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MaineCare's Rate System Evaluation Update

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The Department of Health and Human Services (the Department) is conducting an evaluation of MaineCare's rates and rate setting system and developing a plan for the creation of a comprehensive, streamlined, and coherent system. To complete this work, the Department has contracted with Myers and Stauffer, LLC, a national accounting firm.

Consultants from Myers and Stauffer will conduct their work in two phases. In Phase 1, they will evaluate existing MaineCare reimbursement rates and payment models. This work will result in a report that catalogs existing payment methods; benchmarks payment rates to those used by other states, commercial health plans, and Medicare for comparable services; and recommends services as candidates for alternative payment models (APMs).

Phase 2 will include the development of a plan for a comprehensive rate assessment process, including:

- Recommendations for simplifying and streamlining rate methodologies, and for a process and structure for ongoing rate review and rebasing;
- A priority list and work plan for short- and longer-term rate reviews; and
- An estimate of the necessary investment to implement recommendations.

The Department and Myers and Stauffer will be seeking opinions, ideas, and comments from many stakeholders across the State who participate in MaineCare, including providers, members, and other interested parties.

In Phase 1, the consultants will conduct fact-finding meetings with "key informants" regarding the way MaineCare payment methodologies work now. These key informants will include MaineCare providers and representatives from the Offices of Aging and Disability Services, Child and Family Services, and Behavioral Health. The objective of these meetings is to confirm the consultants' understanding of how the payment systems work and nuances of the design of the payment systems and the effects they have on service delivery.

The consultants will schedule virtual meetings with provider organizations, grouped by service type, and will have prepared questions in advance of the meetings. While the key informants are providers, the meetings will be open to anyone interested in listening in. More information about these sessions will be forthcoming.

Most of the key informant meetings will occur during September and Phase 1 is expected to be complete at the end of October.

In Phase 2, after the Phase 1 benchmarking and APM report is available, the Department and consultants will conduct a series of virtual town hall meetings to invite participants, grouped by service type, to provide feedback on the Phase 1 benchmarking report and comments to help inform Myers and Stauffer's recommendations for rate setting system reform and the rate assessment work plan, which will be completed at the end of February.

As part of this overall assessment, the consultants will also lead several virtual focus groups, depending on level of interest, with MaineCare members to assess their experiences with accessing MaineCare-covered services, including any barriers and challenges that currently exist. The Department will consult with the MaineCare Advisory Committee (MAC) and key advocacy organizations to identify MaineCare members to participate in the focus groups.

These town hall meetings will be scheduled to accommodate providers and members separately, but they will be open to the public.

The Department and Myers and Stauffer will update and engage the MAC and its Rates Subcommittee throughout the engagement and will keep the public informed through e-message updates and website postings.

For more information, please contact [Peter Kraut](#), MaineCare's Rate Setting Manager.