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CMS Approves 1115 Waiver for KanCare

Approval grants state the authority to continue Medicaid program

TOPEKA – The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) announced today that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved the state’s 1115 waiver extension application. The 1115 waiver grants the state of Kansas the authority to operate KanCare, the state’s managed care program.

“I want to thank Administrator Seema Verma and the rest of the Trump administration for approving our 1115 waiver extension,” said Governor Jeff Colyer, M.D. “With the extension, our state can continue to be innovative in the way we address the health care needs of Kansans.”

“I want to congratulate Governor Colyer and his team for their hard work and commitment to serving Kansans,” said CMS Administrator Seema Verma. “The renewal of KanCare will strengthen their program by expanding access to substance use disorder treatment and other supportive services and ensure that this program will continue to deliver value to their state.”

The approved Kansas 1115 waiver extension application included the state requesting authority to implement a supported employment pilot for individuals with disabilities; a waiver of the 15-day monthly maximum on Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Institute for Mental Disease (IMD) utilization for members ages 21-64; and request to extend the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program until an alternative payment model (APM) model will be in place. To gain CMS approval of the 1115 waiver extension the state also had to demonstrate that the federal expenditures were going to be less with the proposed waiver versus operating a program without a waiver.

“It was a collaborative effort and I couldn’t be prouder of the state Medicaid staff that worked on this effort,” said State Medicaid Director Jon Hamdorf. “The CMS team led by Deputy Administrator Mary

Mayhew was fantastic and the assistance from our partners at Navigant Healthcare and Optumas, our actuary firm, were instrumental in our success in getting the waiver extension approved.”

“We want to thank CMS for their partnership as we seek to be innovative in finding ways to create better access,” said KDHE Secretary Jeff Andersen. “This approval will make it easier for Kansans to receive the necessary care to stay healthy.”

In the original 1115 waiver extension application, the state also requested authority to implement a community engagement/work requirements program and a new community service coordination program. However, these programs are not going to be implemented in January due to direction given by the legislature through a budgetary proviso. For these programs to be implemented, the state would need to amend the currently approved waiver to negotiate the terms and conditions of those programs.

The approved version of the 1115 waiver extension will be available shortly on the KanCare website at: www.kancare.ks.gov

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