

MA Health Care Training Forum Summer 2024 Meeting

Health Safety Net and MassHealth Updates Transcription

[Health Safety Net (HSN) Updates July 2024]

Sue Kane: Good morning, everyone. It's 10:00. I would like to welcome you to the MassHealth and Health Safety Nets updates meeting. Thank you for joining us today. I'm Sue Kane from the Massachusetts Health Care Training Forum team, and I'll be facilitating today's meeting. Our presenters today are Lydia Sweetser, Policy Analyst at the Health Safety Net and Kara Chiev, Manager of MassHealth External Training and Communications. Lydia Sweetser: Thank you Sue. Hello, everybody, my name is Lydia Sweetser, and I am a Policy Analyst for the Health Safety Net.

[Health Safety Net Agenda]

Today, we're just going to go over a few things, including the cybersecurity attack, some claims reprocessing, miscellaneous updates, and some general information.

[Cyber Security Attack]

So, regarding the cybersecurity attack, to ensure the safety and security for any Health Safety Net facility that has granted Change HealthCare access to perform INET functions, the Health Safety Net has deactivated accessibility due to the potential cybersecurity attack at Change HealthCare. Therefore, this contact permission is no longer active within INET. So, if your facility does not have the necessary access to perform the INET functions, please reach out to the Helpdesk. And as a best business practice, the Health Safety Net would like to remind facilities that any facility utilizing a billing company or billing intermediary to submit an 837 file to MassHealth or the Health Safety Net, your facility may want to consider submitting electronic 837 files or claims directly as an alternative method when issues like this arise. If you want to implement direct claims submissions as an alternative method, please fill out the necessary document, the Health Safety Net User Agreement, and forward to the Health Safety Net Helpdesk email.

[MMIS Reprocessed/HSN Resweep (slide 1 of 2)]

So, in MMIS we have reprocessed and reswepted many claims, so the following codes were inappropriately denied in MMIS as a non-covered procedure code for the Health Safety Net benefit plans. So, the following codes have been recently reprocessed for adjudication and potential adjudication / payment through the Health Safety Net payment systems. So that's going to be code 90671, 90677, 19325, 49591, 73522, 95708 and G2066.

[MMIS Reprocessed/HSN Resweep (slide 2 of 2)]

Additionally, any claims billed with the procedure code 99211 that were inappropriately paid at a \$0 rate for Community Health Center providers in the Health Safety Net system, those have been identified and those will be reprocessed in the September remits.

[TeleHealth Policy – HSN]

Regarding our Telehealth Policy, the Health Safety Net will reimburse telehealth services at parity with their in-person counterparts, including services provided through live-video, audio-only or asynchronous visits that otherwise meet billing criteria, including use of required modifiers. So, Health Safety Net's telehealth policy is mirroring the policy set forth through all, through MassHealth All Provider Bulletin 374 that is linked above. The HPV Vaccine Code 90651 has also been aligned to MassHealth's policy. So, the Health Safety Net will cover this vaccine for individuals aged 19 through 45 and for children under 19, this vaccine is available free of charge through the Massachusetts Immunization Program. An internal issue has been identified regarding pharmacy claims where certain POPS payments were not included within the HSN remits. We are working on rectifying the issue; during this time, the expectation is that the August remits will include such payments. For facilities who utilize Billing Intermediaries, please notify your Billing Intermediary that the HSN POPS remit for August may be larger than normal.

[General Information]

And we have some general information links here that can help you find more information regarding the Health Safety Net, our billing updates.

[HSN Help Desk]

And this is the information for our Help Desk if you have any further questions. Thank you.

[MassHealth Updates July 2024]

Kara Chiev: Good morning, everyone, and welcome and glad to see you for this quarter's MTF, the MassHealth updates portion of the webinar. As Sue mentioned, I'll be providing you this quarter's updates. Just quickly to those in the audience that's joining for the first time, I want to welcome you and let you know that the information you'll be hearing today applies to MassHealth applicants and members. If you are a MassHealth provider and you want additional information specific to our MassHealth Provider community like billing, how to submit claims to MassHealth and policy specific to MassHealth providers, don't forget to review the MassHealth Provider Updates presentation that will be posted on the MTF website. Also, make sure to sign up and attend their webinar next quarter to get your questions answered.

