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GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

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SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Medicaid program, as established by Title XIX of the Social Security Act, as amended, provides quality health care to low income, disabled, and elderly individuals by utilizing state and federal funds to reimburse providers for approved medical services. This care includes the diagnosis, treatment, and management of illnesses and disabilities.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) is the single state agency designated to administer the South Carolina Medicaid program in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations and the South Carolina State Plan.

SCDHHS offers two Medicaid Managed Care Programs:

- Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) Program
- Primary Care Case Management/Medical Homes Networks (PCCM or PCCM/MHN)

The Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) program consists of contracted MCOs that, through a developed network of providers, provide, at a minimum, all services outlined in the core benefit package described in the MCO contract, for certain eligibility categories. SCDHHS pays a capitated rate per member per month, according to age, gender, and category of eligibility to MCOs. Payments for core services provided to MCO members are the responsibility of MCOs, not the fee-for-service Medicaid program.

The Medical Homes Network (MHN) Program is a Primary Care Case Management (PCCM) program. An MHN is composed of a Care Coordination Services Organization (CSO) and the primary care providers (PCPs) enrolled in that network. The CSO supports the member physicians by providing care coordination, disease management, and data management. The PCPs manage the health care of their patient members either by directly

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION (CONT'D.)

providing medically necessary health care services or authorizing another provider to treat the beneficiary. The Network receives a per-member-per-month (PMPM) care coordination fee. Reimbursement for medical services provided is made on a fee-for-service basis.

Both MHNs and MCOs may elect to provide their members enhanced services beyond what is offered under traditional fee-for-service Medicaid.

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

Applications for Medicaid eligibility may be filed in person or by mail. Applications may be obtained and completed at outstationed locations such as county health departments, some federally qualified health centers, most hospitals, and SCDHHS county eligibility offices. Individuals can also visit the SCDHHS Web site at http://www.scdhhs.gov to download an application for Medicaid.

Individuals who apply for SSI through the Social Security Administration and are determined eligible are automatically eligible for Medicaid.

For certain programs, Medicaid eligibility may be retroactive for a maximum of three months prior to the month of application when the applicant received medical services of the type covered by Medicaid and the applicant would have met all eligibility criteria had the application been filed at the time. A child born to a woman eligible for Medicaid due to pregnancy is automatically entitled to Medicaid benefits for one year provided that the child continues to reside in South Carolina.

Not all Medicaid beneficiaries receive full coverage. Some beneficiaries may qualify under the categories of limited benefits or emergency services only. Questions regarding coverage for these categories should be directed to the SCDHHS Provider Service Center (PSC) at 1-888-289-0709. Providers can also submit an online inquiry at http://scdhhs.gov/contact-us. A provider service representative will then respond to you directly with additional information about these categories.

Providers may verify a beneficiary's eligibility for Medicaid benefits by utilizing a Point of Sale (POS) device, the South Carolina Medicaid Web-based Claims Submission Tool, or an eligibility verification vendor. Additional information on these options is detailed later in this section.

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID PROGRAM

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION (CONT'D.)

If the beneficiary is enrolled in a MCO or MHN/PCCM, certain services will require prior approval and/or coordination through the MCO or MHN/PCCM providers. For questions regarding MCO or MHN/PCCM programs, please visit the SCDHHS Web site at http://scdhhs.gov to view the MCO or MHN Policy and Procedure Guide.

More information about managed care can also be found in the Managed Care Supplement attached to all provider manuals.

ENROLLMENT COUNSELING SERVICES

SCDHHS provides enrollment counseling services to Medicaid beneficiaries through a contract with a private vendor, Maximus, Incorporated. Services are provided under the program name "South Carolina Healthy Connections Choices." The function of the enrollment counselor is to assist Medicaid-eligible members in the selection of the best Medicaid health plan to suit individual/family needs. For additional information, visit http://www.SCchoices.com or contact South Carolina Healthy Connections Choices at (877) 552-4642.

MEDICARE / MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

Medicaid beneficiaries who are also eligible for Medicare benefits are commonly referred to as "dually eligible." Providers may bill SC Medicaid for Medicare cost sharing for Medicaid-covered services for dually eligible beneficiaries. Some dual eligibles are also Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries (QMB). If the dually eligible beneficiary is also a QMB, providers may bill SC Medicaid for Medicare cost sharing, for services that are covered by Medicare without regard to whether the service is covered by SC Medicaid. Reimbursement for these services will be consistent with the SC State Medicaid Plan.

Please refer to Section 3 of this manual for instructions regarding billing procedures for dually eligible beneficiaries. For instructions on how to access beneficiary information, including QMB status, refer to the Medicaid Web-Based Claims Submission Tool (the Web Tool), explained later in this section.

In the Web Tool, the Eligibility or Beneficiary Information section will indicate "Yes" if the beneficiary is a Qualified Medicare Beneficiary.

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID PROGRAM

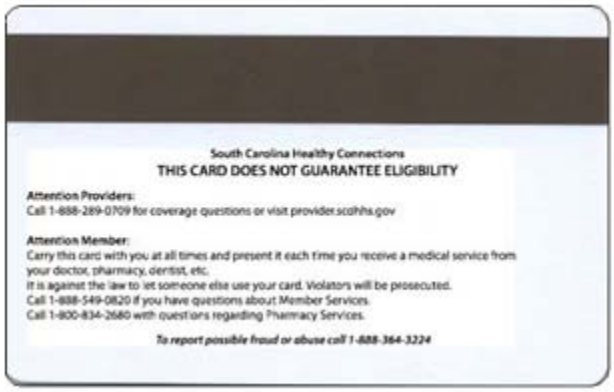
MEDICARE / MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY (CONT'D.)

Note: Pharmacy providers should refer to Section 2 of the Pharmacy Services Provider Manual for more information on coverage for dually eligible beneficiaries.

SOUTH CAROLINA HEALTHY CONNECTIONS MEDICAID CARD

Medicaid beneficiaries are issued a plastic South Carolina Healthy Connections Medicaid card. Only one person's name appears on each card. If more than one family member is eligible for Medicaid, the family receives a card for each eligible member. In addition to the member's name, the front of the card includes the member's date of birth and Medicaid Member Number. Possession of the plastic card does not guarantee Medicaid coverage. Failure to verify eligibility prior to providing a service leaves the provider at risk of providing services to an ineligible individual.

The following is an example of a South Carolina Healthy Connections card:



The back of the Healthy Connections Medicaid card includes:

- A number that providers may call for prior authorization of services outside the normal practice pattern or outside a 25-mile radius of South Carolina
- A magnetic strip that may be used in POS devices to access information regarding Medicaid eligibility, third-party insurance coverage, beneficiary special programs, and service limitations 24 hours a day, seven days a week in a

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID PROGRAM

SOUTH CAROLINA HEALTHY CONNECTIONS MEDICAID CARD (CONT'D.)

real time environment. There is a fee to providers for such POS services.

- A toll-free number for the beneficiary if he or she has questions about enrollment or Medicaid-covered services
- A toll-free number for the beneficiary if he or she has questions regarding pharmacy services

Providers are urged to report inappropriate use of a Medicaid card by a beneficiary (such as abuse, card-sharing, etc.) to the Division of Program Integrity's toll-free Fraud and Abuse Hotline at 1-888-364-3224.

Beneficiaries who choose to enroll with a Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) will also be issued an identification card by the MCO. This MCO-issued card contains phone numbers for member services and provider billing issues specific to the managed care plan. Please see the Managed Care Supplement for samples of cards from the various managed care plans.

