



Final Rule with Comment: Methods for Assuring Access to Covered Medicaid Services

CMS published a final rule entitled, Medicaid Program; Methods for Ensuring Access to Covered Medicaid Services, on November 2, 2015

§ The rule can be accessed at this link:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/11/02/2015-27697/medicaid-program-methods-for-assuring-access-to-covered-medicaid-services>

The rule requires that Connecticut (and all other states with fee-for-service Medicaid programs):

- develop and submit an access monitoring review plan (after a public comment period) on several categories of service every 3 years (plus services with rate reductions)
- Submit an access analysis with each State Plan Amendment (SPA) that reduces rates
 - develop and implement a public input process for providers, members, and the public to raise access issues
 - if applicable, develop and implement corrective action plans to resolve any access problems

The Access Plan must consider:

- beneficiary needs
- availability of providers in each geographic area
- changes in utilization
- characteristics of population
- comparison to other payers

§ Neither provider cost nor charges is a required review element, but the Department must compare its rates to Medicare or private payers

The Access Plan must include the following categories of service, and a separate analysis must be conducted for “each provider type and site of service”:

- Primary care services (including primary care provided by physician, FQHC, clinic, or dental care)
- Physician specialist services (ex. cardiology, urology, radiology)



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- Behavioral health services (including mental health and substance use disorder)
- Pre-and post-natal obstetric services including labor and delivery
- Home health services
- Services where rates are reduced or restructured in a way that may impair access
- Additional types of services “for which the state or CMS has received a significantly higher than usual volume of beneficiary, provider or other stakeholder access complaints for a geographic area”
- Additional types of services selected by the state