[MassHealth Agenda]

Going on to today's agenda, that includes an update to MassHealth CommonHealth plus Medicare Savings Program that was formerly our MassHealth Buy-In program. We do have a new Hardship Waiver for a Period of Ineligibility. And lastly, systems update at MAhealthconnector.org. That is the online integrated application, and it will be updated tomorrow, and you'll hear more and see some screenshots of the new interface.

[CommonHealth and Medicare Savings Program (MSP)]

So, going on to the updates related to CommonHealth and Medicare Savings Program.

[Medicare Savings Programs (MSP)]

Quickly, for those unfamiliar with our Medicare Savings Program, the Medicare Savings Program helps qualified Medicare beneficiaries pay for their Medicare costs, helping to lower the Medicare premium and other health care costs, including prescriptions. Medicare Savings Programs are not insurance plans, and there are three different types of MSP, they include QMB, that's the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary, formerly the MassHealth Senior Buy-In program that pays for Medicare Part A premium. If you have

one, most people will not, and the Medicare Part B premium and cost sharing that's paying for some of the cost of things like co-pays, deductibles and or premiums. If the member has QMB, medical providers are not permitted to bill for Medicare co-pays and deductibles. This includes Medicare Advantage plan providers. However, the member can still be charged a pharmacy copay. Going over the SLMB program, that's the Specified Low Income Medicare Beneficiary and the Qualifying Individual (QI), those are formally MassHealth Buy-In, they pay for the Medicare Part B premium. Enrolling in any of the MSP also automatically provides drug coverage with low copays, if, it also lets Medicare beneficiaries sign up for Medicare Part B at any point in the year without paying any financial penalty, penalties for signing up late. Some people may qualify for Medicare, MSP and full MassHealth coverage that includes MassHealth Standard or MassHealth CommonHealth. These are insurance programs and can be used alone or combined with their Medicare coverage. Unlike MSP, MassHealth provides additional coverage and services not offered by Medicare. Back in March of 2024 the asset test for MSP benefit was eliminated, just a quick reminder. In going over today's update, this speaks to Medicare beneficiaries who qualify for the MassHealth Commonwealth, plus MSP QI program. To be eligible, their income would fall at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Level, which in 2024 is equal to \$1,695 a month for an individual. Going onto the next slide.

[MassHealth Requirements]

So federally, federal regulations does not allow MassHealth to provide MSP to CommonHealth members with income above 135% of FPL. During the Public Health Emergency, MassHealth was required to maintain coverage for all members and CommonHealth members with income above 135% of FPL maintained their coverage. So, starting July, MassHealth will send an informational letter to members letting them know of the change. This letter will go to CommonHealth plus QI members who are over income, so their income is above 135% of FPL. In the letter, it will provide an FAQ, also options members may decide to take and resources they can contact SHINE counselors to understand their options, or they can call MassHealth. This informational letter is not a termination notice. It is, and it is not an appealable, an appealable letter. It is just to let the member know that they are over income and steps that they may want to take to maintain depending on their need, their health care need, options that they may have access to.

[Member Options (slide 1 of 4)]

The next set of slides are the options that members may decide that they want to take. The first one here is that the member may decide to keep their Medicare Savings Program benefit, and if their countable income is above 135% of FPL, but under the income limits listed in the table here, they may stay qualify, they may still qualify for MSP only. In this situation, the member will need to call MassHealth and cancel or voluntarily withdraw their CommonHealth first. So, they do need to take an action. They do need to call MassHealth to let us know that they want to withdraw their CommonHealth. Going onto the next slide.

[Member Options (slide 2 of 4)]

The other option members may decide to take is keep their MassHealth CommonHealth. So, depending on their health care need, such as, they may need long term care services such as the PCA program, the personal care attendant program, which in this situation the member does not need to contact MassHealth, they don't need to do anything. The third option is if they may want to apply for the Frail Elder Waiver program, which is a Home and Community-Based Waiver program that provides frail elders, age 60 and older access to the services and supports they need to live successfully in the community. FEW supports individuals with a variety of needs that can be met with supports ranging from basic to intensive levels. FEW is a MassHealth program, and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs is responsible for the day-to-day operations of this waiver program.

