



STATE OF DELAWARE
STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
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MEMORANDUM

The Honorable John Carney
 Governor

John McNeal
 SCPD Director

DATE: February 21, 2017

TO: Ms. Kimberly Xavier, DMMA
 Planning & Policy Development Unit

FROM: Ms. Jamie Wolfe, Chairperson
 State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: 20 DE Reg. 610 [DMMA Proposed Delaware Healthy Children Program Vision Coverage Regulation (2/1/17)]

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed the Department of Health and Social Services/Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance's (DMMA's) proposal to expand vision services available to a subset of DHCP beneficiaries. The proposed regulation was published as 20 DE Reg. 610 in the February 1, 2017 issue of the Register of Regulations.

Delaware implements the federal Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP) through the State Delaware Healthy Children Program (DHCP). The DHCP provides health care services to children under age 19 whose families have countable income below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). See DMMA Prop. Reg. 17-005b Amendment, §3.1.

The current proposal would expand vision services available to a subset of DHCP beneficiaries. In a nutshell, DMMA plans to contract with a non-profit Medicaid provider to offer free eye exams and glasses on site at Title I Delaware schools in which at least 51% of the student body receives free or reduced price meals. At 611. In FY17, it estimates that 600 children will receive vision exams and 408 children will receive glasses. In FY18, it estimates that 579 children will receive vision exams and 579 children will receive glasses. At 611. The cost to the State would be minimal since the current federal match is 90.94%. At 612. For example, in FY17 DMMA projects a State cost of \$6,719 matched by \$67,441 in federal funds. Id.

DMMA offers the following justification for the initiative:

Access to vision exams and glasses is critical for students' educational achievements and

health outcomes; 80% of all learning during a child's first 12 years is visual. It comes as no surprise that students with vision problems tend to have lower academic performance, as measured by test scores and grades, and that students' performance in school impacts future employment earnings, health behaviors, and life expectancy. As such, Delaware seeks to use the health services initiative (HIS) option to improve the health of low-income children by increasing their access to needed vision services and glasses through a targeted school-based initiative.

At 611.

SCPD is endorsing the proposed regulation since vision services would benefit low-income children, and the proposal leverages significant federal funds.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions or comments regarding our observations and position on the proposed regulation.

cc: Mr. Stephen Groff
Mr. Brian Hartman, Esq.
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Developmental Disabilities Council

20reg610 dmma-delaware healthy children program vision 2-16-17