SC HEALTHY CONNECTIONS HEALTH OPPORTUNITY ACCOUNT

The South Carolina Healthy Connections Health Opportunity Account (HOA) was implemented by SCDHHS in May 2008. It is a Medicaid option that allows beneficiaries to manage their own health care spending and set aside money to be used when they no longer need Medicaid. Routine claims filing procedures apply to HOA participants.

The following is an example of a South Carolina Healthy Connections Health Opportunity Account card:

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID PROGRAM

SC HEALTHY CONNECTIONS HEALTH OPPORTUNITY ACCOUNT (CONT'D.)

The back of the South Carolina Healthy Connections Health Opportunity Account card includes a toll-free number for questions about enrollment, Medicaid-covered services, or eligibility.

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID WEB-BASED CLAIMS SUBMISSION TOOL

SCDHHS provides a free tool, accessible through an Internet browser, which allows providers to submit claims (UB and CMS-1500), query Medicaid eligibility, check claim status, offers providers electronic access to their remittance packages and the ability to change their own passwords.

Note: Dental claims can no longer be submitted on the Web Tool. Please contact the DentaQuest Call Center at 1-888-307-6553 for billing instructions.

Providers interested in using this tool must complete a SC Medicaid Trading Partner Agreement (TPA) with SCDHHS and return the signed SC Medicaid TPA Enrollment Form. Once received, the provider will be contacted with the Web site address and Web Tool User ID(s). If a provider utilizes a billing agent and elects to have the billing agent access their electronic remittance package, both the provider and the billing agent must have a TPA on file. The provider's TPA must name their billing agent. The billing agent's TPA must include the provider's name and Medicaid number. For more information regarding the TPA, refer to Section 3 of this manual.

To learn more about this tool and how to access it, visit the SC Medicaid e-Learning Web site at: http://Medicaid eLearning.com or contact the SC Medicaid EDI Support Center via the SCDHHS Provider Service Center at 1-888-289-0709. A list of training opportunities is also located on the Web site. For Web Tool training dates, click on "Training Options."

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID BULLETINS AND NEWSLETTERS

SCDHHS Medicaid bulletins and newsletters are distributed electronically through e-mail and are available online at the SCDHHS Web site.

To ensure that you receive important SC Medicaid information, visit the Web site at http://www.scdhhs.gov/ or enroll to receive bulletins and newsletters via e-mail, go to bulletin.scdhhs.gov to subscribe.

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID PROGRAM

PROVIDER ENROLLMENT

PROVIDER PARTICIPATION

The Medicaid program administered by the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) is considered to be a covered entity under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191.

Provider participation in the Medicaid program is voluntary. To participate in the Medicaid program, a provider must meet the following requirements:

- Complete an online provider enrollment application and agreement and submit any necessary supporting documentation. Certain provider types, depending on the type of service provided, are required to sign a contractual agreement in addition to the provider enrollment agreement.
- Accept the terms and conditions of the online application by electronic signature, indicating the provider's agreement to the contents of the participation agreement, the Electronic Funds Transfer Agreement, W-9 and Trading Partner Agreement.
- Be licensed by the appropriate licensing body, certified by the standard-setting agency, and/or other pre-contractual approval processes established by (SCDHHS).
- If eligible, obtain a National Provider Identifier (NPI) and share it with SCDHHS. Refer to https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov for additional information about obtaining an NPI.
- Be enrolled in the South Carolina Medicaid program and receive official notification of enrollment.
- Continuously meet South Carolina licensure and/or certification requirements of their respective professions or boards in order to maintain Medicaid enrollment.
- Comply with all federal and state laws and

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID PROGRAM

PROVIDER PARTICIPATION (CONT'D.)

regulations currently in effect as well as all policies, procedures, and standards required by the Medicaid program.

- Medicaid will not provide any payments for items or services provided under the State Plan or under a waiver to any financial institution or entity located outside the United States

All rendering providers must be enrolled in the Medicaid program. Enrolled providers are prohibited from allowing non-enrolled providers use of their Medicaid ID number/NPI number in order for non-participating providers to be reimbursed for services. Claims for Medicaid reimbursement submitted under a Medicaid ID number or NPI number other than that of the ordering, referring or rendering provider will be considered invalid and may result in a program integrity investigation and/or recoupment of the Medicaid payment. As required by 42 CFR 455.440, all claims submitted for payment for items and services that were ordered or referred must contain the NPI of the physician or other professional who ordered or referred such items or services.

MCO network providers/subcontractors do not have to be Medicaid-enrolled providers. Fee-for-service reimbursement from SCDHHS may only be made to Medicaid-enrolled providers.

A provider must immediately report any change in enrollment or contractual information (*e.g.*, mailing or payment address, physical location, telephone number, specialty information, change in group affiliation, ownership, etc.) to SCDHHS Provider Service Center within 30 days of the change. Failure to report this change of information promptly could result in delay of payment and/or termination of enrollment. Mailing information is located in the Correspondence and Inquiries section.

Extent of Provider Participation

Providers have the right to limit the number of Medicaid patients they are willing to treat within their practice; however, providers may not discriminate in selecting the Medicaid beneficiaries they will treat or services they will render. A provider may not refuse to furnish services covered under Medicaid to an eligible individual because of a third party's potential liability for the service(s). A provider who is not a part of a Managed Care

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID PROGRAM

Extent of Provider Participation (Cont'd.)

Organization's network may refuse service to a Medicaid MCO member.

A provider and a beneficiary (or the beneficiary's guardian or representative) should determine before treatment is rendered whether the provider is willing to accept the beneficiary as a Medicaid patient. In an emergency, or if a provider cannot determine that a patient is Medicaid-eligible at the time service is rendered, the provider should meet with the beneficiary (or the beneficiary's legal guardian or representative) at the earliest possible date to determine whether the provider is willing to accept the beneficiary as a Medicaid patient for the previously rendered service. To avoid disputes or misunderstandings, providers are encouraged to document the details of their provider-patient agreement in the patient's record.

In furnishing care to beneficiaries who are participating in a Medicaid managed care option, all providers are required to comply with the benefit requirements specified by the applicable managed care program with respect to issues such as the extent of approvals for referrals, etc. Specific questions may be addressed directly to the managed care provider or the Bureau of Managed Care at (803) 898-4614.

Once a provider has accepted a beneficiary as a Medicaid patient, it is the responsibility of the provider to deliver all Medicaid-covered services throughout the course of treatment. The policy section of this manual may include clarification of specific program policies.

Non-Discrimination

All Medicaid providers are required to comply with the following laws and regulations:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that prohibits any discrimination due to race, color, or national origin (45 CFR Part 80)
- Title V, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 that prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap (45 CFR Part 84)
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability (28 CFR Parts 35 & 36)

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAID PROGRAM

Non-Discrimination (Cont'd.)

- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 that prohibits discrimination on the basis of age (45 CFR Parts 90 and 91)

Service Delivery

Freedom of Choice

Except as otherwise specified in this manual, a Medicaid beneficiary has the right to choose any provider who is both a participant in the Medicaid program and willing to accept the beneficiary as a patient.

However, once a beneficiary exercises his or her freedom of choice by enrolling in a Medicaid managed care option, the beneficiary is required to follow that plan's requirements (*e.g.*, use of designated primary and specialist providers, precertification of services, etc.) for the time period during which the beneficiary is enrolled in the managed care option.