[Member Options (slide 3 of 4)]

Here is the next slide. provides how to qualify for FEW. So, the Frail Elder Waiver program is available to those members 60 and over. They do need to meet clinical requirements, need FEW services, be able to safely be served in the community, meet the financial requirements to qualify for MassHealth Standard in the community, though there are special financial rules for waiver applicants and participants.

[Member Options (slide 4 of 4)]

And here the member may opt to enroll in the Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly, that's the PACE program, which is administered by MassHealth and Medicare, providing a wide range of medical, social, recreational and wellness services to eligible

participants. You don't need to be on MassHealth to enroll in PACE. However, if you meet the income and asset guidelines, you may be eligible for MassHealth and MassHealth may pay for the PACE premium. So, the goal of PACE is to allow participants to live safely in their home instead of in a nursing, nursing facility. As far as how to enroll, the member needs to be 55 or older, live in the service area of the PACE organization, be certified by the state as eligible for a nursing home care, they are living in the community, they're not in a facility. Be able to live safely in the community. They have to agree to receive health services through the PACE org and meet the Social Security Act Disability standards if they're 55 to 64.

[Notices and Resources]

So, going into September this fall, MassHealth will no longer pay the Medicare Part B premium for members with income above 135% of FPL. Again, these are for the currently CommonHealth plus QI members. Notices will be sent to them in early fall in the top six languages based on their language preference. That includes Chinese, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Brazilian, Portuguese and Vietnamese. Again, as far as resources members may contact, may want to contact SHINE counselors. SHINE stands for Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone. They provide free health insurance information to all Medicare beneficiaries. They can call or reach out to SHINE counselors by calling MassOptions or visiting SHINE's website to locate, to locate a SHINE nearest them. Or members can call MassHealth for any questions related to their CommonHealth and MSP QI benefits.

[New Hardship Waiver for a Period of Ineligibility]

So, moving gear to the New Hardship Waiver for a Period of Ineligibility.

[New Hardship Waiver for a Period of Ineligibility (slide 1 of 2)]

If MassHealth has determined that a disqualifying transfer of resources has occurred, MassHealth will calculate a period of ineligibility in compliance with federal rules effective May 24th of 2024. Members or applicants seeking a nursing facility services can request a hardship waiver of a disqualifying transfer penalty period. A disqualifying transfer penalty period is any transfer of assets during the appropriate lookback period by the applicant or the member or the spouse of a resource or interest in a resource owned by or is available to the applicant or a member or the spouse. This could also include the home or a former, the former home of the applicant or member or the

spouse for less than market value. If they meet criteria, MassHealth may waive the entire imposed period of ineligibility or a portion of the period of ineligibility. So, you can find this information, the requirements for the hardship waiver request at MassHealth regulation at 130 CMR 520.019.

[New Hardship Waiver for a Period of Ineligibility (slide 2 of 2)]

The request should include a completed MassHealth request for a Hardship Waiver of a Period of Ineligibility. This form is posted online at MassHealth website, and you have the link here in the chat. The request should also include all documentation should be considered in support of the hardship waiver request, the request form and supporting documentation should be submitted together within 15 days of the notice date. Okay, so the links to that, the information, the hardship waiver request is in the chat for, for you too easy access and moving on to the next slide.

[MAhealthconnector.org System Updates]

Let's get out of all the policy and get you into, some systems updates.

[MAHealthconnector.org System Updates]

As I mentioned, tomorrow MAhealthconnector.org or HIX will be updated. HIX is the single integrated process to determine eligibility for the full range of health insurance programs including MassHealth, the Health Connector, Health Safety Net, or HSN, and the Children's Medical Security Program for applicants and members younger than 65. This update will include modernization, which is really streamlining and simplifying the member and Assister experience. Certified Application Counselors, CACs, and Navigators that have access to the online application. So, following any systems release or update, members with an account and Assisters should clear their cache or internet history before accessing the online application or the Assister Portal for a better web experience. For those unfamiliar or don't know how to clear your history, your browser history, there is instruction on how to do that in the Getting Started Guide at MAhealthconnector.org. So, moving into this quarters, or this release update, it includes address updates and interface updates.

