



TEXAS HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

KYLE L. JANEK, M.D.
EXECUTIVE COMMISSIONER

September 18, 2013

Re: Affordable Care Act Primary Care Rate Increase

Dear Providers:

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides a temporary rate increase for certain primary care providers and services from January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2014. Texas, like most states, was unable to begin making these payments on January 1 because of the late release of federal guidance. As late as July 1, 2013, the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provided updated information on the rate increase. HHSC remains committed to implementing the primary care rate increase as soon as possible, and to making retroactive payments to providers for eligible services provided since January 1.

CMS has already approved the Texas plan for increased primary care fee-for-service rates. HHSC is still awaiting federal approval for the state's plan to increase primary care rates in the Medicaid managed care program. In May, CMS asked Texas to submit more information about the proposed managed care rate methodology, and again requested additional information in September.

Because of the time needed for system changes to calculate and process payments, we anticipate beginning to pay the rate increase by March 1, 2014, in the form of quarterly supplemental payments to eligible providers. We will expedite this timeline if at all possible. Providers will be eligible for retroactive payments back to January 1, 2013 if, before the first payment is issued, they have completed the self-attestation that they meet the requirements for increased payments. The process for completing the self-attestation is described below. HHSC will notify providers through the TMHP website, HMO websites, and provider associations before beginning the supplemental payments.

The higher rate applies to primary care services (physician visits and the administration of vaccines) delivered by a physician with a specialty designation of family medicine, general internal medicine, or pediatric medicine. Specialists and subspecialists within those designations as recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties, the American Osteopathic Association, or the American Board of Physician Specialties also qualify for the enhanced payments. To be eligible for the higher rate:

1) Physicians must first self-attest to a covered specialty or subspecialty designation.

2) As part of that attestation they must specify that they are either board certified in an eligible specialty or subspecialty and/or that 60 percent of their Medicaid claims for the prior year were for eligible services.

Eligible providers must self-attest by completing the Texas Medicaid Attestation for ACA Primary Care Services Rate Increase form using their own individual performing provider Texas Provider Identifier (TPI) for each eligible TPI suffix. The form can be found at www.tmhp.com/Provider_Forms/Medicaid/ACA%20Primary%20Care%20Attestation.pdf.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Monica Thyssen, Medicaid Chip Division Project Manager, is serving as the lead staff on this matter and can be reached at 512-462-6217 or by e-mail at Monica.thyssen@hsc.state.tx.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kay Ghahremani".

Kay Ghahremani
Texas Medicaid Director