Medical Necessity

Medicaid will pay for a service when the service is covered under the South Carolina State Plan and is medically necessary. "Medically necessary" means that the service (the provision of which may be limited by specific manual provisions, bulletins, and other directives) is directed toward the maintenance, improvement, or protection of health or toward the diagnosis and treatment of illness or disability. A provider's medical records or other appropriate documentation for each beneficiary must substantiate the need for services, must include all findings and information supporting medical necessity and justification for services, and must detail all treatment provided. Medicaid will not provide any payments for items or services provided under the State Plan or under a waiver to any financial institution or entity located outside of the United States.

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

RECORDS/ DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

As a condition of participation in the Medicaid program, providers are required to maintain and provide access to records. These records should fully disclose the medical necessity for treatment and the extent of services provided to Medicaid beneficiaries. Unless program policy otherwise allows, this documentation must be present in the beneficiaries' records before the provider files claims for reimbursement. For the purpose of reviewing and reproducing documents, providers shall grant to staff of SCDHHS, the State Auditor's Office, the South Carolina Attorney General's Office, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) and/or any of their designees access to all records concerning Medicaid services and payment. These records may be reviewed during normal business hours, with or without notice.

A provider record or any part thereof will be considered illegible if at least three medical or other professional staff members who regularly perform post-payment reviews are unable to read the records or determine the extent of services provided. If this situation should occur, a written request for a translation may be made. In the event of a negative response or no response, the reimbursed amount will be subject to recoupment.

Assuming that the information is in a reasonably accessible format, the South Carolina Medicaid Program will accept records and clinical service notes in accordance with the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (S.C. Code Ann. §26-6-10 *et seq.*). Reviewers and auditors will accept electronic documentation as long as they can access them and the integrity of the document is ensured. Furthermore, providers must comply with the provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191.

The minimum retention period for Medicaid records is five years. Exceptions include providers of hospital and nursing home services, who are required to maintain records

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

RECORDS / DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION (CONT'D.)

pertaining to Medicaid beneficiaries for a period of six years. Other Medicaid provider agreements/contracts may require differing periods of time for records retention.

Providers should contact the PSC or submit an online inquiry at http://scdhhs.gov/contact-us for specific information regarding the documentation requirements for the services provided. In all cases, records must be retained until any audit, investigation, or litigation is resolved, even if the records must be maintained longer than normally required. Medicaid providers generally maintain on-site all medical and fiscal records pertaining to Medicaid beneficiaries.

Medical and fiscal records pertaining to Medicaid beneficiaries that a provider may maintain at an off-site location/storage facility are subject to the same retention policies, and the records must be made available to SCDHHS within five business days of the request. For reviews by the SCDHHS Division of Program Integrity, requested Medicaid records should be provided within two business days.

Note: These requirements pertain to retention of records for Medicaid purposes only; other state or federal rules may require longer retention periods.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION BY PROVIDER

As of April 14, 2003, for most covered entities, health care providers are required to comply with privacy standards of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191, which includes providing all patients and/or clients with a Notice of Privacy Practices. The Notice should include sufficient information to disclose to each Medicaid patient/client the provider's intent to release any medical information necessary for processing claims, including Medicaid claims. Providers who have not issued their patients/clients a Notice of Privacy Practices should obtain authorization to release such information to SCDHHS. The authorization must be signed and dated by the beneficiary and must be maintained in the patient's/client's record.

Once a Notice of Privacy Practices is acknowledged by the Medicaid beneficiary, or the beneficiary's authorization to release information is obtained, a provider who uses hard-copy claim forms that require the patient's signature is no

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

RECORDS / DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION BY PROVIDER (CONT'D.)

longer required to have each claim form signed by the beneficiary. Providers who file claims electronically are required under their Trading Partner Agreement (TPA) to ensure ready association of electronic claims with an acknowledged Notice of Privacy Practices or a signed statement from the beneficiary consenting to the release of information necessary to process claims.

Certain medical services may be subject to more stringent rules or regulations governing the disclosure of information than others. However, if a provider is unable to release information necessary for Medicaid claims processing due to the lack of proper Notice or authorization from the beneficiary, payment may be denied and/or previous payments may be recouped. Consequently, providers who are concerned about releasing patient information to SCDHHS are advised to obtain specific written authorization from the Medicaid patient/client.

SAFEGUARDING BENEFICIARY INFORMATION

Federal regulations at 42 CFR Part 431, Subpart F, and South Carolina Regulations at Chapter 126, Article 1, Subarticle 4, require that certain information concerning Medicaid applicants and beneficiaries be protected. As a condition of participation in the Medicaid program, all providers must agree to comply with the federal laws and regulations regarding this protection, by execution of either a contract or a provider enrollment agreement. Questions regarding access to protected information should be referred to the PSC. Provider can also submit an online inquiry at http://scdhhs.gov/contact-us to request additional information.

Beneficiary information that must be protected includes but is not limited to the following:

- Name and address
- Medical services provided
- Social and economic circumstances
- Medical data, including diagnosis and past history of disease or disability
- Any information involving the identification of legally liable third-party resources
- Any information verifying income eligibility and the amount of medical assistance payments

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

RECORDS / DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

SAFEGUARDING BENEFICIARY INFORMATION (CONT'D.)

This information may generally be used or disclosed only for the following purposes:

- Establishing eligibility
- Determining the amount of medical assistance
- Providing services for beneficiaries
- Assisting in a Medicaid-related investigation, prosecution, or civil or criminal proceeding

Regarding the release of beneficiary information to billing/collection agencies, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has instructed the states that the requirements for the release of beneficiary information should parallel the limitations on payments. Agents to whom payments could be made are allowed to obtain relevant beneficiary information, since the sharing of that information is for a purpose directly connected with Medicaid administration. However, if no payment could be made to the agent because the agent's compensation is tied to the amount billed or collected, or is dependent upon the collection of the payment, then Medicaid is not allowed to release beneficiary information to that agent.

Note: The manner in which the Medicaid program deals with the agent is determined primarily by the terms of the agent's compensation, not by the designation attributed to the agent by the provider. Agents or providers who furnish inaccurate, incomplete, or misleading information to SCDHHS regarding agent compensation issues may face sanctions.

Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Case Records

Federal law requires providers to observe more stringent rules when disclosing medical information from the records of alcohol and drug abuse patients than when disclosing information concerning other Medicaid beneficiaries. Federal regulations govern the information that must be protected in such cases and the circumstances under which this information may be disclosed. These regulations may be found at 42 CFR Part 2.

SPECIAL / PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

Certain medical services must be authorized by SCDHHS (or its designee) prior to delivery in order to be reimbursable by Medicaid. Some of the services that are

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

RECORDS / DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

SPECIAL / PRIOR AUTHORIZATION (CONT'D.)

specifically subject to prior authorization and approval are as follows:

- Services provided outside of the South Carolina Medicaid Service Area (SCMSA). The SCMSA is South Carolina and adjacent areas within 25 miles of its borders. Providers should contact the PSC or submit an online inquiry for prior authorization guidelines.
- Services not routinely covered by Medicaid, or other services that require prior approval before payment or before service delivery as a matter of policy. Please refer to the appropriate section of this manual, contact the PSC, or submit an online inquiry for prior authorization guidelines.
- Services for which prepayment review is required.

Refer to program-specific sections of this manual for other services that must be authorized prior to delivery.

