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Letter of Direction #89

Date: December 9, 2022

To: Centennial Care 2.0 Managed Care Organizations

From: Nicole Comeaux, Director, Medical Assistance Division 

Subject: Prior Authorization Requirements for Skilled Nursing, Long-Term Care, and Home Health Facilities during the New Mexico Public Health Emergency

Title: Suspension of Prior Authorization Requirements for Skilled Nursing, Long-Term Care, and Home Health Facilities

The purpose of this Letter of Direction (LOD) is to provide guidance and directives to the Centennial Care 2.0 Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) for modifications of program requirements related to the Public Health Emergency Order declared by the New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) on December 5, 2022.

Increased demand for in-patient care resulting from RSV, Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) and COVID-19 has caused acute care facilities (ACF) in New Mexico to expand their inpatient and intensive care units beyond normal capacity. As an individual who receives treatment in an ACF stabilizes, a skilled nursing, long-term care, or home health facility/agency may be able to provide necessary ongoing in-patient care. When medically appropriate, transferring a patient from an ACF to one of these alternative settings frees capacity in the ACF.

Therefore, HSD directs MCOs to waive all prior authorization requirements relating to the discharge and transfer of any patient from an ACF to a skilled nursing, long-term care, or home health facility/agency for the duration of this public health emergency.

This LOD is an exemption to requirements outlined in Section 2c of Special COVID-19 LOD #9-1.

This LOD will sunset upon the end of the DOH declared public health emergency.