[Updating Mailing Address]

So, let's talk about the address update first. For many quarters within the MTF meetings, I've brought and asked folks or reminded folks to help members update their

address, their mailing address with us. That really ensures members are receiving notices that are sent, specifically those notices that do require action, such as renewal notices, request for additional information notices. So, it's really important that we have their latest mailing address. So, in a previous release, that was Release 28, a banner message was added to alert members or account holders to confirm or update their mailing address within 15 days, through a data match. So, we found mailing address that was different than what MassHealth had on file. And as such, this new banner message would alert the member to that information. So, in this release, Release 29, members will have 30 days. So, we've extended the timeline for when they would need to update or verify their mailing address. Here is the sample screenshot of that message. When the user moves to the "Click here" the confirm or update their address, it will navigate that user to additional instructions and the reported change feature where they can update their mailing address.

[Address Change]

So, going on to the next slide, if the member doesn't take an action, they may be terminated and will be sent a notice for one of the following reasons: "Whereabouts unknown" or "Moved out of state." So, "Whereabouts unknown" is that we weren't able to confirm their mailing address, and we received return mail for them. Or they moved out of state, in which case we found a mailing address that was outside of Massachusetts, as they may have, there was a data match for those address. So just as a reminder, to qualify for MassHealth the person needs to be a Massachusetts resident or they intend to reside in Massachusetts., and they will have 45 days to submit their renewal online, by paper or calling MassHealth.

[Returned MassHealth Renewal Notice Due to Incorrect Mailing Address]

As I mentioned, MassHealth receives a lot of return mail, such as when we're sending out notices for RFIs, Requests for Information, address updates or renewal, because we didn't have the most updated mailing address for that member. So MassHealth will attempt to notify the members of the need to update mailing address by email. If an email is available, text or notices. So, we'll send the notice to the new address as well as the current mailing address that we have on file. When a renewal notice is returned, HIX will display the new banner message alerting the member, an account holder, or the Assister that the member will need to update or confirm their mailing address. They have 30 days to update or confirm that information with MassHealth. This needs to be

done by contacting MassHealth by phone, or they can write us a letter confirming that, letting us know which of the mailing address is correct, or they can do it in person at any of the MassHealth Enrollment Centers to update the address and request reinstatement of their benefits. If they qualify for reinstatement, a new renewal packet will be sent to the member using the confirmed or updated mailing address and they will have 45 days to submit their renewal online, by paper or calling MassHealth.

[User Interface Update]

So, moving on to the Interface Updates. The next set of screenshots are sample screenshots of what the system will look like. Really the, the questions that members and Assisters will see after tomorrow. So, this interface update is really looking to improve that user experience, providing a more streamlined and intuitive for users. Adding plain language and accessibility improvements, there'll be less text on the main screen, new tooltips for complex topics and other opportunities for users to learn more about certain information. So, this is really going to provide a more modern user interface for both our members and our Assister community.

[System Updates: Landing Page]

Going on to the next slide. Here, you'll see a sample screenshot of the landing page for, for MA HIX. That logon page, as you'll notice, the current landing page there's a lot of text and there's a lot of uncertainty as far as which button to select when you get to this page. Moving into the new interface, as you'll notice, the "Apply Now" has clear instructions as far as who should be clicking that button, and the sign button is right next to it. So, for those that do have an account in MAhealthconnector.org they can just sign in, even if you've had an account three years ago you can continue to use that account. Update your, your information if you need to, request or submit a new application. So additionally, at the bottom of that screenshot there are, also you'll notice new icons that will be used throughout the application. Simpler to understand and they do stand out as far as what information you'll get or be asked for. So, there's a lot more white space on the page and simplified text to help navigate through the system.

