

Office of Long-Term Living COVID-19 Update

April 14, 2020

Agenda

- Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Operations and Priorities
 - Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL) Priorities
 - Community HealthChoices Managed Care Organization (CHC-MCO) Updates
 - LIFE Program Updates
 - Enrollment Updates
- OLTL 1915c Waiver Appendix K
- Personal Care Homes and Assisted Living Residences
- PASRR Process Updates

LTSS Operations and Priorities

Current OLTL priorities related to COVID-19 include but are not limited to:

- Keeping people safe as best we can including participants and staff.
- Minimizing potential service interruptions and provider capacity issues.
- Creating flexibilities through the 1915c Appendix K and 1135 waivers to decrease procedural and regulatory burdens for providers.
- Identifying sources of PPE and distribution mechanisms in collaboration with Public Partnerships, LLC., the CHC-MCOs, and other stakeholders.
- Distributing information and resources to all stakeholders.

CHC-MCO priorities have included:

- Activating emergency response protocols to ensure the continuity of operations and services.
- Providing ongoing provider guidance and updates.
- Conducting ongoing check-in calls with participants to verify back-up plans, identify unmet needs, and ensure participant has access to essential home items.
- Distributing participant COVID-19 resources including fact sheets, safety information, and behavioral health resources.

Participant-Directed Services Updates

Public Partnerships, LLC. (PPL) priorities include:

- Implementing an expedited enrollment process for new DCWs to address potential gaps in services.
- Compiling a variety of resources including webinars and FAQs for DCWs and Common Law Employers.
- Collaborating with OLTL and the CHC-MCOs to distribute PPE to participant-directed workers.

LIFE Program Updates

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- All LIFE providers were instructed to close their day centers effective March 17th until further notice. This impacted 58 locations.
- LIFE providers are able to continue to utilize their clinic and therapy spaces to provide necessary medical and therapy services to their participants.
- LIFE providers are ensuring that individuals continue to receive services in their homes.

Independent Enrollment Broker (IEB)

- The IEB has adapted their daily operations to continue application and enrollment activities in a timely manner.
- Initial in-home visits and functional eligibility determinations are being completed telephonically.
- The outreach team is completing daily calls for physician certifications.

OLTL 1915(c) Waiver Appendix K

OLTL 1915c Waiver Appendix K

- The changes outlined in Appendix K provide flexibilities for CHC-MCOs, service coordinators, and providers as they work with participants who may be facing a disruption in services due to COVID-19 related issues.
- The flexibilities outlined in Appendix K will not apply to all participants and should not be considered broad changes that must be implemented.
- The Appendix K changes have been approved from March 6, 2020 through June 30, 2020. The duration of the approval may be extended depending on the length of the declared emergency.

Guidance for Determining Whether Appendix K Applies

- Flexibilities outlined in Appendix K should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in coordination with the service coordinator and CHC-MCOs.
- The revised Appendix K guidance that will be released on the OLTL listservs includes questions that can be utilized to determine whether requests and authorizations will be covered under Appendix K.

All Waiver Services:

- Services may not be reduced on the Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP), except when requested by the participant or their representative. However, it is possible that not all services on the PCSP will be delivered during the emergency.
- Providers should be given flexibility to ensure delivery of crucial, life-sustaining services and if necessary, delay less crucial services such as laundry and changing linens.
- The CHC-MCOs may need to identify and prioritize services to participants with critical issues and simultaneously allow for missed shifts for participants who have adequate informal supports or less-critical issues.

Temporary changes outlined in Appendix K include, but are not limited to:

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for paid direct care workers (DCWs) and unpaid/informal caregivers such as gloves, gowns and masks can be obtained under specialized medical equipment and supplies.
- Spouses, legal guardians and powers of attorney may serve as paid DCWs only when scheduled workers are not available due to COVID-19 and the participant's emergency backup plan cannot be implemented.
- Incident Management and Provider Documentation

Temporary changes outlined in Appendix K (continued):

- Person-Centered Service Planning, Comprehensive Needs Assessments, and Annual Reassessments
- Retainer Payments to Address Emergency-Related Issues
- Modifications to provider qualifications and service settings for Adult Day Services, Residential Habilitation, and Structured Day Habilitation
- Provision of Cognitive Rehabilitation, Behavior Therapy, Counseling, and Structured Day Habilitation remotely.

Personal Care Homes and Assisted Living Residences

Temporary Changes

- OLTL has suspended, with conditions, specific license regulations for Personal Care Homes and for Assisted Living Residences.
- OLTL has also imposed restrictions on visitations and temporarily suspends annual inspections.
- Additional detail on the temporary suspension of specific licensing requirements is included in guidance that has been released through the OLTL listservs.

Learning and Support Network

- DHS, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, and several regional health systems, have partnered to launch a collaborative learning and support network offering additional resources to Personal Care Homes and Assisted Living Residences.
- Resources include:
 - Online forums and educational resources.
 - Weekly webinars.
 - Web-based clinical supports from physicians and clinical professionals.

PASRR Process Updates

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- Standard requirement for PASRR level two assessments is to have them completed in the hospital at the same time as the clinical assessment required for nursing facility eligibility.
- The 1135 waiver allows for a 30-day delay in these assessments in all cases.
- OLTL has decided to apply this waiver only on a case-by-case basis for following reasons:
 - A blanket waiver would create disruptions for those individuals who are determined to be inappropriate for nursing facility placement after they were already placed.
 - Nursing facilities are experiencing capacity pressure and other challenges and a blanket waiver would only increase this pressure.
 - A 30 day delay may create a backlog for assessors while the COVID-19 crisis period is still active.

COVID-19 Resources

- DOH Website:
<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>
- DHS Provider Website:
<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Pages/Coronavirus-2020.aspx>
- DHS Citizen Website:
<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Pages/Coronavirus-Citizen-Resources.aspx>

Questions?

