



State of New Jersey
Department of Human Services
Division of Medical Assistance & Health Services
and
Division of Disability Services

NEWSLETTER

Volume 13 No. 63

September 2003

TO: Home Health Agencies, Personal Care Assistance Agencies,
Homemaker Agencies providing Personal Care Assistant Services
- For Action
Health Maintenance Organizations - For Information Only

SUBJECT: Personal Care Assistant Services (PCA)

EFFECTIVE: **August 24, 2003**

PURPOSE: To inform providers of Personal Care Assistant Services (PCA) that the maximum number of hours of PCA services that can be provided to a beneficiary on a weekly basis is reduced from 40 hours to no more than 25 hours.

BACKGROUND: Currently, a provider of PCA services can request that a beneficiary be allowed to receive over 25 hours of PCA services, up to a maximum of 40 hours per week, if the beneficiary meets one of the four conditions listed in the Home Care Services Manual at N.J.A.C. 10:60-3.8(c)1 through 4. The State Fiscal Year 2004 Appropriations Act, P.L. 2003 c.122, supersedes this rule.

ACTION: Effective August 24, 2003, PCA services are limited to a maximum of 25 hours per week. Beneficiaries enrolled in Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver programs are exempt from this policy change. A provider agency may request an exemption for a non-waivered beneficiary when there is a substantial documented need that additional hours may be necessary.

The provider agency requesting an exemption for an emergency situation must contact the Division of Disability Services in writing or by phone at the address or phone number listed below. Requests for exemptions to the policy for non-waivered beneficiaries or inquiries regarding this Newsletter should be referred to:

**Division of Disability Services
Home and Community Services
PO Box 712
Quakerbridge Plaza, Bldg. 11 A
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0712
Phone: (609)-588-2620
Fax: (609)-588-7942**

Please note the following:

1. The reduction to a maximum of 25 hours to be billed effective August 24, 2003 will occur ONLY for those beneficiaries who do not have an approved Prior Authorization (PA) in place as of that date.
2. Any beneficiary who has a currently approved Prior Authorization (PA) for services in excess of 25 hours per week should continue to receive those hours in excess of 25 until the current PA expires, or is replaced with a new PA. Claims with a valid and active PA on the system will be paid, if the provider has verified that the beneficiary continues to be eligible for PCA service.
3. If the beneficiary continues to need more than 25 hours, a new PA request, based on the standard shown above, must be requested at least 30 days in advance of the expiration of the current PA.
4. The PA process is not being eliminated. It will continue as in the past. However, all PA requests will be evaluated to determine that there is a verified and substantial need.

If you have any questions regarding this change in PCA services policy, please contact Home and Community Services at (609)-588-2620

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