

## **Slide 1: Communication Access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing One Care Members**

People who are Deaf and hard of hearing have a distinct culture outside of the hearing world. Being Deaf is not a disability; accommodations for people who are Deaf and hard of hearing are distinct from accommodation requests made by other populations served by One Care. With this background in mind, we are putting forward for discussion and voting again, the three communication access motions originally voted on and accepted in 20218, with some minor edits and amendments. The council's continuing concerns are result of the following:

1. People who are Deaf and/or hard of hearing are not getting timely medical care – often due to a lack of communication access or inadequate communication access that does not meet the member's communication needs (which may vary depending on circumstance).
2. The lack of communication access and healthcare access for Deaf and hard of hearing One Care members can be compounded by additional factors such as depression, isolation, loneliness, stigma, substance use disorder and/or a general misunderstanding of the unique culture of people who are Deaf and hard of hearing.

## **Slide 2: Communication Access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing One Care Members continued...**

We call on plans to meet the unique communication access needs of Deaf and hard of hearing members by designating one person who is responsible for communication access. The responsibility of the person in that role is to work with the member and the member's providers to coordinate communication access for care as well as to act as a resource for the plan care coordinators and staff.

The motions provided were developed by the communication access work group which was a collaboration between the Implementation Council, MassHealth, Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH), Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Centers (DHILS), One Care Plans, and other advocates. The Council wants to elevate these motions again for discussion and review – as these issues remain.

### **Slide 3: Communication Access May 8, 2018 Motion 109**

**Important Note: February 13, 2024: Amended to allow for plans to designate staff to oversee communication access.**

Require MassHealth Plans to establish a communication access coordinator role, or designate one or two individuals within the plan, to facilitate communication for Deaf and Hard of Hearing members. The coordinator/contact will assist in onboarding members requiring communication access services and ensure ongoing coordination of their communication needs, in

collaboration with the member and their care coordinator. Plans must engage with MCDHH and DHILs for hiring and training of the coordinator if applicable.

#### **Slide 4: Communication Access May 8, 2018 Motions**

##### **Motion 110 - Motion was passed unanimously.**

Motion to request representatives from the One Care Implementation Council work with representatives from MCDHH and MassHealth to develop contract requirements in provision of communication access for people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

##### **Motion 111 - Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion to request representatives from the One Care Implementation Council meet with representatives from MCDHH, representatives from the One Care plans, and MassHealth to develop a budgeting process to be implemented by plans. The budget should include funding for a dedicated communication access coordinator (name to be determined) and communication access services (ASL interpreters, VRI, other) and other costs associated with providing communication access as needed.