



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

Better Health Care for all Floridians

ELIZABETH DUDEK
SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 15, 2011

Contact: AHCA Communications Office
AHCACommunications@ahca.myflorida.com, 850-412-3623

AHCA Announces Medicaid Pilot Extension through June 30, 2014
~Approval coincides with the release of independent review of the Reform Pilot~

TALLAHASSEE – The federal government has given Florida approval to continue the Medicaid Reform Section 1115 Demonstration waiver through June 30, 2014. Now that the extension has been granted, the focus of the Agency’s discussions with federal CMS will shift to approval of the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care program mandated by the Florida Legislature.

“I am pleased the federal government has given Florida approval to continue this effective pilot program through June 30, 2014,” said Secretary Liz Dudek. “The Agency has been in negotiations with federal officials since July 2010 and we appreciate their recognition of the success of the Medicaid Reform program. We particularly appreciate the federal government’s willingness to consider our position on critical components like the Low Income Pool, the preservation of key elements relating to recipients’ choice, and the continuation of innovations like the enhanced benefit account program.”

The Agency’s independent evaluator, the University of Florida, has completed their final evaluation of the initial 5 year demonstration period. Specifically, the evaluation explored patient satisfaction, plan performance, and savings associated with the pilot.

Consumers found that the Demonstration improved their access to care

The independent research team measured enrollee experience and patient satisfaction with a survey tool called the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS). CAHPS is a nationally accepted survey tool for measuring, among other things, patient satisfaction with their health care. The survey shows that, under reform, recipients established more and better connections with a personal doctor. In addition, a high percentage of enrollees reported that they did not have a problem finding a personal doctor, and enrollees reported more rapid access to care under the demonstration compared to the year prior to implementation. Most enrollees who participated in the study had generally positive views of their health care and had not witnessed major changes in the way their health care was delivered. Surveys of enrollees showed no statistically significant difference in their ratings of specialty care access. The independent researchers found a clear majority of enrollees self-selected their health plans through the Choice Counseling program during the Demonstration, rather than having a plan selected for them.



The Demonstration improved health plan performance

The independent evaluation team noted that the Agency instituted new quality measurement requirements with the demonstration that go further than any previously existing in MediPass and further than previous requirements for Medicaid HMOs. Plans were evaluated using Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS), and for many measures, plans in the demonstration areas achieved higher levels of performance than those of plans and networks in non-demonstration areas. Plans participating in the demonstration areas also showed greater improvement than non-reform demonstration plans, with particular improvement occurring in the categories of well-child and adolescent well-care visits, and in prenatal care. The evaluation concluded that there are indications that all types of Medicaid providers have a greater degree of accountability under the demonstration.

The Demonstration saved money even after controlling for age, race and gender

The evaluation team found that the demonstration saved money even after it controlled for age, race, and gender. Also, the Low Income Pool component of the demonstration provided for an additional \$ 5 billion in funds for hospital and non-hospital providers to provide care to the under and uninsured.

The Demonstration rewarded Medicaid enrollees for healthy behaviors

During the 5 year demonstration project, the innovative Enhanced Benefits (EB) program rewarded enrollees who engaged in healthy behaviors with additional benefits in the form of credits that could be used to purchase over-the-counter health-related supplies. Enrollees used that benefit to purchase \$21,588,907 in health-related over-the-counter supplies, including diapers and other baby supplies, dental supplies, and first aid products.

The Agency for Health Care Administration is committed to better health care for all Floridians. The Agency administers Florida's Medicaid program, licenses and regulates more than 40,000 health care facilities and 37 health maintenance organizations, and publishes health care data and statistics at FloridaHealthFinder.gov. For more information, visit AHCA.MyFlorida.com.

#