

**NEWS RELEASE** | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | October 15, 2020

## **ND Medicaid expands access to behavioral health services, hosts training for providers on new coverage options**

BISMARCK, ND – The North Dakota Department of Human Services has proposed several amendments to its Medicaid State Plan to expand access to behavioral health services for individuals eligible for traditional Medicaid coverage.

North Dakota Medicaid will pay a flat rate per week for all services related to medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorders. Another notable Medicaid State Plan coverage change includes the addition of withdrawal management services, previously known as detoxification services, which are used to help treat substance use disorders.

These proposed changes will shift some expenditures from the state-funded Substance Use Disorder Voucher to North Dakota Medicaid making federal funding available for the services.

Once approved by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the medication-assisted treatment and withdrawal management services will be considered Medicaid-covered services. Medicaid payments for these services will be available retroactively to Oct. 1, 2020.

### **Provider Training**

The department's Medical Services and Behavioral Health divisions are hosting a virtual training for providers and others interested in learning more about the expanded coverage options on Monday, Oct. 26 at noon CT. The training will be held by [Microsoft Teams](#) and by conference call at 701-328-0950, conference ID: 677 329 702#.

"These changes are good for our Medicaid members who need treatment services for substance use disorders," said Medical Services Division Director Caprice Knapp. "A tremendous amount of collaboration went into crafting these state plan changes to best serve vulnerable North Dakotans."

In 2019, the North Dakota legislature added withdrawal management services to the department's appropriation bill. CMS now requires all state Medicaid programs to cover medication-assisted treatment as a mandatory benefit for eligible individuals.

"The expansion to cover medication-assisted treatment and withdrawal management for individuals suffering from a substance use disorder aligns to our state's goals of ensuring access to quality care for all North Dakotans," said Behavioral Health Division Director Pamela Sagness. "By providing individuals access to more medically-necessary services, they have an increased ability to recover and live fulfilled lives."

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People needing accommodations to attend the training should contact Stacy Koehly at 701-328-4807, toll-free 800-755-2604, 711 (TTY) or [skoehly@nd.gov](mailto:skoehly@nd.gov).

Individuals interested in learning more about the new medication assisted treatment policy can visit [www.nd.gov/dhs/services/medicalserv/medicaid/docs/mat-policy.pdf](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/medicalserv/medicaid/docs/mat-policy.pdf).

North Dakota's Medicaid State Plan is an agreement between the state and federal government that outlines how the state will operate its Medicaid program. The plan covers many topics from program administration to provider reimbursement and is updated regularly through state plan amendments.

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