



"UniteOurVoices" Newsletter # 148

October 26, 2016

Clarification to proposed changes for the GAPP, SOURCE, CCSP, NOW and COMP waivers for children under the age of 21 years of age.

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Dearest Advocates:

Many of you received an email from CHOA (Children's Healthcare of Atlanta) last week regarding proposed changes to the GAPP, SOURCE, CCSP, NOW and COMP waivers and the impact on children under the age of 21 years of age. I have been in discussions with Department of Community Health (DCH) and Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) in the last week and wanted to clarify this matter:

1. The Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA) email was inaccurate regarding access to the CCSP/SOURCE/NOW/COMP waivers for children under 21.
2. The Georgia Pediatric Program (GAPP) provides for skilled nursing and personal support services for children under 21 years of age as part of the Georgia Medicaid State Plan.
3. Federal Medicaid guidelines are very clear that Georgia Medicaid State Plan services need to be accessed BEFORE any waiver services. A waiver is considered "extra" services that federal Medicaid doesn't require to be provided in the State Plan (such as hospital and physician services).
4. To follow these guidelines, DCH has begun educating case managers about the availability of personal support services/community living support under the State Plan. Guidance includes that as children are newly entering the system, if they are only in need of personal supports, that they should be referred to GAPP; however, if they need other services offered through a waiver they can also proceed with application to the waiver program as well (which includes the NOW/COMP waivers).
5. For children under the age of 21 years of age, Medicaid has to provide

services under Early & Periodic Screening Diagnostic & Treatment (EPSDT).

This protects children. To learn more about EPSDT:

<http://www.georgialegalaid.org/resource/a-parents-guide-to-epsdt-medicaid-benefits?ref=7u7Cn>

6. Currently, only families of children under 21 years of age that will be impacted by this change are those **NEW** to the system. If a child qualifies for personal support/community living support they will access those services under GAPP. If the child needs the other services under NOW/COMP waiver, then they may have access to services under that program. So in theory, a child under 21 yrs. of age could have both the GAPP and NOW/COMP waiver.
7. **No** decision has been made at this time on when and if children under 21 years of age that **currently** have either the CCSP/SOURCE or NOW/COMP waiver will be impacted.
8. DCH's goal is to be in compliance and have continuity of care of services when medically necessary for personal support.
9. I have been given a promise by DCH that when DCH is ready to present its proposal for those families impacted, stakeholders (families) will have an opportunity to make comment and voice their concerns. (I know many families would be concerned because they currently are participant directed for personal support services and would want to continue that option. Those are issues families would need to get involved with to make sure there is a continuity of services at a future date to be determined)

If you should have any questions regarding this change and how it may impact your child's waiver and services, please contact the following:

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I hope you find this information helpful. It has taken over a week to research and talking to various employees at DCH and DBHDD on this matter. This information is based on what I was told at the current time and may change. I think it is something that we will need to continue to monitor and get involved with as the need arises. As always, I will let you know as I hear more information. Please share this information to families that maybe impacted by this change.

"United - We Will Make A Difference"

Sincerely,

Heidi J. Moore

Parent Advocate for Children & Adults with Disabilities and Cancer

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