

**NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES IN STATEWIDE METHODS AND STANDARDS FOR SETTING PAYMENT RATES**

**SUBJECT:** MassHealth: Rates for MassHealth Home Health Services

**AGENCY:** Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services

**SUMMARY:** Rate Changes for Home Health Services Effective July 14, 2017

**DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES**

Described below are changes to the rates for home health services under the MassHealth program. These changes are being made in accordance with M.G.L. c. 118E, section 13D, which requires the Secretary of the Executive Office of Health Human Services to establish, by regulation, rates for health care services, including home health services.

The following rate changes are effective July 14, 2017.

- 1) An updated two-tiered rate structure for skilled nursing visits. The purpose of this change is to better align payment rates for home health skilled nursing visits with the efficient delivery of these services. The modified rate structure reflects the higher intensity of skilled nursing services provided in the first 30 days calendar of skilled nursing visits

The two-tier rate structure for skilled nursing visits includes the following two rate tiers:

- a) a higher rate of \$89.21 for the first 30 calendar days of service; and
- b) a lower rate of \$69.59 for visits on or after 31 calendar days.

Under the proposed two-tier rate structure, the higher ‘post-acute’ rate for skilled nursing services provided in the first 30 calendar days reflects a 2.6% cost adjustment factor (CAF) increase over the current 1-60 day nursing visit rate to reflect that visits in the first 30 calendar days tend to be more complex and time-sensitive than visits to established patients. The rate of \$69.59 represents an increase over the current rate of \$64.59 for visits on or after 61 calendar days, being applied to visits on or after 31 calendar days.

- 2) A new medication administration rate. The purpose of this new rate is to allow for more efficient payment for home health skilled nursing services provided for the limited purpose of medication administration. The proposed rate of \$59.14 is below the current UD modifier rate of \$69.59 to reflect the shorter time required to conduct a skilled nursing visit for administering medication.
- 3) An updated rate for Continuous Skilled Nursing (CSN). This change will increase the rates for CSN services by 2.25%. This increase is in addition to the 2.6% increase that was recently added effective January 1, 2017.

It is estimated that annual aggregate state expenditures will decrease by \$12.0 million as a result of these changes. The actual change in annualized expenditures may vary depending on actual utilization of

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services.

## **PUBLIC HEARING AND OPPORTUNITY FOR WRITTEN COMMENT**

A public hearing about the above described proposed rate changes to be established under 101 CMR 350.00, will be held on Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon in the First Floor Conference Room, 100 Hancock Street, Quincy, MA. Individuals who notify EOHHS of their intent to testify at the hearing will be afforded an earlier opportunity to speak. Speakers may notify EOHHS of their intention to testify at the hearing by registering online at [www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/laws-regs/hhs/public-hearings.html](http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/laws-regs/hhs/public-hearings.html). Individuals may also submit written testimony by e-mailing [ehs-regulations@state.ma.us](mailto:ehs-regulations@state.ma.us). Please submit electronic testimony as an attached Word document or as text within the body of the e-mail with the name of the regulation, 101 CMR 350.00, in the subject line. All submissions must include the sender's full name, mailing address, and organization or affiliation, if any. Individuals who are unable to submit testimony by e-mail should mail written testimony to EOHHS, c/o D. Briggs, 100 Hancock Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Quincy, MA 02171. Written testimony must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 15, 2017.

All persons desiring to review the current draft of the proposed regulatory actions may go to [www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/laws-regs/hhs/public-hearings.html](http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/laws-regs/hhs/public-hearings.html) or request a copy in writing or in person from MassHealth Publications, 100 Hancock Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Quincy, MA 02171.