

January 20, 2009 Directors' Conference Call

Medicaid School Based Services (SBS) Program—Jane Reagan

- The most current copy of Michigan's Medicaid SBS Program Policy is dated **January 1, 2009**. Almost every component of the program changed July 1st, so be sure your staff have the most current copy, available from the DCH web page or on John Dickey's MAASE web site at this link: <http://maase.pbwiki.com/Medicaid> He has posted sample forms, the powerpoint presentations on changes (not the ones by PCG), and a couple web links. If you have Medicaid forms or tips you'd like to share, get them to Dr. Dickey and they'll be available statewide.

What's New

- Today's Medicaid Policy Workgroup meeting has been cancelled.
- The formal direct communication and interaction of ISDs and Medicaid staff is changing. Supts. Jeff Siegel and Mike DeVault have appointed a smaller SBS Policy Group of ISD representatives (participants are not official yet) who will attend ~6 meetings a year in Lansing. I will continue to attend. This group will then be expected to share pertinent information with the Medicaid coordinators of your staff, (now called the Medicaid Implementers Group) so they can be fully informed on Medicaid expectations.
- Medicaid Coordinators/ Implementers Group—consists of at least 1 person from every ISD to attend approx. 6 meetings a year in Lansing or via phone. The first meeting was December 3rd. I am facilitating communications for and between those meetings. THANK YOU for providing me with names and email addresses of your reps. Every ISD is represented. Next meeting is Thursday February 26, 1:30pm to 3:30pm at Ingham ISD, Thorburn Education Center AB. Phone access will be available. More information later. Get your agenda items to me.
- PCG Issues in December and January. I received many emails last week indicating there were widespread and significant issues with the DCH Contractor for the SBS time studies. Issues like website being down for weeks; random moment packets arriving late; compliance reports not accessible; random moments packaged differently, requiring more of your staff time, etc. Supt. Siegel brought these issues up to DCH management and I also shared these issues with DCH. I hope there will be a statewide response explaining what happened, how it will be fixed, and suggest anything you can do to help keep things moving smoothly.

- Time studies are the main basis for future payments. Previously there was one time study each quarter with 800 statewide 'moments'. Now there are 12,000 moments quarterly, a 15-fold increase. We know this has required much more time expended by your staff, who also need to learn the changes related to the time studies, such as: Any person doing Medicaid reimbursable services must be placed in a time study. The staff (pool) lists must also be updated each quarter based on who's doing the work in your districts.
- The Speech licensure bill has passed and been signed by the Governor as PA 524 of 2008. As of this writing, I have not analyzed the bill, but understand it will allow TSLIs to apply for licensure FOR A SHORT WINDOW of time. Implementing this bill will probably take a long time. We need to assume nothing will change for Medicaid billing purposes for at least one year. A Speech Board needs to be formed; they need to pass rules and develop procedures for license applications, processing, and granting. We will share our analysis.
- Interim payments—nothing has changed in Medicaid requirements for the way you disburse your Medicaid monthly payments. You may receive reports from the contractor PCG listing LEA activity for Medicaid, but you still have the authority and discretion for dispersing those dollars.
- Training sessions for the SBS program have been scheduled for May 2009 all over the State. As far as I know, these will focus on financial information and how to compile your annual cost reports—targeted for business officials— but I think your Medicaid coordinator should attend. More details on that later.

QUESTION: “Can you tell us any more information on the speech licensure bill that was signed last month?”

REPLY from Jane Reagan: “We really have no new information other than what is summarized in my report. We know that Medicaid has traditionally recognized state licensure of professionals as justification for reimbursing their services; licensure has generally trumped other credentials. Our hope is that will happen with this situation as well.

Although we have not formally analyzed it, the bill apparently allows currently certified Teachers of Speech Language Impaired (TSLIs) to apply for speech licensure. But no licenses can be granted until many steps take place, including: Governor appointing the Board of Speech Pathology members; the Board establishes a calendar for meetings and conducts business at those meetings; the Board promulgates rules, including developing a process for applications and granting licenses. We hope this will occur quickly, but it may be a year before the new Speech Board has everything in place to grant licenses.

In the meantime, you must continue to follow the current Michigan Medicaid requirements that, services provided by TSLIs who do not have CCC credential may not be claimed for Medicaid reimbursement UNLESS they are working 'under the direction of' a CCC speech pathologist or audiologist. We hope that change in the School Based Services policy will only cause less-than-one-year of lost reimbursement for TSLI services."

Please do not hesitate to contact me with agenda items for the Medicaid coordinators/implementers, or if you have any questions or issues you need addressed. ReaganJ@michigan.gov OR 517-335-2250