



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

**Department of
Health and Social Services**

DIVISION OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES
Director's Office

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April 19, 2018

The Honorable Paul Seaton
Co-Chair, House Finance Committee
Room 505
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

The Honorable Neal Foster
Co-Chair, House Finance Committee
Room 410
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representatives Foster and Seaton:

In the April 17, 2018, House Finance Committee hearing on Senate Bill 105 Representative Tammie Wilson asked me to provide the committee the following information:

1. When was the last time the state deleted a service from the state plan?

According to the historic state plan document files, in 1994, the state submitted, and received Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approval on, a state plan amendment (SPA) removing the following optional services for adults:

- a. Chiropractic services;
- b. Advanced nurse practitioner services;
- c. Dental care;
- d. Emergency hospital services;
- e. Speech, hearing, and language services;
- f. Vision care and eyeglasses; and
- g. Occupational therapy.

2. What is the process involved in removing a service from the Medicaid state plan?

When considering an optional service for removal from the state plan, the Division of Health Care Services (HCS) conducts an initial analysis of the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of the service as currently written and implemented. This analysis also includes an internal review of the services on the same page of the state plan as those sharing a page with the removed services will be reviewed by CMS and open to mandated changes.

Once Health Care Services completes its analysis, this report is shared with Department directors belonging to the Medicaid Directors Group, who analyze the issue to gain departmental consensus on the service removal.

Upon reaching consensus, a draft SPA is created for use during informal technical assistance with CMS. This process allows the state to provide CMS with the context for the SPA, gain knowledge regarding the roadblocks to SPA approval, and work through the majority of these issues prior to formal submission.

Once a draft of the SPA is completed, the state requests technical assistance from CMS via the Alaska contact in the Region X office, providing the draft SPA at this stage allows CMS to engage the appropriate subject matter experts for telephonic meetings with the state. During the non-binding informal technical assistance, both federal and state participants work to resolve any issues inherent to the proposed change or removal of an optional service. While the process is non-binding, Alaska has seen positive results in reduced time between submission and approval from this type of engagement with the federal authorities.

Sincerely,



Margaret C. Brodie
Director

Cc: The Honorable David Wilson, Alaska State Senate
Valerie Nurr'araaluk Davidson, Commissioner
Jon Sherwood, Deputy Commissioner
Darwin Peterson, Legislative Director, Office of the Governor
Randall Burns, Director, Division of Behavioral Health