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

RECORDS / DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

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SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

REIMBURSEMENT

CHARGE LIMITS

Providers may not charge Medicaid any more for services to a beneficiary than they would customarily charge the general public. Providers should bill their usual and customary charges and not the Medicaid reimbursement rate. Retroactive adjustments can only be made up to the billed amount. Medicaid will generally pay the lower of the established Medicaid reimbursement rate, determined by the program, or the provider's charges. The Medicaid program will not pay for services or items that are furnished gratuitously without regard to the beneficiary's ability to pay, or where no payment from any other source is expected, such as free x-rays or immunizations provided by health organizations.

BROKEN, MISSED, OR CANCELLED APPOINTMENTS

CMS prohibits billing Medicaid beneficiaries for broken, missed, or cancelled appointments. Medicaid programs are state-designed and administered with federal policy established by CMS. Federal requirements mandate that providers participating in the Medicaid program must accept the agency's payment as payment in full. Providers cannot bill for scheduling appointments or holding appointment blocks. According to CMS Program Issuance Transmittal Notice MCD-43-94, broken or missed appointments are considered part of the overall cost of doing business.

NATIONAL CORRECT CODING INITIATIVE (NCCI)

The South Carolina Medicaid program utilizes NCCI edits and its related coding policy to control improper coding.

The CMS developed the National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) to promote national correct coding methodologies and to control improper coding leading to inappropriate payment. The purpose of the NCCI edits is to prevent improper payment when incorrect code combinations or units of service are reported exceeding what is normally considered to be medically necessary. NCCI edits identify procedures/services performed by the same provider for the same beneficiary on the same date of service.

NCCI consist of two types of edits:

1) NCCI Procedure to Procedure (PTP) edits: These edits define pairs of HCPCS/CPT codes that should not be reported together for a variety of reasons.

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

REIMBURSEMENT

NATIONAL CORRECT CODING INITIATIVE (NCCI) (CONT'D.)

These edits consist of a column one code and a column two code. If both codes are reported, the column one code is eligible for payment and the column two code is denied. In some instances an appropriate modifier may be added to one or both codes of an edit pair to make the code combination eligible for payment.

2) Medically Unlikely Edits (MUE): These edits define for each HCPCS/CPT code the number of units of service that is unlikely to be correct. The units of service that exceed what is considered medically necessary will be denied.

It is important to understand, however, that the NCCI does not include all possible combinations of correct coding edits or types of unbundling that exist. Providers are obligated to code correctly even if edits do not exist to prevent use of an inappropriate code combination.

Services denied based on NCCI code pair edits or MUEs may not be billed to patients.

The CMS web page http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/NationalCorrectCodInitEd/index.html provides overview information to providers on Medicare's NCCI edits and links for additional information.

MEDICAID AS PAYMENT IN FULL

Once a provider has accepted a beneficiary as a Medicaid patient, the provider must accept the amount established and paid by the Medicaid program (or paid by a third party, if equal or greater) as payment in full. Neither the beneficiary, beneficiary's family, guardian, or legal representative may be billed for any difference between the Medicaid allowable amount for a covered service and the provider's actual charge, or for any coinsurance or deductible not paid by a third party. In addition to not charging the patient for any coinsurance or deductible amounts, providers may not charge the patient for the primary insurance carrier's copayment. Only applicable Medicaid copayments and services not covered by Medicaid may be billed to the beneficiary.

For beneficiaries enrolled in a Medicaid managed care option, the managed care entity must accept SCDHHS' capitated payment as payment in full for all services covered by the capitation arrangement. Managed care

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

REIMBURSEMENT

MEDICAID AS PAYMENT IN FULL (CONT'D.)

network providers must accept their reimbursement from the managed care entity as payment in full. Only services not included in the specified benefits package or not otherwise covered by Medicaid may be billed to a beneficiary enrolled in a managed care option.

PAYMENT LIMITATION

Medicaid payments may be made only to a provider, to a provider's employer, or to an authorized billing entity. **There is no option for reimbursement to a beneficiary.** Likewise, seeking or receiving payment from a beneficiary pending receipt of payment from the Medicaid program is not allowed, except where a copayment is applicable. By virtue of submitting a claim to Medicaid, a provider is agreeing to accept Medicaid as the payer.

REASSIGNMENT OF CLAIMS

In general, Medicaid payments are to be made only to the enrolled practitioner. However, in certain circumstances payment may be made to the following:

1. The employer of the practitioner, if the practitioner is required as a condition of employment to turn over fees to the employer
2. The facility in which the service is provided, if the practitioner has a contract under which the facility submits the claim
3. A foundation, plan, or similar organization operating an organized health care delivery system, if the practitioner has a contract under which the organization submits the claim
4. A business agent. Regulations found at 42 CFR Part 447, Subpart A, allow Medicaid to make payment for services to a provider's "business agent" such as a billing service or an accounting firm, <u>only</u> if the agent's compensation is:

   a) Related to the cost of processing the billing

   b) <u>Not</u> related on a percentage or other basis to the amount that is billed or collected

   c) <u>Not</u> dependent upon the collection of the payment

   If the agent's compensation is tied to the amount billed or collected or is dependent upon the collection of the payment, Medicaid is <u>not</u> allowed

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REASSIGNMENT OF CLAIMS (CONT'D.)

to make payment to the agent. Furthermore, providers are urged to seek advice regarding the HIPAA (Public Law 104-191) provisions when entering into such an agreement.

THIRD-PARTY LIABILITY

As a condition of eligibility for Medicaid, federal regulations at 42 CFR Part 433, Subpart D, require individuals to assign any rights to medical support or other third-party payment to the Medicaid agency (SCDHHS) and cooperate with the agency in obtaining such payments. The South Carolina Code §43-7-420 makes this assignment effective automatically upon application for Medicaid.

Medicaid providers may obtain information regarding third-party resources that are known to SCDHHS by utilizing the South Carolina Healthy Connections Medicaid Insurance card with a Point of Sale (POS) device or by using the South Carolina Medicaid Web-based Claims Submission Tool. Third-party resources include but are not limited to health benefits under commercial health insurance plans, indemnity contracts, school insurance, Workers' Compensation, and other casualty plans that may provide health insurance benefits under automobile or homeowner's coverages.

For Medicaid purposes, third-party resources are divided into two general categories: Health Insurance and Casualty Insurance.

Health Insurance

In general, health insurance may include any individual accident and health policy or group policy that provides payment for health care costs. Unless otherwise permitted, a provider who accepts a Medicaid beneficiary as a patient is required to request payment from all available third-party resources prior to billing Medicaid. All third-party claims filed must be assigned to the provider.

Should the third-party carrier deny payment or reduce payment to less than the Medicaid approved amount, the provider may then submit the claim to Medicaid. The claim filed to Medicaid must be properly completed with all applicable third-party information entered in the appropriate fields (see Section 3 or other appropriate materials for billing instructions). Under the federally mandated Cost Avoidance program, 42 CFR §433.139, claims for certain services to beneficiaries who have health

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Health Insurance

insurance coverage may automatically reject if the third-party carrier has not been billed first. If a claim is rejected for failure to bill third-party coverage, the resulting Edit Correction Form (ECF) for the rejected claim will contain the carrier code, policy number, and name of the policyholder for each third-party carrier. SCDHHS will not reprocess the claim unless the provider returns a correctly coded ECF that documents payment or denial of payment by the third-party carrier.

While most claims are subject to coordination of benefits to ensure Medicaid is the payer of last resort, federal regulations exempt claims submitted for physicians' services under the Early & Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) program, Maternal Health, Title IV – Child Support Enforcement, and certain Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) services under Title V. While providers are encouraged to file with any liable third party for these claim types, if they choose not to do so, SCDHHS will pay the claims and bill liable third parties directly through the Benefit Recovery program.

