

Texas CHIP Coalition Minutes  
Friday, November 12, 2004, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
Durham Conference Room, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Texas Medical Association

Anne Dunkelberg called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

HHSC Updates

Joanne Molina provided an update on the impact of the asset test for the period of August 24 – September 30, the first 5-week period since its implementation. For **applications**, *vehicles only* affected 23 cases or 45 children; *cash only* affected 71 cases or 139 children; and a combination of *cash and vehicles* affected 82 cases or 186 children. For **renewals**, *vehicles only* affected 1 case or 2 children; *cash only* affected 5 cases or 9 children; and a combination of *cash and vehicles* affected 6 cases or 18 children. However, applications “pending” (need more information regarding assets) at the end of the first 5 weeks included 7,709 accounts or 14,772 children. For renewals, there were 731 accounts pending.

Ms. Molina reported that HHSC would hold an executive meeting with Commissioner Hawkins on Thursday of the following week to discuss the disenrollment survey and the special study on cost-sharing, which make up the ICHP report. After this meeting, there will be a decision made on when to release the ICHP report.

Ms. Molina reported that letters regarding the suspension of premium payments for all families went out in October. ACS experienced a large volume of phone calls as a result, and reported that many families were confused. Some families believed that there would not be funding for CHIP if they did not pay their premiums. Some families are still paying their premiums as a result. Those payments are not being returned and instead families’ accounts are being credited. Currently, HHSC’s financial services division is still costing out options for revising premium policies, and any further dialogue with stakeholders (including the Coalition) regarding premium payments will occur after Commissioner Hawkins has been briefed on these options; no firm time line for this.

Ms. Molina also provided a toll-free phone number to reach the co-located Medicaid unit at ACS (TexCare), per request from several coalition members. The co-location unit is the group of state eligibility workers stationed at ACS that process TexCare applications deemed to Medicaid. Coalition members who work closely with families had previously reported that they did not have a direct phone number to reach the co-located unit when they wanted to check the

status of an application that had initially gone through TexCare/ACS. The phone number is 1-866-291-1258.

Other discussion included feedback on the Medicaid ID form, CHIP provider rules and the Preferred Drug List or PDL.

Ms. Molina asked if any feedback was received from coalition members regarding the proposal to send Medicaid ID forms to children once per 6 months (rather than monthly, the current practice). It was suggested that HHSC develop a communications plan, and that HHSC consider conducting informal focus groups with Medicaid doctors and clients to try and address any of the day-to-day activities that might cause problems with the new ID forms.

There was a brief discussion of the new CHIP provider rules. These rules were only shared with a small group of people, some coalition members. There are not too many changes and the new rules deal mostly with how providers will make appeals and complaints on HMO claim issues.

Helen Kent Davis with TMA reported that a letter would be sent to HHSC regarding complaints about the PDL. Doctors don't understand the new procedures and why they must seek extra approval for some of the prescriptions they give their patients that are on the PDL. For instance, an extra approval is required when the dosage or number of times the patient is prescribed to take a prescription is not what is approved according to the PDL. Also, any revisions or updates to the PDL are not being given to the doctors in timely manner and there are concerns about this as well.

#### CHIP Congress

Patti Everitt with CDF gave a brief summary of the CHIP Congress held on Wednesday, November 10. The CHIP Congress brought together key stakeholders from all over the state for the *Campaign to Restore CHIP* to develop an action plan for the legislative session. Patti reported that next steps included facilitating the advocacy day and to select a date for the event.

#### CHIP Principles

Anne provided copies of the most recent draft of the principles for the upcoming legislative session. There are some comments that Anne is still incorporating into the document and the final draft will be sent to the listserv next week.

#### Other Business

The next CHIP coalition meeting will be held on Friday, December 17 from 11:00am – 1:00 pm at TMA, May Owen Conference Room, 10<sup>th</sup> floor.

With no other agenda items, the CHIP Coalition meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.