

# STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Sean Parnell, Governor

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March 12, 2012

Commissioner William Streur  
P.O. Box 240249  
Anchorage, Alaska 99524-0249

Dear Commissioner Streur,

In recent meetings, the Medical Care Advisory Committee has reviewed existing recipient information and we offer the following recommendations.

The committee finds the Alaska Medicaid Recipient Services handbook (2006 version) remains a good tool, but that “the department should update and replace the handbook. A new manual should be user-friendly, and the reading level and terminology assessed to better meet the target audience.” Further, it should be made available electronically, and include active links to more detailed information. The committee agreed with the existing purpose of the handbook:

*“To help you (a recipient) understand available programs and, if you are eligible, how to effectively use the coverage. The handbook is not designed to provide detailed and individual information, but instead is able to provide a broad overview of the program and services available”.*

The committee was pleased to have the opportunity to review the updated draft of the Alaska Medicaid Recipient Services handbook and was pleased with the proposed changes (as presented by Sandy Ahlin on January 20, 2012). The committee very much liked the Medicaid Recipient Information Helpline business card (that Sandy Ahlin distributed) and agreed with Sandy that the card be made more widely available.

The committee recommends that in addition to the Medicaid Helpline business card, “an informational (3-or-4 fold business card size) brochure (for recipients) should be created and include the following messages and information:

- “How to get the most out of your Medicaid coverage” (title),
- Take good care of your health,
- Use our resources wisely,
- Be informed,

- Medicaid program rules and health care practice change over time and it is your responsibility to stay informed,
- Call the Recipient Helpline if you have questions at 1 (800) 780-9972 or email the helpline at [RecipientHelp@acs-inc.com](mailto:RecipientHelp@acs-inc.com)\*\*
- Use the recipient handbook <http://hss.alaska.gov/dhcs/PDF/MedicaidRecipientHandbook.pdf> \*\*\*and website at [http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dhcs/medicaid\\_medicare/helpline.htm](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dhcs/medicaid_medicare/helpline.htm)
- Keep your medical appointments,
- Bring your stickers (to your appointments), and
- Other Medicaid phone numbers (DPA eligibility, Denali KidCare, State Travel Office).”

Further, the committee also finds that the Alaska Medicaid Recipient Services handbook link and the Medicaid Helpline link be given names that are shorter and easier to recall. Those existing links are: <http://hss.alaska.gov/dhcs/PDF/MedicaidRecipientHandbook.pdf> (\*\* above), and [http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dhcs/medicaid\\_medicare/helpline.htm](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dhcs/medicaid_medicare/helpline.htm) (\*\*\*) above).

Finally, the committee also recommended the letter from the Division of Public Assistance to recipients notifying them that their Medicaid (application) has been approved should be updated. In the letter, the recipient should be asked if they want a copy of the Alaska Medicaid Recipient Services handbook and given information on how to obtain one. They should also be told that “if the recipient has questions they should call the Medicaid Helpline.” Further, the Medicaid Helpline business card (noted above) should be included in the envelope with the letter to recipients, and when produced, the informational 3-or-4 fold business card size brochure should also be included in the envelope. The department should also produce magnets with the same information as the Medicaid Helpline business card.

On behalf of the MCAC, we would like to thank you for your careful consideration of these recommendations.

Sincerely,



Tracy Charles-Smith  
Chair



Lorilyn Swanson  
Vice Chair  
Medical Care Advisory Committee

cc: Kimberli Poppe-Smart, Deputy Commissioner