Premium Payment Project

Through the Premium Payment Project, SCDHHS is able to pay private health insurance premiums for Medicaid beneficiaries who are subject to losing coverage due to non-payment. SCDHHS will pay these premiums when said payment is determined to be cost effective.

Premium payment is usually cost effective for Medicaid beneficiaries with chronic medical conditions requiring long-term treatment such as cancer, end stage renal disease, chronic heart problems, congenital birth defects, and AIDS. Depending on the amount of the premium, the program may also be appropriate for beneficiaries with short-term costly health needs, such as pregnancy.

Providers of services to participating beneficiaries should consider Medicaid the payer of last resort and bill any liable third-party insurance plan prior to billing Medicaid.

Questions regarding the Premium Payment Project or referrals for beneficiary participation in this project should be directed to the Third Party Liability - Medicaid Insurance Verification Services (MIVS) department by calling (803) 264-6847.

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Casualty Insurance

Casualty insurance includes policies that provide payment for treatment related to an accident or injury. This type of coverage is most commonly related to incidents such as auto accidents, and in these cases the injured party is frequently represented by an attorney.

Unlike health insurance claims, claims involving casualty insurance are not subject to review under the Cost Avoidance program. The accident questionnaire is the primary referral source and is generated by the Medicaid claims processing system. At times, it is the provider who identifies a potentially liable third party. If there is casualty insurance coverage, the provider may pursue the claim directly with either the beneficiary's attorney or the casualty insurance carrier, or file a claim with Medicaid (provided that the one-year time limit for submission of claims has not been exceeded).

If the provider files a claim with Medicaid and the claim is paid, then SCDHHS will pursue reimbursement from any liable third party.

Provider Responsibilities – TPL

A provider who has been paid by Medicaid and **subsequently** receives reimbursement from a third party must repay to SCDHHS either the full amount paid by Medicaid or the full amount paid by the third party, whichever is less. Some providers may choose to submit a repayment check accompanied by a completed Form for Medicaid Refunds (DHHS Form 205) identifying the third-party payer. Others providers may decide to submit a Claim Adjustment Form 130, which will allow them to void and/or replace a claim that resulted in under or overpayment. Examples of these forms can be found in the Forms section of this manual. For detailed information regarding both of these adjustment processes, please refer to Section 3 of this manual.

The Medicaid program makes payments to providers on behalf of beneficiaries for medical services rendered, but only to the extent that the beneficiary has a legal obligation to pay. If the beneficiary does not have a legal obligation to pay, then Medicaid will not make a payment. This means that if a beneficiary has third party insurance, including Medicare, SCDHHS's payment will be limited to the patient's responsibility (usually the deductible, co-pay

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

REIMBURSEMENT

Provider Responsibilities – TPL (Cont'd.)

and/or co-insurance.) The Medicaid reimbursement and third party payment cannot exceed the amount the provider has agreed to accept as payment in full from the third party payer. A provider must not bill Medicaid for the difference between the payment received from a third party and the actual charges if the provider's third-party payment was determined under a "preferred provider" agreement. A "preferred provider" agreement is an agreement between the provider and the third party payer that establishes an amount that the provider is agreeing to accept as payment in full on its claims. Where such an agreement exists, Medicaid may only coordinate payment up to the lesser of the Medicaid allowed amount or the amount the provider has agreed to accept as payment in full from the third party payer.

The South Carolina Code §43-7-440(B) requires Medicaid providers to cooperate with SCDHHS in the identification of any third-party resource that may be responsible for payment of all or part of the cost of medical services provided to a Medicaid beneficiary. Upon receiving knowledge of third-party coverage that is not verified via a POS system or SCDHHS Web Tool, a provider is encouraged to notify SCDHHS's Division of Third-Party Liability of said coverage. The Health Insurance Information Referral Form may be used for this purpose. This form can be found in the Forms section of this manual.

The Division of Third-Party Liability must also be notified in writing if copies of claims submitted to Medicaid are released to anyone, including the beneficiary or the beneficiary's attorney. Before being released, the documents must clearly indicate that third-party benefits are assigned to SCDHHS pursuant to state law.

Providers should be aware that in no instance will SCDHHS pay any amount that is the responsibility of a third-party resource. If a provider releases copies of claims submitted to Medicaid and the release of those documents results in third-party payment being made to the beneficiary rather than to the provider, SCDHHS will not reimburse the provider for the amount of the third-party payment made to the beneficiary.

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

REIMBURSEMENT

TIME LIMIT FOR SUBMITTING CLAIMS

SCDHHS requires that only "clean" claims and related ECFs received and entered into the claims processing system within one year from the date of service (or date of discharge for hospital claims) be considered for payment. A "clean" claim is error-free and can be processed without obtaining additional information from the provider or from another third party. This time limit will not be extended on the basis of third-party liability requirements. However, the one-year time limit does not apply to Medicare cost sharing claims or to claims involving retroactive eligibility.

Medicare Cost Sharing Claims

Claims for payment of Medicare cost sharing amounts must be received and entered into the claims processing system within two years from the date of service or date of discharge, or up to six months following the date of Medicare payment, whichever is later.

Retroactive Eligibility

Effective December 1, 2009, claims and related ECFs involving retroactive eligibility must meet both of the following criteria to be considered for payment:

- Be received and entered into the claims processing system within **six months** of the beneficiary's eligibility being added to the Medicaid eligibility system AND
- Be received within **three years** from the date of service or date of discharge (for hospital claims). Claims for dates of service that are more than three years old will not be considered for payment.

To document retroactive eligibility, the provider is responsible for submitting one of the following documents with each claim or ECF within the above time frames:

- DHHS Form 945, which is a statement verifying the retroactive determination furnished by the eligibility worker, or
- The computer-generated Medicaid eligibility approval letter notifying the beneficiary that Medicaid benefits have been approved. This can be furnished by the beneficiary or the eligibility worker. (This is different from the Certificate of Creditable Coverage.)

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

REIMBURSEMENT

Retroactive Eligibility (Cont'd.)

SCDHHS will no longer consider claims that exceed the timely filing limits due to the provider being unaware of the beneficiary's coverage.

Payment Information

SCDHHS establishes reimbursement rates for each Medicaid-covered service. Specific service rates for covered services can be found in the appropriate section of this provider manual. Providers should contact the PSC or submit an online inquiry for additional information.

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REIMBURSEMENT

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SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

MEDICAID PROGRAM INTEGRITY

The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services ensures the integrity of the Medicaid Program and seeks to identify and reduce waste, fraud, and abuse in the use of Medicaid funds through the activities carried out by the Division of Program Integrity and the Division of Audits. The purposes of program oversight are to safeguard against unnecessary, inappropriate, and/or fraudulent use of Medicaid services, identify excessive or inaccurate payments to providers, and ensure compliance with the applicable Medicaid laws, regulations, and policies.

