

## **ATCA Medicaid Work Group Report for September 09 meeting**

**Work group:** Medicaid and 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Payer

**Chair and contact information:** Andrea Thomas

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**Main work group members:** Kathy Allely, Scotty Barr, Bill Bouwens, Christine Brubaker, Karlene Borja, Carrie Enoch, Renee Gayhart, Chris Grangaard, Michael Handricks, Jessica Harvill, Alan Moma, and Marilyn Thomson, Lynda Koski, and Laurie Wiese. In addition, 13 other people receive the information.

### **Summary of activities since last meeting:**

For the past year the ATCA Medicaid and Third Party Payer Workgroup has been working to develop and promote a set of suggested changes to the current Alaska Medicaid benefit for tobacco cessation counseling and medications.

Recently, the workgroup received pre-notification that the following changes to the benefit have been recommended by the Medicaid Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Committee:

- 1) Prior authorization requirements will be removed for all covered cessation pharmacotherapies except for nasal spray. However to retain some control, new “to be determined” maximum quantity limits will be implemented for NRT and Chantix.
- 2) The “fail first” on patches requirement will be eliminated so clients can try any of the covered NRT options first.

Please note that the changes are NOT YET in effect. Medicaid staff anticipate that the “programming” for these changes will be submitted sometime this summer (2009). In the past when changes occurred to medication coverage and protocol, an official explanatory letter from the State Medicaid Pharmacy Program has been disseminated to providers. We are currently exploring and planning how to best get the word out among grantee communities.

Members of the team went to the National Conference on Tobacco and Health and became aware of a Multi-State Collaborative for Health Systems change. Six states have been funded to do the type of work this current workgroup is undertaking. A great number of lessons learned and helpful tools have already been developed. We have currently been to three teleconferences with this group to gather information on how to proceed in Alaska.

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

- Promote the Medicaid changes in grantee communities when they are made public
- Look at the success of other states in the Multi-State Collaborative and learn about the steps they took for changes in: insurance coverage, health plan education, state employee insurance coverage, large employee focused outreach and education to leverage purchasing health plans that include tobacco cessation, targeted collaboration, Quit line tie with insurance, and Medicaid changes.