

Medicaid Matters

New rules, web portal established to register RCO collaborators

As directed by state law, the Alabama Medicaid Agency has established new rules and a new web portal for individuals and entities who wish to cooperate, negotiate or contract in the establishment of the Agency's planned Regional Care Organizations.

According to Acting Alabama Medicaid Commissioner Stephanie Azar, "Since the law was signed in May, the Agency has been researching and drafting rules and regulations that are consistent with the legislative mandate." An emergency rule, or change to the state Administrative Code, was filed October 11, outlining the requirements for those individuals and entities seeking a Certificate to Collaborate in the establishment of an Alabama Medicaid Regional Care Organization. A permanent rule was filed October 21.



To register, potential collaborators will need to go to the Agency's website at <http://www.medicaid.alabama.gov/> and click on the "Regional Care Organizations" icon on the left hand side to access the web portal. Once the applicant creates a profile, a short application can be

completed and submitted for review. Approved collaborators will receive a certificate and will be required to follow specific standards and file periodic reports.

Commission explores Medicaid pharmacy savings possibilities for state

At two separate meetings in October, members of the Alabama Medicaid Pharmacy Study Commission heard presentations from other state Medicaid pharmacy program administrators and from pharmacy benefits management programs and other organizations with new ideas for reducing pharmacy costs to the state.

An October 10 meeting focused on the experiences of three southern states – Arkansas, Georgia and Mississippi – to manage pharmacy costs in their respective Medicaid programs. On October 24, the Commission heard presentations on use of three different approaches, to include a pharmacy benefits management (PBM) organization, a state-based joint venture with existing vendors and a preferred provider system.



Commission members, from left: Jim Carnes, Alabama ARISE, Dothan pediatrician Dr. Michael Ramsey, and Fayette Medical Center Administrator Barry Cochran.

"Now that we have heard from these states and organizations, our next step is to have Medicaid's actuary take the results of these presentations and try to give us some assessment of how much money we would potentially save," said State Health Officer Dr. Don Williamson, commission chair.

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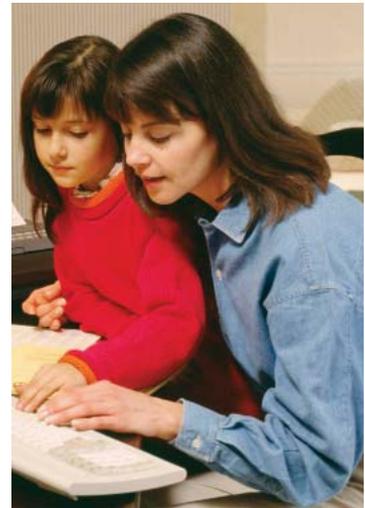
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Agile development, collaboration results in successful system launch

From the outset, the task of creating a new eligibility and enrollment system that would comply with the requirements of the Affordable Care Act posed a challenge. There was a short timeframe to complete it, many new federal requirements had been issued, multiple state agencies were involved and it was a technically complex project.

However, thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Alabama Medicaid Agency and the Alabama Department of Public Health and the Alabama ALL Kids program, the first phase of a new online system has been successfully developed, tested and launched on schedule and at a savings to taxpayers. Members from the governor's office and the Alabama Department of Human Resources have been involved on the project team as well.



Launched October 1, the new online portal allows applicants to create accounts and submit applications for ALL Kids coverage for children or for Medicaid coverage for children, pregnant women or women seeking family planning coverage only through Plan First. The portal is also available for those applying for tax credits or other subsidies to purchase health insurance through the federally-facilitated insurance exchange (FFE). [Read more >>](#)

Four Medicaid employees attain Certified Public Manager® designation

Four Medicaid employees are now among a select group of state employees who have received the Certified Public Manager® (CPM) designation following almost two years of study. Robin Arrington,



Medicaid's four newest Certified Public Managers display their certificates, from left: Judy Thomas, Susan Watkins, Nakeshia James, and Robin Arrington.

Long Term Care; Nakeshia James, Administrative Services, Judy Thomas, Beneficiary Services, and Susan Watkins, Fiscal Agent Liaison, graduated October 16 in ceremonies at the State Capitol.

Offered to state employees through the Alabama Training Institute, the nationally-accredited Certified Public Manager® training program helps participants learn new methods to achieve efficiency gains or cost savings in their agencies

and to employ innovative approaches to solving problems. Courses include topics such as leadership, project management, performance coaching, building and leading teams and managing public organizations, among others. Participants experience a sequence of courses, projects, examinations and relevant electives in the program. [Read more >>](#)

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