PROGRAM INTEGRITY

The Division of Program Integrity conducts post-payment reviews of all health care provider types including but not limited to hospitals (inpatient and outpatient) rural health clinics, Federally-qualified health clinics, pharmacies, ASCs, ESRD clinics, physicians, dentists, other health care professionals, speech, PT and OT therapists, CLTC providers, durable medical equipment providers, transportation providers, and behavioral and mental health care providers. Program Integrity uses several methods to identify areas for review:

- The toll-free Fraud and Abuse Hotline for complaints of provider and beneficiary abuse. The number is 1-888-364-3224.
- Complaints of provider or beneficiary abuse reported using the Fraud and Abuse email address: fraudres@scdhhs.gov. Each complaint received from the hotline or email is reviewed, and if the complaint is determined to involve either a Medicaid beneficiary or provider, a preliminary investigation is conducted to identify any indications of fraud and abuse.
- Referrals from other sources as well as ongoing provider monitoring that identify aberrant or excessive billing practices.
- The automated Surveillance and Utilization Review System (SURS) to create provider profiles and

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

MEDICAID PROGRAM INTEGRITY

PROGRAM INTEGRITY (CONT'D.)

exception reports that identify excessive or aberrant billing practices.

A Program Integrity review can cover several years' worth of paid claims data. (See "Records/Documentation Requirements" in this section for the policy on Medicaid record retention.) The Division conducts payment reviews, analysis of provider payments, and review of provider records, using statistical sampling and overpayment estimation when feasible, to determine the following:

- Medical reasonableness and necessity of the service provided
- Compliance with Medicaid program coverage and payment policies
- Compliance with state and federal Medicaid laws and regulations
- Compliance with accepted medical coding conventions, procedures, and standards
- Whether the amount, scope, and duration of the services billed to Medicaid are fully documented in the provider's records

Most Program Integrity on-site reviews are unannounced. The medical records and all other necessary documents obtained/received from the provider must contain documentation sufficient to disclose the extent of services delivered, medical necessity, appropriateness of treatment, and quality of care. Program Integrity staff thoroughly review all the documentation and notify the provider of the post-payment review results.

If the Program Integrity review finds that excessive, improper, or unnecessary payments have been made to a provider, the provider will be required to refund the overpayment or have it taken from subsequent Medicaid reimbursement. Failure to provide sufficient medical records within the timeframe allowed, or refusal to allow access to records, will also result in denial of the claim(s) involved, and Medicaid reimbursement for these claims must be refunded. Even if a provider terminates his or her agreement with Medicaid, the provider is still liable for any penalties or refunds identified by a Program Integrity review or audit. Failure to repay an identified overpayment may result in termination or exclusion from the Medicaid

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

MEDICAID PROGRAM INTEGRITY

PROGRAM INTEGRITY (CONT'D.)

program and other sanctions, which will be reported to the Federal Office of Inspector General (OIG).

For claims selected for a Program Integrity review, the provider cannot void, replace, or tamper with any claim records and documentation until the review is finalized.

Providers who disagree with the review findings are instructed to follow the process outlined in the certified letter of notification. The process affords providers the opportunity to discuss and/or present evidence to support their Medicaid claims.

RECOVERY AUDIT CONTRACTOR

The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Program Integrity, has contracted with a Recovery Audit Contractor to assist in identifying and collecting improper payments paid to providers as a result of billing errors as referenced in 42 CFR 476.71. Section 6411(a) of the Affordable Care Act, Expansion of the Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) Program amends section 1902(a) (42) of the Social Security Act and requires States to establish a RAC program to enable the auditing of claims for services furnished by Medicaid providers. Pursuant to the statute, these Medicaid RACs must: (1) identify overpayments; (2) recoup overpayments; and (3) identify underpayments. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) published the final rule implementing this provision, with an effective date of January 1, 2012. States are required to contract with Medicaid RACs "in the same manner as the Secretary enters into contracts" with the Medicare Recovery Auditors. For example, the contingency fee paid to the Medicaid RAC may not exceed that of the highest fee paid to a Medicare Recovery Auditor.

Under this rule, State contracts with Medicaid Recovery Audit Contractors must include the following requirements (or the State must obtain an exemption from CMS for the requirement):

- That each Medicaid RAC hires a minimum of 1.0 FTE Contractor Medical Director who is a Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Osteopathy licensed to practice in that State.
- That each Medicaid RAC also hires certified coders (unless the State determines that certified coders are

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MEDICAID PROGRAM INTEGRITY

RECOVERY AUDIT CONTRACTOR (CONT'D.)

not required for the effective review of Medicaid claims)

- An education and outreach program for providers, including notification of audit policies and protocols
- Minimum customer service measures such as a toll-free telephone number for providers and mandatory acceptance of provider submissions of electronic medical records on CD/DVD or via facsimile at the providers' request
- Notifying providers of overpayment findings within 60 calendar days
- A 3 year maximum claims look-back period and
- A State-established limit on the number and frequency of medical records requested by a RAC.

HMS (Health Management Systems, Inc.) is the current Recovery Audit Contractor for the SCDHHS Division of Program Integrity.

BENEFICIARY EXPLANATION OF MEDICAL BENEFITS PROGRAM

The Beneficiary Explanation of Medical Benefits Program allows Medicaid beneficiaries the opportunity to participate in the detection of fraud and abuse. Each month the Division of Program Integrity randomly selects four hundred beneficiaries for whom claims for services were paid. These beneficiaries are provided with an Explanation of Medical Benefits that lists all non-confidential services that were billed as having been delivered to them and which were paid during the previous 45-day period. Beneficiaries are requested to verify that they received the services listed. The Division of Program Integrity investigates any provider when the beneficiary denies having received the services.

BENEFICIARY OVERSIGHT

The Division of Program Integrity identifies beneficiaries who may be misusing or overusing Medicaid services. Claims for services provided to identified persons are analyzed for patterns of possible fraudulent or abusive use of services. Referral to the State Attorney General's Office or other law enforcement agencies for investigation will be made based on the severity of the misuse. When a referral is not warranted, an educational letter may be sent to the beneficiary encouraging them to select a primary care

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MEDICAID PROGRAM INTEGRITY

BENEFICIARY OVERSIGHT (CONT'D.)

physician and one pharmacy to ensure they receive quality care from a health care provider of their choice.

Complaints pertaining to beneficiaries' misuse of Medicaid services can be reported using the Fraud and Abuse Hotline (1-888-364-3224) or fraud email at fraudres@scdhhs.gov.

MEDICAID BENEFICIARY LOCK-IN PROGRAM

SCDHHS implemented a Medicaid Beneficiary Lock-In Program in December 2008. The purpose of the Beneficiary Lock-In Program is to address issues such as coordination of care, patient safety, quality of care, improper or excessive utilization of benefits, and potential fraud and abuse associated with the use of multiple pharmacies and prescribers. The policy implements SC Code of Regulations R 126-425. The Division of Program Integrity reviews beneficiary profiles in order to identify patterns of inappropriate, excessive, or duplicative use of pharmacy services, such as using four or more pharmacies in a six-month period. If beneficiaries meet the lock-in criteria established by SCDHHS, they will be placed in the Medicaid Lock-In Program for one year to monitor their drug utilization and to require them to utilize one designated pharmacy. The beneficiary has the opportunity to select a pharmacy and has the right to appeal. The pharmacy provider selected is also notified of the lock-in, so that adequate time is allowed for selection of another provider should the first provider find he or she cannot provide the needed services.

DIVISION OF AUDITS

Medicaid providers, who contract with SCDHHS for services, including state agencies, may be audited by the SCDHHS Division of Audits. The SCDHHS Division of Audits was formed to assist the agency in the management, assessment, and improvement of agency programs, services, and operations. The Division of Audits accomplishes these goals by continuously reviewing and evaluating programs administered by SCDHHS to determine the extent to which fiscal, administrative, and programmatic objectives are met in a cost-effective manner.

