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Governor

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STEPHANIE MCGEE AZAR
Commissioner

October 17, 2024

Providers, recipients, and other interested individuals will have the opportunity to provide input on the Alabama Medicaid Agency Section 1115 Institutions for Mental Disease Waiver for Serious Mental Illness (SMI) 1115(a) Demonstration program during November public forums in Daphne, Alabama and Montgomery, Alabama.

Written comments concerning the 1115 Institutions for Mental Disease Waiver for SMI will be accepted starting November 7, 2024, and are due December 7, 2024. Send comments to the following email address: PublicComment@Medicaid.Alabama.gov or mail hard copy to Administrative Secretary, Alabama Medicaid Agency, 501 Dexter Avenue, P.O. Box 5624, Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5624. All written comments will be available for review by the public during normal business hours at the above address. The scheduled public forum(s) will be held:

<p>Wednesday, November 20, 2024 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>To Join Online or by Telephone: https://medicaid.webex.com/medicaid/j.php?MTID=mef38edc26d3ff78fcb346a35611d82b9 Meeting number (access code): 2661 827 6397 Join by Phone 1-650-479-3208 Meeting Password: SMIMED1!</p>	<p>To Join In-Person: 501 Dexter Ave. Montgomery, AL 36104</p>
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<p>Thursday, November 21, 2024 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>To Join Online or by Telephone: https://medicaid.webex.com/medicaid/j.php?MTID=m9f361c87e24d5b02f0f0a63a2878ef51 Meeting number (access code): 2662 029 7506 Join by Phone 1-650-479-3208 Meeting Password: SMIMED2!</p>	<p>To Join In-Person: 7400 Roper Lane Daphne, AL 36526</p>
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The annual forums are a requirement by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for the 1115 Demonstration Waiver under which the SMI program operates. The waiver was originally approved on May 20, 2022.

The goal of the SMI Demonstration is to maintain and enhance access to mental health services and continue delivery system improvements for these services to provide more coordinated and comprehensive treatment of Medicaid recipients with SMI. This demonstration will provide the state with the authority to provide high-quality, clinically appropriate treatment to recipients with SMI while they are short-term residents in inpatient treatment settings that qualify as an Institute for Mental Diseases (IMD) in Baldwin and Mobile counties. Medicaid Alabamians who are eligible for inpatient psychiatric services will be able to access services via the IMDs participating in the demonstration, regardless of their county of residence. It will also support state efforts to enhance provider capacity and improve access to a continuum of treatments for SMI. During the demonstration period, the state seeks to achieve the following goals which align with the SMI SMDL #18-011:

- Reduced utilization and lengths of stay in emergency departments (EDs) among Medicaid beneficiaries with SMI or Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) while awaiting mental health treatment in specialized settings;
- Reduced preventable readmissions to acute care hospitals and residential settings;
- Improved availability of crisis stabilization services, including services made available through call centers and mobile crisis units, intensive outpatient services, as well as services provided during acute short-term stays in residential crisis stabilization programs, psychiatric hospitals and residential treatment settings throughout the state;
- Improved access to community-based services to address the chronic mental health care needs of beneficiaries with SMI or SED, including through increased integration of primary and behavioral health care; and
- Improved care coordination, especially continuity of care in the community following episodes of acute care in hospitals and residential treatment facilities.

CMS expects the state to achieve the goals on a statewide basis despite authorizing expenditure authority on less-than-a statewide basis since the state will concurrently implement initiatives that improve community-based mental health care.

Information on the Serious Mental Illness Waiver Program (SMI) is available on the following website:

- Alabama Medicaid Agency:

https://medicaid.alabama.gov/content/4.0_Programs/4.2_Medical_Services/4.2.6_Mental_Health/4.2.6.2_SMI_Waiver.aspx