

**NEWS RELEASE** | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | April 30, 2020

## **Human Services submits Medicaid state plan amendment to federal government to expand home and community-based behavioral health services**

BISMARCK, N.D. – Late yesterday, the North Dakota Department of Human Services submitted its draft Medicaid 1915(i) state plan amendment to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to expand home and community-based behavioral health services for children and adults.

Once approved, the Medicaid 1915(i) state plan amendment will allow North Dakota Medicaid to pay for additional in-home and community-based services for individuals with mental health conditions, substance use disorders and/or brain injuries. These services include educational, employment and housing supports; community transition services; peer support; care coordination; respite care and other supportive services.

“Over the past year, stakeholders have been very engaged in identifying needed behavioral health services and providing feedback on the draft amendment,” said Pamela Sagness, Behavioral Health Division director. “We are grateful for everyone’s recommendations and look forward to increasing access to vital behavioral health services and supports for North Dakotans.”

North Dakota lawmakers authorized the department to develop and implement a Medicaid 1915(i) state plan amendment during the 2019 legislative session. Department officials created an aggressive strategy to gather input and recommendations for the amendment by hosting six community meetings throughout the state last fall. Over 200 individuals provided comments at the meetings or submitted comments online.

The public also provided over 100 comments and recommendations during the 30-day public comment period from Feb. 18 to March 19, 2020.

“A tremendous amount of collaboration has occurred to create the draft state plan amendment,” said Caprice Knapp, Medical Services Division Director. “This is a very exciting opportunity to expand access to behavioral health services and supports that can make a difference in the lives of the people we serve.”

The department expects final approval of the Medicaid 1915(i) state plan amendment by early fall.

For more information, visit [www.nd.gov/1915i](http://www.nd.gov/1915i).

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