In performing its audits, the Division of Audits follows generally accepted auditing standards (GAGAS). The Division of Audits performs different types of audits of Medicaid providers and programs, including:

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MEDICAID PROGRAM INTEGRITY

DIVISION OF AUDITS (CONT'D.)

- Performance audits that provide an independent assessment of the program outcomes and the management of resources. These audits address the effectiveness, efficiency, and adequacy of program results.
- Audits of contracts with health care providers and other state agencies to ensure compliance with contract terms and conditions for Medicaid service delivery and administration

Audits to confirm the accuracy and allowability of costs and other financial information reported to SCDHHS

PAYMENT ERROR RATE MEASUREMENT

The South Carolina Medicaid program, along with the Medicaid programs in other states, is required to comply with the CMS Payment Error Rate Measurement (PERM) program, which was implemented in federal fiscal year 2007. Each state will be reviewed every three years. PERM requires states to submit a statistically valid sample of paid Medicaid claims to a federal contractor, which will review for compliance with payment rates and state Medicaid policies, and will determine whether medical necessity for the service is adequately documented in the medical record. Providers who are chosen for the sample will be required to submit all applicable medical records for review; however, for most providers only one claim will be chosen for the sample. Providers who fail to send in the requested documentation will face recoupment of the Medicaid payment for the claim in question. In addition, if the CMS PERM contractor determines that a Medicaid claim was paid in error, SCDHHS will be required to recoup the payment for that claim. PERM will combine the errors found in each state in order to establish a national Medicaid error rate.

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

MEDICAID ANTI-FRAUD PROVISIONS / PAYMENT SUSPENSION / PROVIDER EXCLUSIONS / TERMINATIONS

FRAUD

The South Carolina Medicaid program operates under the anti-fraud provisions of 42 US Code §1320a-7b. This federal law relates to both fraud and abuse of the program and identifies illegal acts, penalties for violations, and the individuals and/or entities liable under this section.

The Division of Program Integrity carries out SCDHHS responsibilities concerning suspected Medicaid fraud as required by 42 CFR Part 455, Subpart A. Program Integrity must conduct a preliminary investigation and cooperate with the state and federal authorities in the referral, investigation, and prosecution of suspected fraud in the Medicaid program. SCDHHS refers suspected cases of Medicaid fraud by health care providers to the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit of the State Attorney General's Office for investigation and possible prosecution. SCDHHS also makes referrals to the Bureau of Drug Control for suspected misuse or overprescribing of prescription drugs, especially controlled substances. If a provider suspected of fraud or abuse is also enrolled in a Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO), Program Integrity will coordinate the investigation with the MCO(s) involved. Suspected Medicaid fraud on the part of a beneficiary is referred to a Medicaid Recipient Fraud Unit in the State Attorney General's Office for investigation.

PAYMENT SUSPENSION

Medicaid payments to a provider may be withheld upon credible allegation of fraud, in accordance with the requirements in 42 CFR §455.23.

Suspension of Provider Payments for Credible Allegation of Fraud

SCDHHS will suspend payments in cases of a credible allegation of fraud. A "credible allegation of fraud" is an allegation that has been verified by SCDHHS and that comes from any source, including but not limited to the following:

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MEDICAID ANTI-FRAUD PROVISIONS / PAYMENT SUSPENSION / PROVIDER EXCLUSIONS /TERMINATIONS

Suspension of Provider Payments for Credible Allegation of Fraud (Cont'd.)

- Fraud hotline complaints
- Claims data mining
- Patterns identified through provider audits, civil false claims cases, and law enforcement investigations

SCDHHS has flexibility in determining what constitutes a "credible allegation of fraud." Allegations are considered to be credible when they have indications of reliability based upon SCDHHS' review of the allegations, facts, and evidence on a case-by-case basis.

Notice of Suspension

SCDHHS will suspend all Medicaid payments to a provider after the agency determines there is a credible allegation of fraud for which an investigation is pending under the Medicaid program against an individual or entity. Payments may be suspended without first notifying the provider of the intention to suspend payments. SCDHHS will send notice of its suspension of program payments within the following timeframes:

- Within five business days of suspending the payment, unless requested in writing by a law enforcement agency to temporarily withhold such notice
- Within 30 calendar days of suspending the payment, if requested by law enforcement in writing to delay sending such notice

The Notice of Payment Suspension will include all information required to be provided in accordance with 42 CFR §455.23.

All suspension of payment actions will be temporary and will not continue after either of the following:

- SCDHHS or the prosecuting authorities determine that there is insufficient evidence of fraud by the provider
- Legal proceedings related to the provider's alleged fraud are completed

Referrals to the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit

Whenever an investigation leads to the initiation of a payment suspension in whole or part, SCDHHS will make a fraud referral to the South Carolina Medicaid Fraud Control Unit ("MFCU").

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MEDICAID ANTI-FRAUD PROVISIONS / PAYMENT SUSPENSION / PROVIDER EXCLUSIONS /TERMINATIONS

Good Cause not to Suspend Payments or to Suspend Only in Part

SCDHHS may find that good cause exists not to suspend payments, or not to continue a payment suspension previously imposed on an individual or entity regarding a credible allegation of fraud, if any of the following are applicable:

- Law enforcement officials have specifically requested that a payment suspension not be imposed because such a payment suspension may compromise or jeopardize an investigation;
- Other available remedies implemented by SCDHHS will more effectively or quickly protect Medicaid funds;
- SCDHHS determines, based upon the submission of written evidence by the individual or entity that is the subject of the payment suspension, that the suspension should be removed;
- SCDHHS determines that beneficiary access to items or services would be jeopardized by a payment suspension for either of the following reasons:
    - An individual or entity is the sole community physician or the sole source of essential specialized services in a community;
    - The individual or entity serves a large number of beneficiary's within a medically underserved area, as designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Law enforcement declines to certify that a matter continues to be under investigation;
- SCDHHS determines that payment suspension is not in the best interests of the Medicaid program.

SCDHHS may also find that good cause exists to suspend payments in part, or to convert a payment suspension previously imposed in whole to one only in part, on any individual or entity regarding a credible allegation of fraud, if any of the following are applicable:

- SCDHHS determines that beneficiary access to items or services would be jeopardized by a payment suspension for either of the following reasons:

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MEDICAID ANTI-FRAUD PROVISIONS / PAYMENT SUSPENSION / PROVIDER EXCLUSIONS /TERMINATIONS

Good Cause not to Suspend Payments or to Suspend Only in Part (Cont'd.)

- An individual or entity is the sole community physician or the sole source of essential specialized services in a community;
- The individual or entity serves beneficiaries within a medically underserved area, as designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

- SCDHHS determines, based upon the submission of written evidence by the individual or entity that is the subject of a whole payment suspension, that such suspension should be imposed only in part.
- SCDHHS determines the following:
  - The credible allegation focuses solely and definitively on only a specific type of claim or arises from only a specific business unit of a provider; and
  - A payment suspension in part would effectively ensure that potentially fraudulent claims were not continuing to be paid. If this determination is made by SCDHHS, it will be documented in writing.
- Law enforcement declines to certify that a matter continues to be under investigation.
- SCDHHS determines that payment suspension is not in the best interest of the Medicaid program.

Even if SCDHHS exercises the good cause exceptions set forth above, this does not relieve the agency of its obligation to refer a credible allegation of fraud to the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit.

