFS' Medical Electronic Data Interchange (MEDI) System, which is a free, easily accessible web-based system for verifying client eligibility and tracking claims. To protect client confidentiality, providers need to register prior to accessing MEDI and obtain a username and password. Many institutions also use a Recipient Eligibility Vendor (such as Medifax, NEBO) that reports the client's eligibility status and PCP information. Information on how to register for MEDI can be obtained by accessing HFS' website at <http://www.myhfs.illinois.gov/gettingstarted.html> and clicking on "**MEDI Training Page**". Information about the MEDI system is also available on the Illinois Health Connect website at www.illinoishealthconnect.com under Provider Information.

Illinois Health Connect staff can arrange a training session for any provider, group or facility. For any questions or to schedule a training session, please contact the Illinois Health Connect Provider Helpline at 1-877-912-1999 or contact the Illinois Health Connect Medical Director, Dr. Margaret Kirkegaard, MD, MPH at 888-912-9120 ext 2218 or mkirkegaard@automated-health.com.