

ATCA Medicaid Work Group Report for Feb 12 & 13 meeting

Work group: Medicaid and 3rd Party Payer

Chair and contact information: Andrea Thomas

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Main work group members: Kathy Allely, Bill Bouwens, Christine Brubaker, Karlene Borja, David Campana, Carrie Enoch, Renee Gayhart, Debra Golden, Chris Grangaard, Jessica Harvill, Erin Peterson, and Marilyn Thomson and Lynda Koski. In addition, 13 other people receive the information.

Summary of activities since last meeting:

Medicaid:

A subset of this group is preparing information for Kathy Allely, and other division leaders, to meet with top Medicaid officials to move the Medicaid recommendations forward. Current discussion is centered on what can be changed administratively and how to best prepare backup documentation (i.e. cost utilization information) The Drug Utilization Committee met about our recommendations, but we have been unable to get the full record of their discussions.

Medicaid Recommendations

- Allowing coverage of combination nicotine replacement therapies.
- Adding a first line pharmacotherapy (inhaler)
- Allowing coverage of other nicotine replacement therapies prior to patch failure.
- Discontinuing prior authorization for nicotine patches.
- 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.
- Change provider types to allow tobacco treatment specialists to be a Medicaid reimbursable provider type.

Insurance:

The group was lucky enough to have Carol White from Premera attend our last meeting to help the group understand how the insurance companies cover tobacco cessation and how to best influence change in the 3rd party payer system. The group is looking into surveying the top state insurers (Premera, Etna, Great West and Oregon Dental). Two surveys are being looked at: *Addressing Tobacco in Managed Care-Survey of Health Insurers* and the *CDC State Medicaid Tobacco Dependence Treatment Survey*. Insurance companies have lots of different plans, so assessing what they cover is difficult. We will likely try to get information from the top selling coverage's for fully insured small group and large client plans. One thing that Carol White shared is that insurance companies are really moving into funding health promotion as the increases in health care costs are not sustainable. Often the missing link is people not knowing what their insurance covers, so current coverage for things like tobacco cessation are underutilized.

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

- Continue to work with Medicaid personnel to work toward changes on tobacco cessation coverage.
- Explore the possibility of a insurance survey to top Alaska insurers and how to best promote utilization of tobacco cessation benefits