PROVIDER EXCLUSIONS

Federal regulations that give States the authority to exclude providers for fraud and abuse in the Medicaid program are found at 42 CFR Part 1002, Subparts A and B. Exclusion means that a health care provider, either an individual practitioner or facility, organization, institution, business, or other type of entity, cannot receive Medicaid payment for any health care services rendered. Exclusions from Medicaid, as well as the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), may be the result of:

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MEDICAID ANTI-FRAUD PROVISIONS / PAYMENT SUSPENSION / PROVIDER EXCLUSIONS /TERMINATIONS

PROVIDER EXCLUSIONS (CONT'D.)

- Conviction of a criminal offense related to delivery of services in a health care program
- Conviction of health care fraud under either Federal or State laws
- Conviction of the patient neglect or abuse in connection with delivery of health care
- Excessive claims or furnishing of unnecessary or substandard items and services
- Failure to comply with financial responsibilities and obligations
- Adverse action by a licensing board

Exclusions can be initiated by either federal authorities such as the US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General (OIG) or by the State Medicaid agency. An excluded individual may be a licensed medical professional, such as a physician, dentist, or nurse, but exclusion is not limited to these types of individuals. The ban on Medicaid funding can extend to any individual or entity providing services that are related to and reimbursed, directly or indirectly, by a Medicaid program.

In addition, the OIG and/or SCDHHS may exclude an entity, including managed care organizations, if someone who is an owner, an officer, an agent, a director, a partner, or a managing employee of the entity has been excluded.

Any medical provider, organization, or entity that accepts Medicaid funding, or that is involved in administering the Medicaid program, should screen all employees and contractors to determine whether any of them have been excluded. Any individual or entity which employs or contracts with an excluded provider cannot claim Medicaid reimbursement for any items or services furnished, authorized, or prescribed by the excluded provider.

Federal regulations further require that any party who is excluded from participation in Medicare under 42 CFR Part 1001 must also be excluded from the Medicaid program. Medicaid payment is not available for services furnished directly by, or under the supervision of, an excluded party.

The OIG maintains the LEIE (List of Excluded Individuals and Entities), a database accessible to the general public that

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PROVIDER EXCLUSIONS (CONT'D.)

provides information about parties excluded from participation in Medicare, Medicaid, and all other Federal health care programs. Visit the OIG Web site at http://www.oig.hhs.gov/fraud/exclusions.asp to search and/or download the LEIE.

SCDHHS also maintains its own list of excluded, South Carolina-only Medicaid providers (or those with a South Carolina connection) on our Web site. Visit the Provider Information page at http://provider.scdhhs.gov for the most current list of individuals or entities excluded from South Carolina Medicaid.

PROVIDER TERMINATIONS

"Termination" means that the SCDHHS has taken an action to revoke a provider's Medicaid billing privileges, the provider has exhausted all applicable appeal rights or the timeline for appeal has expired, and there is no expectation on the part of the provider or SCDHHS that the revocation is temporary. Under Federal regulations established by the Affordable Care Act, SCDHHS has established the reasons under which a provider can be terminated from the Medicaid program "for cause"; see SCDHHS PE Policy-03, Terminations.

ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS

State regulations concerning administrative sanctions in the Medicaid program are found in South Carolina Regulations at Chapter 126, Article 4, Subarticle 1. SCDHHS may impose one or more of the following sanctions against a provider who has been determined to have abused the program:

- Educational intervention
- Post payment review
- Prepayment review
- Peer review
- Financial sanctions, including recoupment of overpayment or inappropriate payment
- Termination or exclusion
- Referral to licensing/certifying boards or agencies

SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

MEDICAID ANTI-FRAUD PROVISIONS / PAYMENT SUSPENSION / PROVIDER EXCLUSIONS /TERMINATIONS

OTHER FINANCIAL PENALTIES

The State Attorney General's Office may also impose financial penalties and damages against a provider who has been determined to be guilty of fraud or convicted of a crime related to participation in the Medicaid or Medicare programs.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS), Office of Inspector General (OIG), may also impose civil money penalties and assessments under the provisions of 42 CFR Part 1003

FAIR HEARINGS

Proposed South Carolina initiated exclusion or termination from the Medicaid program, as well as recoupment of an overpayment identified by Program Integrity, may be appealed within 30 days of imposition of the sanction. (See "Appeals Procedures" elsewhere in this section.)

Any party who has been excluded or terminated from the Medicaid program as a result of a similar action by Medicare may exercise appeal rights as set forth in the written notice from the USDHHS OIG. Appeals to the OIG shall be processed in accordance with 42 CFR 1001.2007. A party so excluded shall have no right to separate appeal before SCDHHS.

REINSTATEMENT

Re-enrollment in Medicaid by formerly excluded providers is not automatic. The CFR [42 CFR 1002.215(a)] gives states the right to review requests for reinstatement and to grant or deny the requests.

Before a request for re-enrollment in Medicaid will be considered, the provider must have an active, valid license to practice and must not be excluded from Medicaid or Medicare by the federal government (USDHHS OIG). It is the provider's responsibility to satisfy these requirements. If the individual was excluded by the Office of Inspector General (HHS-OIG), then the individual must first apply to HHS-OIG for reinstatement and follow any federal requirements.

SCDHHS may deny reinstatement to the Medicaid program based on, but not limited to, any one or a combination of the following:

1. The likelihood that the events that led to exclusion will re-occur.

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REINSTATEMENT (CONT'D.)

2. If, since the date of the original exclusion, the provider has been convicted of fraud related to the delivery of services in a healthcare program, or has been convicted or had his license suspended or revoked due to failure to follow standards of care and/or patient harm or abuse.
3. If new information is provided that such conduct (as described above) occurred prior to the date of the exclusion but was not known to SCDHHS at the time.
4. If the provider has been excluded or had billing privileges terminated from Medicaid and/or Medicare by any state or by the US DHHS OIG.
5. Any terms or conditions associated with reinstatement by the appropriate licensing board or regulatory agency, or by the HHS-OIG.
6. Whether all fines, overpayments, or any other debts owed to the Medicaid program have been paid or arrangements have been made to fulfill these obligations.

All requests for re-enrollment in Medicaid will be considered by SCDHHS on an individual basis and on their own merit.

Any appeal of a denial of reinstatement will be in accordance with SCDHHS appeals policies and procedures as provided by South Carolina Code of Laws R. 126-150.

A terminated provider will also be required to reapply and be reenrolled with the Medicaid program if they wish billing privileges to be reinstated.

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APPEALS

SCDHHS maintains procedures ensuring that all Medicaid providers will be granted an opportunity for a fair hearing. These procedures may be found in South Carolina Regulations at Chapter 126, Article 1, Subarticle 3. An appeal hearing may be requested by a provider when a request for payment for services is denied or when the amount of such payment is in controversy.

The South Carolina Medicaid appeals process is not a reconsideration or claims review process. It is a formal process that should be considered as an avenue of last resort to be used in attempting to resolve or settle a dispute(s). Providers should contact the PSC or submit an online inquiry for assistance to resolve or settle a dispute(s) before requesting an administrative hearing.

In accordance with regulations of SCDHHS, a provider wishing to file an appeal must send a letter requesting a hearing along with a copy of the notice of adverse action or the remittance advice reflecting the denial in question. Letters requesting an appeal hearing should be sent to the following address:

Division of Appeals and Hearings
Department of Health and Human Services
PO Box 8206
Columbia, SC 29202-8206

The request for an appeal hearing must be made within 30 days of the date of receipt of the notice of adverse action or 30 days from receipt of the remittance advice reflecting the denial, whichever is later. Hearings will be held in Columbia unless otherwise arranged. The appellant or appellant's representative must be present at the appeal hearing.

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