[New Dashboard (slide 1 of 2)]

Going into the next slide. Here is the sample snapshot of the, the, the Welcome page. This is the dashboard; this is the members dashboard. As you'll notice, the information

provided here it really is one long page, but not having enough for you to see. And you'll have the PDF that will be posted on the website too, to increase the size. But this is just an example to show you what you'll see come after the 25th. The first thing you'll notice is under the members' name and their ID is any next steps that they need to take. This will include renewals. If they have an upcoming renewal, it'll be displayed here at the top of the page and next to it, below it, any documents that they need to provide either to MassHealth or the Health Connector that will be listed for all the members within the household, these are there are RFIs. And there is a button to upload documents, so quick access to are, to their ability to upload and submit those documents quickly and easily to MassHealth. Below that is health and dental plans, what they're covered for, for the year, then any payments. So, premiums, if they have a MassHealth premium or a Health Connector premium that will be displayed here, easy access to that information. The next box is quick access to our Report a Change functionality. So, if they need to update their income, add a new member to their household, update their address, they can do it quickly from this dashboard. They'll also be able to review their eligibility, which program each member of their household, the household was found eligible for. And also at the bottom is contact information. So certified Assister's out in the audience, always an ask when you're meeting with members and you haven't seen them for a number of weeks or months confirm their contact information, making sure that the, their mailing address, their email address, phone number, home address is up to date and is correct.

[New Dashboard (slide 2 of 2)]

So, going on to the next screenshot. Here is the primary contact information that is displayed. I wanted to point this out really just to hone in on the updates that, that's been made, including dropdowns. There'll be dropdowns now, for example, in the language information, preferred spoken language, the member or new applicant can do a quick search for their language with this new tool as well as scroll down to find their, their spoken language. In addition, there are new tooltips. If you'll notice at the preferred written language next to it in blue is "How is it used?" If the member or the Assister clicks on this it will bring up additional text describing how this information is used. So here it says, when you click on "How it's used" it'll say preferred written language may be used by MassHealth and the Health Connector to communicate with you. You can visit this website, this webpage to see which language, which notice languages are available. If you select, "don't know" or skip this question, we will send

them in English. So, it does let the applicant and member know that if they, this is an optional question. If they don't select anything their notices will, will go out in English.

[Income Screen]

Going on to the next screenshot. Here is a new, updated dashboard, that's the Income screen. As you'll notice, as I mentioned, there'll be new icons. These are the new icons that is now in the system, making it easier for, for members and Assistors to quickly access or update that information. So here nothing is selected. At the top, right hand corner of each icon, you'll notice a plus sign, if you select that plus sign, so you need to update your job, you'll select that and that will be highlighted. As you can see here nothing is highlighted and underneath there's that continue with no income. So, if you don't highlight in any of these boxes, any of these icons, it means that there's no income to report. And you can click on "Continue" with no income to move through the next set of questions.

[Reporting Income]

So, going on to the next slide. Here's a sample of the same Income screen when, which the icon has been selected. So, the job, the job button and the unemployment icon was selected, they've been highlighted. If you need to deselect them, you don't have any updates, you selected by, by accident, you can deselect it by Xing it out at the top right-hand corner of that box. And here, as you'll notice, that button below these icons will now say "Save and continue." So once that's selected it will go into each of the questions related to updating job information or unemployment information.

[Application Summary Screen]

Going on to the next slide. Here is the eligibility result screen; this is the Summary screen. As I mentioned, as you'll notice, it is a lot more streamlined, the information is in plain language, simpler for members and applicants to understand the information. It will have eligibility information for each member of the household, what they were found eligible for, whether it is a MassHealth program or the Health Connector program. Here is an example of a Connector Care plan. So, all of that information is available on this screen. Additionally, if they need to submit any documents the RFI will be, will, that RFI information will also be available on this screen. And here's the, at the top right-hand corner of the screen, you'll notice the "Upload Document" button. If they need to submit any documents, they can do it quickly here.

[Summary Screen]

Okay. Here is the review application, this is basically the summary, the Application Summary screen of all the members in the household, the information they inputted into the application, the summary will be provided here for each member of that household. So, income type, projected income for the year, so that will be available for, for members and Assistants. This isn't the whole, I didn't bring the whole application, but just some key screenshots to give you some idea of what members and Assistants will experience when the system gets updated after tomorrow. So, what you'll experience and what the members will see in the application. The functionality has not been updated. This is really the, the user experience, the interface that's, that's been updated to streamline the application, the usability. Our systems team did test these screens. The questions with members and Advocates, so there was a lot of work in getting to, to where we're at right now for, for the systems update.

[Thank you!]

Sue Kane: I just want to thank everybody for joining us today and have a great rest of your day. Bye bye. Kara Chiev: Thanks, everyone.