



**MassHealth**  
**All Provider Bulletin 370**  
**June 2023**

**TO:** All Providers Participating in MassHealth

**FROM:** Mike Levine, Assistant Secretary for MassHealth *Mike Levine*

**RE:** **MassHealth Coordinating Aligned, Relationship-centered, Enhanced Support (CARES) for Kids Program**

## **Background**

MassHealth is committed to improving the health outcomes of its diverse members and their families by providing access to integrated health care services that sustainably and equitably promote health, well-being, independence, and quality of life. Accordingly, MassHealth will cover a new targeted case management (TCM) service, the MassHealth Coordinating Aligned, Relationship-centered, Enhanced Support (CARES) for Kids Program, effective July 7, 2023.

CARES is a TCM service to be delivered through a health care team operating by a MassHealth-participating provider that meets the CARES program requirements, as defined below. The MassHealth provider types that may participate in the CARES program are:

- community health centers (CHCs);
- acute outpatient hospitals (AOHs), including hospital licensed health centers (HLHCs) or other hospital satellite clinics; or
- group practices.

The term “CARES program requirements” refers to all requirements described in this bulletin and in the regulations to be promulgated on July 7, 2023, at 130 CMR 405.477: *CARES Program Services*, 130 CMR 410.482: *CARES Program Services*, and 130 CMR 433.485: *CARES Program Services*.

The provider’s CARES health care team will be primarily responsible for:

- facilitating and improving the care planning and coordination of services for eligible medically complex MassHealth members younger than 21 years of age; and
- providing a single point of accountability for ensuring that necessary medical, educational, social, or other services are accessed, coordinated, and delivered in a strength-based, individualized, member-driven, culturally competent, linguistically appropriate, and accessible manner.

This bulletin describes the CARES program, member eligibility for receiving CARES services, and provider requirements for those that will be participating in the CARES program. Specifically, this bulletin provides guidance to MassHealth-participating CHCs, AOHs, and group practices that want to be certified by MassHealth to provide CARES services and participate in the CARES program.

## **Eligible MassHealth Members**

CARES services will be available for all eligible MassHealth members who:

- are younger than 21 years of age with medically complex health care needs;
- meet the medical necessity criteria described in the CARES program requirements; and
- are covered by MassHealth Standard or CommonHealth.

## **CARES Services Provider Participation Requirements**

MassHealth is administering a process for MassHealth CHCs, AOHs, and group practices to become certified to deliver CARES services. To become certified to deliver CARES services and receive payment for them, the provider must satisfy all CARES program requirements.

### **CARES Program Provider Certification Form Submission**

To be considered for certification to render CARES services, a MassHealth CHC, AOH, or group practice must submit the [CARES Program Provider Certification Form](https://www.mass.gov/doc/cares-program-provider-certification-form-o/download) available at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/cares-program-provider-certification-form-o/download>. All CARES Program Provider Certification Forms must be completely and accurately filled out, and must include all required accompanying documentation.

MassHealth may request additional documentation or information it deems necessary to complete its review and determination of CARES program certification, and the provider must provide such additional documentation or information in the timeframe, form, and format requested by MassHealth.

MassHealth will review and consider all submitted information and documentation before determining a provider's certification for participation in the CARES program.

MassHealth will notify the applicant of its decision in writing. The CARES program certification notice will, at a minimum, identify the effective date of the certification and the service location(s) with which the provider's CARES health care team must be associated.

Complete, accurate, and signed [CARES Program Provider Certification Forms](#) must be submitted to [CARES@mass.gov](mailto:CARES@mass.gov) for MassHealth's consideration.

### **CARES Program Monitoring**

In addition to any audit or document review activities that may be undertaken by MassHealth pursuant to 130 CMR 450.000: *Administrative and Billing Requirements*, the CARES program and providers rendering CARES services will be subject to the following program monitoring requirements and activities.

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- MassHealth will monitor CARES services providers using family experience survey data including, but not limited to, survey results on the following domains: coordination and connection to needed services and resources, communication, family impact, and care-goal creation and planning.
- MassHealth will monitor CARES services providers' health information-exchange capabilities, including, but not limited to, the number of care coordination partners outside their practice area and the type of exchanges (including two-way vs. one-way communications, and digital, telephone, and fax exchanges).
- If a provider certified to participate in the CARES program no longer wants to participate or is unable to meet the CARES program requirements, the provider must notify MassHealth 30 days before ceasing provision of CARES services, or in the case of an emergency, as soon as practicable. Notice must be provided to [CARES@mass.gov](mailto:CARES@mass.gov) and include the date on which the CARES provider will stop or stopped meeting the requirements for participation in the CARES program.

### **Conditions of Payment**

Effective July 7, 2023, payment for CARES services will be made only to CHCs, AOHs, and group practices participating in MassHealth that are also certified by MassHealth to provide CARES services that are rendered in accordance with the CARES program requirements by the CARES health care team associated with the approved service location on the provider's CARES program certification notice. MassHealth will pay for these CARES services for dates of service occurring on or after the later of July 7, 2023, or the date of CARES program certification on a provider's CARES program certification notice.

MassHealth will make a single per-member-per-month (PMPM) payment for CARES services rendered by a CARES services provider to a CARES services eligible member. To qualify for the PMPM CARES services payment rate in any given month, the CARES services provider must provide *at least* two of the CARES program services to a CARES services eligible member during that calendar month. Not more than one provider may be paid for CARES services per member per month. Further, MassHealth will not pay for more than one TCM service per member for the same dates of service, whether that TCM service is through the CARES program or a different MassHealth TCM covered service.

The final PMPM rate for CARES services will be finalized through the regular rate-setting process for 101 CMR 317:00: *Rates for Medicine Services*.

### **MassHealth Website**

This bulletin is available on the [MassHealth Provider Bulletins](#) web page.

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## **Questions**

### **Dental Services**

Phone: (800) 207-5019; TTY: (800) 466-7566

### **Long-Term Services and Supports**

Phone: (844) 368-5184 (toll free)  
Email: [support@masshealthltss.com](mailto:support@masshealthltss.com)  
Portal: [www.MassHealthLTSS.com](http://www.MassHealthLTSS.com)  
Mail: MassHealth LTSS  
PO Box 159108  
Boston, MA 02215  
Fax: (888) 832-3006

### **All Other Provider Types**

Phone: (800) 841-2900, TDD/TTY: 711  
Email: [providersupport@mahealth.net](mailto:providersupport@mahealth.net)  
Fax: (617) 988-8974

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