

Alaska Tobacco Control Alliance Medicaid and Third-Party Payer Workgroup  
*Report for the Health Services Finance Committee Nov 4, 2009*

The workgroup received confirmation that the work order for changes to the Medicaid Tobacco Cessation medication benefit approved by the Medicaid Drug Utilization Review Committee in Fall 2008 have been submitted to the claims contractor. Medicaid program staff can not provide any information on timeline for implementation. These changes include elimination for prior authorization of all cessation medications (except the nicotine nasal spray) and elimination of the requirement for nicotine patch use failure prior to coverage for other forms of nicotine replacement therapy such as the gum, lozenge or nasal spray.

Once we have received confirmation of, or timeline for, implementation of these changes the workgroup plans to design a utilization promotion campaign to promote tobacco cessation benefit utilization in general and update providers statewide on the changes to the medication benefit. Tentative plans are to target healthcare providers, benefits managers/HR professionals and potentially billing/coding staff. **If committee members have any input on strategy for the promotional campaign, suggestions on partners to collaborate with or ideas for design/format or dissemination of the materials please contact the workgroup chair, Andrea Thomas, [andrea.thomas@searhc.org](mailto:andrea.thomas@searhc.org).**

We received updated utilization data from the Medicaid Program. Utilization of both the prescription and counseling benefits remain low.

FY09

127,504 = Total adults enrolled in Medicaid  
\$68.6 million = Total Medicaid dollars spent on all prescription drugs after rebates

Tobacco Cessation Counseling 94 Counseling Claims Submitted  
74 Claims Paid  
\$1,229 Total Payments Made

Tobacco Cessation Medications 2,030 Claims Submitted (808 recipients)  
\$147,551 Total Payments Made

FY08

124,600 = Total adults enrolled in Medicaid  
\$67.8 million = Total Medicaid dollars spent on all prescription drugs after rebates

Tobacco Cessation Counseling 48 Counseling Claims Submitted  
26 Claims Paid  
\$239.51 Total Payments Made

Tobacco Cessation Medications 5,378 Claims Submitted (2,261 recipients)  
\$552,483 Total Payments Made

The workgroup has been in communication with Kathy Allely, State of Alaska Chronic Disease Section Chief. Now that we have updated utilization data Ms. Allely will be organizing a meeting in December or January with Renee Gayhart, Michelle Lyons-Brown and core workgroup members to discuss how best to collaborate on pursuing

changes to reduce barriers to the tobacco cessation counseling benefit. Options on the agenda for discussion include:

- Opportunities to synergize our efforts with other related DHHS initiatives and identification of other groups/committees we should be in communication with as we move forward with efforts to reduce counseling benefit utilization barriers
- Physician (or provider)-extender status for Tobacco Treatment Specialists (TTS)
  - Having TTSs provide services under supervision of another provider type who is Medicaid billable
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Clinicians
  - Utility of working with the various licensing groups to incorporate tobacco cessation treatment training as part of licensure requirements, perhaps via an endorsement
  - Opportunities to achieve reimbursement for tobacco cessation treatment services of behavioral health providers under the substance abuse/behavioral health regulation re-writes currently in progress
- TTS as its own license and Medicaid Provider-type
  - The ANTHC Tobacco Treatment Specialist Training became the first nationally accredited TTS training in Summer 2009, by the Association for the Treatment of Tobacco Use and Dependence (ATTUD). ATTUD would be supportive of and can provide resources for establishment of the TTS as an independently licensed provider-type at the state level.