

## Chapter HSS 108

**MEDICAL ASSISTANCE: GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

HSS 108.01 Safeguarded information      HSS 108.03 County responsibilities  
HSS 108.02 Department rights and responsibilities

**HSS 108.01 Safeguarded information.** (1) Except for purposes directly related to direct program administration, the department may not use or disclose any information concerning past or present applicants and recipients of MA.

(2) In this section, "direct program administration" means:

(a) Determining initial eligibility of the applicant and continuing eligibility of the recipient;

(b) Determining appropriate services to be covered;

(c) Providing services for recipients;

(d) Processing provider claims for reimbursement;

(e) Auditing provider claims for reimbursement;

(f) Investigating or prosecuting criminal or civil proceedings conducted in connection with program administration;

(g) Seeking third-party payment for services provided to a recipient; and

(h) Other activities determined by the department to be necessary for proper and efficient administration of MA.

(3) The department shall request the attorney general to institute appropriate action when necessary to enforce provisions of this section.

(4) Safeguarded information concerning an individual applicant or recipient shall include but not be limited to:

(a) Name and address;

(b) Social data, including but not limited to:

1. Marital status;

2. Age;

3. Race;

4. Names and MA numbers of family members;

5. Paternity status of children; and

6. Unique identifying characteristics;

(c) Economic data, including but not limited to:

1. Assets;

2. Amount of assistance received;
  3. Amount of medical expenses incurred;
  4. Sources of payment or support;
  5. Past or present employment;
  6. Income, regardless of source;
  7. Social security number; and
  8. Income expense deductions;
- (d) Agency evaluation information, including but not limited to:
1. Verification of client information; and
  2. Identity of verification sources; and
- (e) Medical data, including but not limited to:
1. Past history and medical record content;
  2. Diagnosis;
  3. Drugs prescribed;
  4. Course of treatment prescribed; and
  5. Name of provider.

(5) For purposes of direct program administration, the department may permit disclosure to, or use of safeguarded information by, legally qualified persons or agency representatives outside the department. Governmental authorities, the courts, and law enforcement officers are persons outside the department who shall comply with sub. (6).

(6) Persons or agency representatives outside the department to whom the department may disclose or permit use of safeguarded information shall meet the following qualifications:

(a) The purpose for use or disclosure shall involve direct program administration; and

(b) The person or the person's agency shall be bound by law or other legally enforceable obligation to observe confidentiality standards comparable to those observed by the department.

(7) Unless it is related to direct program administration, the department shall respond to a subpoena for a case record or for agency representative testimony regarding an applicant or recipient as follows:

(a) The department shall provide the court and all parties to the proceeding with a copy of this section;

(b) The department shall request that the attorney general intervene in the proceeding in a manner which will give effect to this section; and

(c) The department shall notify in writing applicants or recipients affected by a subpoena for safeguarded information.

(8) The department shall publicize this section as follows:

- (a) Publication in the Wisconsin administrative code;
  - (b) Incorporation by reference in certification procedures for all providers; and
  - (c) Incorporation in information provided to recipients regarding their rights and responsibilities.
- (9) The secretary or a designee shall determine the appropriate application of this section to circumstances not covered expressly by this section. Use or disclosure not expressly provided for in this section may not occur prior to this determination.

History: Cr. Register, December, 1979, No. 288, eff. 2-1-80; am. Register, February, 1986, No. 362, eff. 3-1-86.

**HSS 108.02 Department rights and responsibilities. (1) DIFFERENT BENEFITS FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS.** The department may offer MA benefits to the categorically needy which are different from the benefits offered to the medically needy, subject to ss. 49.46 (2) (a) and 49.47 (6) (a), Stats. For the categorically needy, benefits shall meet federal minimum standards of coverage under 42 CFR 435.100-135. The department need not provide the same benefits that the categorically needy receive to individuals who are determined to be medically needy. The department is not required to provide the same amount, duration and scope of services to all the different groups who make up the medically needy population.

**(2) REIMBURSEMENT METHODS AND PAYMENT LEVELS.** The department may establish the reimbursement methods and payment levels for program services subject to the requirements of federal and state statutes, regulations and chs. HSS 101 to 107 and this chapter. Notice of specific changes or updates to payment levels shall be communicated to the service providers by the department through periodic publication of provider handbooks.

**(3) ADVISORY COMMITTEES.** The department may appoint and make use of professional advisory committees on an ad hoc basis to provide expertise for development of service or reimbursement policies.

**(4) PROVIDER HANDBOOKS.** The department may publish provider handbooks and periodic updates to inform providers of changes in state or federal law, interim policy, departmental interpretation and procedural directives such as billing and prior authorization procedures, specific reimbursement changes and items of general information.

**(5) NOTIFICATION OF RECIPIENTS.** The department shall publish periodic notification to eligible recipients, as necessary, to provide general information regarding MA program benefits and procedural requirements, and to notify recipients of any benefit or eligibility changes.

**(6) NOTICE OF CHANGE IN METHOD OR LEVEL OF REIMBURSEMENT.** (a) Except as provided in par. (b), the department shall publish a public notice in the Wisconsin administrative register of any significant proposed change in the statewide method or level of reimbursement for a service, in compliance with 42 CFR 442.205. This notice shall include information on the procedure for obtaining details of the proposed change, why the change is proposed and how to provide public comment to the department.

