

## **Meeting summary for OHCA Home Care and Hospice Member Call (02/14/2024)**

### **Quick recap**

Josh Anderson provided updates on homecare and hospice, mentioning no new information regarding relief from cuts to the home health payment system. He noted a lawsuit against CMS over the implementation of behavioral adjustments to home health payment rates. Erin Hart discussed ongoing issues with billing system glitches leading to around \$20,000 in outstanding issues related to room and board charges in a nursing home and core services. She also mentioned a systemic issue with routine home care under the Hospice care program, not expected to be resolved until May 2024.

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### **Summary**

#### **Home Health Payment Updates and Legal Developments**

Josh Anderson led a discussion about updates in homecare and hospice. He reported there was no new information regarding relief from cuts to the home health payment system. He also mentioned a lawsuit by Nack against CMS over the implementation of behavioral adjustments to home health payment rates. On the legislative front, there was no progress due to other pressing issues. However, there were developments on the Federal front concerning the Medicaid access rule, which could potentially require states to pay 80% of Medicaid rates to home health aids. This rule has been sent to the Office of Management and Budget and is expected to be finalized around April. Pete van Runkle added that a new administration could potentially change or repeal this rule.

#### **Health Department Updates and Changes**

Josh Anderson shared updates from the Department of Health's quarterly meeting. He highlighted that 1,500 home health licenses have been approved, with 400 still pending. He also clarified a mistake from the previous quarter regarding the average time between surveys for home health, which is now reported at 53 months. On the positive side, no hospice applications have been denied and all are up-to-date with surveys. Josh also discussed changes to the Evv electronic visit verification process, including the simplification of rules and the distribution of devices under the providers' auspices.

#### **Medicaid Revalidations and Claim Processing Issues**

Josh Anderson discussed recent updates about Medicaid's resumption of revalidations of provider agreements and advised attendees to keep an eye out for notices regarding revalidation deadlines. Erin Hart then took over, focusing on the ongoing rollout of the Provider Network Module for 2023 and its impact on Hospice Room and Board claims. Hart mentioned that there have been numerous claim processing issues, and that while they are currently being reprocessed, they may offset fees with recruitments, which

attendees should monitor closely. She also mentioned that the Department of Medicaid has created a dashboard to look up past recruitment balances before October 2023. Lastly, Hart noted some issues with Buckeye's processing of new rates for home care waiver claims.

### **Billing, Hospice, and Medicaid Issues Discussed**

Erin Hart and Nanette Montero discussed ongoing issues with billing system glitches that had led to around \$20,000 in outstanding issues, primarily related to room and board charges in a nursing home and core services. Erin requested Nanette to send an example of the issue for further examination. Erin also mentioned a systemic issue with routine home care under the Hospice care program, which is not expected to be resolved until May 2024. Furthermore, Erin informed that they had requested an extension on timely filing for claims due to ongoing issues and were awaiting a response from Medicaid.

### **Consolidated Appropriations Act 2023 and Pepper Reporting Updates**

Erin Hart clarified changes in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, which allows marriage and family therapists and mental health counselors to participate in the interdisciplinary Care group in place of a social worker. However, this does not alter the core services requirements for hospice care. Erin highlighted that while these professionals are not required to be employed within a hospice agency, they can be contracted if a patient requests their services. She also addressed common questions and misconceptions about the new rule and recommended referring to a FAQ document for more detailed information. Josh Anderson provided an update on Pepper reporting, stating that it has been paused due to technical issues and is not expected to be available again until fall 2024.

### **Ohca Convention and Updates Announced**

Josh Anderson announced the upcoming Ohca convention from May 13th to 16th. He mentioned that there would be several interesting speakers and topics for home care and Hospice, with specific sessions scheduled for the 14th and 15th. Josh also highlighted the updated fundamentals of home care course, now available on-demand through their education website, and the forthcoming online version of their check program. Lastly, he mentioned that in-person versions of these courses will be held in September.

### **Next steps**

- Stay tuned for updates on the Medicaid access rule, expected to be finalized around April.
- Providers should review the FAQ document from the open door forum regarding MFT and MHCs in hospice care.

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