

ATCA Medicaid Work Group Report for April 10 & 11th meeting

Work group: Medicaid and 3rd Party Payer

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Summary of activities since last meeting:

Work group activities include looking at the Alaska Medicaid coverage of tobacco cessation, and coming up with short, intermediate and long terms goals to change the coverage to better serve Alaskans. This includes collecting past information about the original Medicaid coverage work group recommendations, gathering information from key Medicaid personnel on how to change coverage, and comparing our state coverage to other states.

Medicaid short term goals include:

1. Point of visit- change the regulation that only allows tobacco cessation reimbursement for patients seen only for tobacco, to patients that are seen for other issues and tobacco.
2. Allowing coverage of combination nicotine replacement therapies.
3. Allowing coverage of other nicotine replacement therapies prior to patch failure.

Medicaid intermediate goals:

1. Discontinuing prior authorization for nicotine patches.
2. Changing the reimbursement to higher rate for current provider types.

Medicaid long term goal:

1. Change provider types to allow tobacco treatment specialists to be a Medicaid reimbursable provider type.

The group is also looking at third party payer coverage of tobacco cessation. Research was done on third party payers in Alaska. We created a strategy to inform and encourage major employers in Alaska to adopt a gold standard of coverage for tobacco cessation.

Summary of activities or discussions anticipated for the next 4 months:

- Work on the short tem goals for Medicaid and discuss the intermediate and long term goals with Medicaid personnel.
- Create material addressing the best coverage for tobacco cessation and send the information to the Benefit Officers of top Alaskan employers.