(b) Changes for which no public notice is required include the following:

1. Changes to conform with medicare methods and federally-invoked upper limits on reimbursement;
2. Changes required of the department by court order; and
3. Changes in wholesalers' or manufacturers' prices of drugs or materials, if the department's method of reimbursement is based on direct or wholesale prices as reported in a national standard such as the American druggist blue book, plus a pharmacy dispensing fee.

(c) Notice in the Wisconsin administrative register shall constitute official notice by the department to its contracted health service providers of a contractual change.

(7) MAILINGS AND DISTRIBUTIONS. The department shall mail or distribute materials to applicants, recipients or medical providers, as follows:

(a) All materials shall be limited to purposes directly related to program administration.

(b) Materials which may not be mailed or distributed include:

1. "Holiday" greetings;
2. General public announcements;
3. Voting information;
4. Alien registration notices;
5. Names of individuals, unless:
  - a. The named individual is connected with direct program administration; or
  - b. The named individual is identified only in an official agency capacity; and
6. Any material with political implications.

(c) Materials which may be mailed or distributed include:

1. Information of immediate interest to applicants' or recipients' health and welfare;
2. Information regarding the deletion or reduction of covered services; and
3. Consumer protection information.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1986, No. 362, eff. 3-1-86.

**HSS 108.03 County responsibilities. (1) DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY.** Agencies shall be responsible for determination of eligibility for MA. These determinations shall comply with standards for eligibility found in ss. 49.46 (1) and 49.47 (4), Stats., and ch. HSS 103.

Register, February, 1986, No. 362

(2) **INFORMING RECIPIENTS OF RIGHTS AND DUTIES.** Agencies shall inform recipients of the recipients' rights and duties under the program, including those rights enumerated in s. HSS 106.04 (3).

(3) **RECOVERY OF INCORRECT PAYMENTS.** (a) Agencies shall begin recovery action, as provided by statute for civil liabilities, on behalf of the department against any MA recipient to whom or on whose behalf an incorrect payment was made.

(b) The incorrect payment shall have resulted from a misstatement or omission of fact by the person supplying information during an application for MA benefits, or failure by the recipient, or any other person responsible for giving information on the recipient's behalf, to report income or assets in an amount which would affect the recipient's eligibility for benefits.

(c) The amount of recovery may not exceed the amount of the MA benefits incorrectly provided.

(d) Records of payment for the period of ineligibility, provided to the agency by the MA fiscal agent, shall be evidence of the amounts paid on behalf of the recipient.

(e) The agency shall notify the recipient or the recipient's representative of the period of ineligibility and the amounts incorrectly paid, and shall request arrangement of repayment within a specified period of time.

(f) If the effort to recover incorrect payments under par. (e) is not successful, the agency shall refer cases of possible recovery to the district attorney or corporation counsel for investigation and the district attorney or corporation counsel may bring whatever action may be appropriate for prosecution for fraud or collection under civil liability statutes. Judgments obtained in these actions shall be filed as liens against property in any county in which the recipient is known to possess assets, if not satisfied at the time the judgment or order for restitution is rendered. Execution may be taken on the judgments as otherwise provided in statute.

(g) The agency may seek recovery through an order for restitution by the court of jurisdiction in which the recipient or former recipient is being prosecuted for fraud.

(h) The agency's decision concerning ineligibility and amounts owed may be appealed pursuant to s. PW-PA 20.18, [ch. HSS 225]. During the appeal process the agency may take no further recovery actions pending a decision. Benefits shall be continued pending the decision on the appeal. When the hearing decision is subsequently adverse to the client the benefits paid pending a decision on the appeal shall be collectable as incorrect payments.

(i) The agency shall immediately deposit monies collected under this subsection to a designated bank account. The collection shall be reported to the department in the manner and on forms designated by the department within 30 days following the end of the month in which the collection is made, and shall be transmitted to the state in accordance with departmental instructions.

(4) **AUTHORIZATION OF PAYMENTS.** (a) The board created under s. 46.23 or 51.42, Stats., in the county in which the recipient resides shall

authorize payment by the department for outpatient mental health services funded by the MA program, as well as inpatient psychiatric services for persons in the age group 22 to 64. The board shall be liable for a portion of the cost of services as designated in s. 49.46 (2) (b) 6 f and 7, Stats.

(b) As part of its function of managing the provision of mental health services, the board shall contract with a sufficient number of psychotherapy providers qualified to meet the standards of s. HSS 105.22, to serve recipients in each county who require psychotherapy.

(c) The board shall review all claims and prior authorization requests for mental health services, and shall note the completion of the review on the provider's request in accordance with the guidelines in s. HSS 107.13.

(d) In the case of inpatient psychiatric services for persons age 22 through 64 in a psychiatric hospital, the county shall be responsible for the state's share of MA costs for the calendar month in which the recipient is admitted.

(5) ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM OF MEDICAL SUPPORT LIABILITY. Pursuant to s. 59.07 (97), Stats., counties shall contract with the department to implement and administer the child support collection program under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act of 1935, as amended. One of the responsibilities of a county's child support agency defined in s. HSS 215.02 (1) is to establish a program of medical support liability along with the child and spousal support and paternity establishment program.

History: Cr. Register, December, 1979, No. 288, eff. 2-1-80; renum. from HSS 108.02 and am. Register, February, 1986, No. 362, eff. 3-1-86.