



Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services

3 West Road | Virks Building | Cranston, RI 02920

Date: August 6, 2021

To: Nancy Hermiz, Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
Julienne Stenberg, Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
Michael Florczyk, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan
Matthew Padelli, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan
Domenic Delmonico, Tufts Health Public Plans
Alice Msumba, Tufts Health Public Plans
Stephen Camper, Tufts Health Public Plans

From: Mark Kraics, Medicaid Managed Care Director, EOHHS

Cc: Kristin Sousa, Deputy Medicaid Director, RI EOHHS
Melody Lawrence, Policy Director, RI EOHHS
Ave Houston, Compliance Officer, RI EOHHS
Ted DeNicola, Contract Liaison, RI EOHHS
Jan Begert, Medicaid Project Manager, RI EOHHS

Re: **CMS Mandate to Notify Medicaid Members of Impending Prior Authorization Lift**

Dear Managed Care Organizations (MCOs),

On June 30, 2021, EOHHS sent the enclosed memo stating that prior authorization (PA) requirements for all services (except behavioral health services), previously extended to June 30th, will be lifted as of October 1, 2021. CMS has notified states that MCOs must send their respective Medicaid managed care members a notice at least thirty (30) days prior to the date this change will go into effect October 1, 2021. **The enclosed model document contains the approved language that MCOs must distribute (by mail) to your members as soon as possible, postmarked no later than September 1, 2021.**

Please note that MCOs are permitted to include plan-specific details but may not alter the content of the enclosed member-directed document. EOHHS requests that MCOs please also post this language to your website(s) and on your social media page(s) on or before September 1, 2021, to ensure that this notification is made available within CMS' required timeframe.

As stated in the June 2021 communication, members are instructed to contact their provider(s) directly, rather than contact their respective MCO or EOHHS. However, EOHHS requests that MCOs please inform your call center staff of this change in the likelihood that some members will contact your organization directly with questions.

Additionally, MCOs will be required to notify members that PA requirements for behavioral health services will be reinstated effective January 1, 2022. This notice should be provided to members no later than thirty (30) days prior to the effective date. MCOs may use the enclosed communication to inform members of the behavioral health services PA requirement. This notification should be received by members no later than December 1, 2021.

We thank you for your cooperation and adherence to this time-sensitive CMS requirement. Do not hesitate to reach out to Mark Kraics (Mark.Kraics@ohhs.ri.gov), Ave Houston (Ave.Houston@ohhs.ri.gov) or your respective contract liaison (Janet.Begert.CTR@ohhs.ri.gov / Ted.DeNicola.CTR@ohhs.ri.gov) with any questions or concerns.

Yours in Health,

Mark D Kraics, Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Attachments:

- 1) Prior Authorization Requirements to be Reinstated_COVID-19
- 2) RI Medicaid Managed Care COVID-19 Model Language for the Reinstatement of PA for Members