

May 16, 2022

RE: Preventing disruptions in health care when the Public Health Emergency ends

Members of the Health and Human Services Conference Committee:

The undersigned coalitions represent over a million Minnesotans on Medical Assistance and MnCare. Without legislative action, the approaching end of the public health emergency will result in negative and costly consequences for Minnesotans, the providers who serve them, and our state. Legislators must take action this session to provide the needed time and funding to wind down these flexibilities and protect Minnesotans from the unnecessary negative consequences that come with health care coverage loss.

We strongly encourage the adoption of all of the Public Health Emergency unwinding proposals included in the Governor's Budget and the House proposal found in the spreadsheet on lines 562-572:

- **Supporting navigator organizations** to help enrollees with renewals, particularly enrollees with limited English proficiency and in BIPOC communities.
- **Expanding the capacity for disability determinations** will allow the State Medical Review Team to manage the expected significant increase in requests for disability determinations.
- **Adding funding for electronic income verification** will enable counties to meet statutory requirements to verify enrollees' wage income electronically.
- **Giving some enrollees more time to spend down excess assets** will allow Minnesotans who are blind, have a disability or are 65 or older to spend down assets above eligibility limits for 95 days after their renewal. This recognizes additional assets these enrollees may have acquired during the pandemic from one-time payments, such as federal stimulus checks.
- **Phasing in a return to standard policies and procedures** will allow continuous coverage until an enrollee's renewal is conducted, in accordance with federal guidance.
- **Extending forgiveness of unpaid premiums for Employed Persons with Disabilities** will keep Minnesotans in the Medical Assistance for Employed Persons with Disabilities (MA-EPD) program from losing coverage before their renewal, which is prohibited by the federal government.
- **Continuing to suspend periodic data matching** until renewals are completed aligns with federal guidance preventing states from terminating an enrollee's coverage before conducting a full renewal.

Please ensure Minnesotans on Medical Assistance and MnCare are able to continue receiving the care they need, and as a state we have the time to ensure a smooth transition.

Sincerely,

AspireMN
Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities
Mental Health Legislative Network
Minnesota Hospital Association
Minnesota Prenatal to Three Coalition
This Is Medicaid