



COMMISSIONER
Chris Traylor

December 29, 2010

To: Community Based Alternatives Providers
Consumer Directed Services Agencies
Day Activity and Health Services Providers
Integrated Care Management 1915(c) Waiver Providers
Primary Home Care Providers
Consumer Managed Personal Attendant Services Providers

Subject: Community Services Information Letter No. 10-159
Updated Information: Expansion of the STAR+PLUS Program in the Dallas and Tarrant Service Areas

The purpose of this letter is to provide updated information on the expansion of the STAR+PLUS program in the Dallas and Tarrant service areas.

On February 1, 2011, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) will implement the Medicaid STAR+PLUS program in the Dallas and Tarrant service areas. STAR+PLUS offers integrated acute and long-term services and supports (LTSS) to the aged, blind, and disabled Medicaid population. HHSC awarded contracts to four health maintenance organizations (HMOs) to provide coverage for the delivery of these services; two plans for the Dallas service area, and two plans for the Tarrant service area.

The Dallas service area includes the following seven counties: Collin, Dallas, Ellis, Hunt, Kaufman, Navarro and Rockwall. The HMOs contracted to provide STAR+PLUS services in this service area are:

- Molina Healthcare of Texas (Molina); and
- Superior HealthPlan, Inc. (Superior).

The Tarrant service area includes the following six counties: Denton, Hood, Johnson, Parker, Tarrant and Wise. The HMOs contracted to provide STAR+PLUS services in this service area are:

- Amerigroup Texas Inc. (Amerigroup); and
- Bravo Health Texas, Inc. (Bravo).

As described in previous information letters, Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) LTSS providers affected by this expansion are those contracted to provide services through the Integrated Care Management (ICM) 1915(c) waivers, Consumer Managed Personal Attendant Services (CMPAS), Primary Home Care (PHC), and Day Activity and Health Services (DAHS) programs and currently serve DADS individuals in the Dallas and Tarrant service areas.

Tarrant Service Area Operations - Bravo Enrollment Suspension

In the Tarrant service area, HHSC has placed Bravo on temporary enrollment suspension. While Bravo's enrollment is suspended, Tarrant service area members will be enrolled in Amerigroup. Once Bravo demonstrates operational readiness, HHSC will lift Bravo's enrollment suspension, allowing members to enroll in their health plan, possibly as early as April 1, 2011.

Impact of Bravo Enrollment Suspension: STAR+PLUS Enrollment

As a result of the Bravo enrollment suspension, Tarrant service area members who previously selected Bravo will be transferred to Amerigroup. Once the enrollment suspension is lifted, all Tarrant service area members will be informed about the availability of a second health plan.

Impact of Bravo Enrollment Suspension: DADS LTSS Individuals

SSI or SSI-related Medicaid individuals who are enrolled in the STAR+PLUS program include those currently authorized by DADS to receive ICM 1915(c) waiver services, CMPAS, PHC, and DAHS. As a result of the Bravo enrollment suspension, Tarrant service area members who selected LTSS providers who only contracted with Bravo will need to select LTSS providers who have contracted with Amerigroup.

Impact of Bravo Enrollment Suspension: DADS LTSS Providers

STAR+PLUS HMOs contract with LTSS providers, authorize LTSS directly, and pay their network providers directly. As a result, HMO requirements for executing contracts, documenting service delivery, and billing for delivered services may be different from those of DADS. In previous STAR+PLUS communications, DADS recommended that any current LTSS provider in the Dallas and Tarrant service delivery areas contract with all HMOs providing STAR+PLUS services in those areas. Any current LTSS providers that contracted with Bravo but did not contract with Amerigroup will be impacted by the Bravo enrollment suspension.

The HHSC STAR+PLUS contract with the HMOs includes a provision to ensure continuity of care for DADS providers affected by the Bravo enrollment suspension. These providers will need to execute a contract with Amerigroup.

STAR+PLUS Provider Communications

DADS has a link to the HHSC STAR+PLUS Expansion website on each DADS provider web page for those programs impacted by the STAR+PLUS expansion project. DADS will continue to publish information regarding the transition of the ICM 1915(c) waiver, CMPAS, PHC, and DAHS programs into the STAR+PLUS program on these websites.

For general information about the STAR+PLUS program, please refer to the HHSC STAR+PLUS website at <http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/starplus/Overview.htm#top>.

STAR+PLUS Contact Information

If you have questions regarding the Bravo enrollment suspension, please contact HHSC-Managed Care Operations via email or fax as indicated below:

Email starplus_dfw_exp2011@hhsc.state.tx.us
Fax: (512) 491-1976

The HHSC staff monitoring the email box and fax line will ensure all incoming communications are forwarded to the appropriate staff for resolution. At this time, HHSC will only respond to inquiries submitted by email or fax.

If you have general questions about the components of DADS operations impacted by the STAR+PLUS expansion project, please contact Rhonda Pratt via email at rhonda.pratt@dads.state.tx.us or telephone at (512) 438-5813.

Sincerely,

[signature on file]

Teresa Richard
Director
Center for Policy Innovation

TR:lab