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S.C. Medicaid announces reinstatement of several planned service reductions

COLUMBIA, S.C. — The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) announced Monday that after a review ordered by Gov. Nikki Haley it is reversing previously planned reductions to several optional Medicaid services.

The Department will not proceed with the following previously announced reductions:

- Elimination of hospice care services. Hospice provides palliative care to individuals near the end-of-life in their homes, at residential hospices and in nursing homes.
- Elimination of respite care services provided through the Community Long Term Care (CLTC) Community Choices waivers. These services allow caregivers caring for a family member in the home a safe setting to place their loved one for a limited time period in the event the caregiver is temporarily unavailable.
- Reduction in the number of home delivered meals from 14 to 10 weekly in the CLTC Community Choices waivers. The inability of some individuals to prepare their own meals often causes them to enter nursing homes unnecessarily.
- Elimination of nutritional supplements in the CLTC Community Choices waivers. The number of units of these supplements will instead be decreased from its current levels, based on medical necessity.

“The agency’s goal in reinstating these services is to protect vulnerable Medicaid beneficiaries,” said SCDHHS Director Anthony Keck. “Each of these services is important to reducing overall program costs and allows people the choice of receiving services in their home and community rather than in more costly institutional settings.”

SCDHHS announced last month that certain optional Medicaid services would be eliminated or reduced. For a full list of those services, as well as clarifying bulletins, please visit:

<http://www.dhhs.state.sc.us/Internet/pdf/MedicaidReductionsBULLETIN.pdf>

SCDHHS is also issuing clarifying bulletins to providers detailing certain exceptions to the discontinuation of adult dental services and a delay in the implementation of new limits on certain speech, occupational and physical therapy visits. The limit will take effect April 1, 2011.

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