

STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS AND RULES

ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

IN THE MATTER OF: [REDACTED],
Claimant

Reg. No: 2009-3154
Issue No: 2009
Case No: [REDACTED]
Load No: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date:
February 5, 2009
Oakland County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Linda Steadley Schwarb

HEARING DECISION

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37 upon claimant's request for a hearing. After due notice, a hearing was held on February 5, 2009. Claimant appeared and testified. Claimant was represented by [REDACTED].

ISSUE

Did the Department of Human Services (DHS or department) properly determine that claimant is not "disabled" for purposes of the Medical Assistance (MA-P) program?

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the competent, material and substantial evidence on the whole record, finds as material fact:

(1) On May 9, 2008, an application was filed on claimant's behalf for MA-P and State Disability Assistance (SDA) program benefits. The application requested MA-P retroactive to March of 2008.

(2) On June 3, 2008, the department approved SDA benefits but denied MA-P benefits.

(3) On August 19, 2008, a hearing request was filed on claimant's behalf to protest the denial of his request for MA-P benefits.

(4) Claimant's SDA, which opened in June of 2008, was closed in November of 2008 based on claimant's failure to provide verification of his ongoing eligibility.

(5) Claimant, age 54, has an 11th grade education.

(6) Claimant last worked in March of 2008 as a carpenter. Claimant has also performed relevant work as a welder and construction worker.

(7) Claimant has a history of tobacco abuse.

(8) On March 18, 2008, claimant fell from a ladder and sustained multiple left rib fractures with bilateral pleural effusions. Claimant was hospitalized March 19th through March 21st of 2008.

(9) Claimant's rib fractures and pleural effusions improved within 12 months from the date of onset.

(10) The allegations concerning claimant's impairments and limitations, when considered in light of all objective medical evidence, as well as the record as a whole, do not reflect an individual who is so impaired as to be incapable of engaging in any substantial gainful activity for a continuous period of not less than 12 months.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Medical Assistance (MA) program is established by Title XIX of the Social Security Act and is implemented by Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The Department of Human Services (DHS or department) administers the MA program pursuant to MCL 400.10,

et seq., and MCL 400.105. Department policies are found in the Program Administrative Manual (PAM), the Program Eligibility Manual (PEM) and the Program Reference Manual (PRM).

Federal regulations require that the department use the same operative definition for “disabled” as used for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) under Title XVI of the Social Security Act. 42 CFR 435.540(a).

“Disability” is:

...the inability to do any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment which can be expected to result in death or which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months
... 20 CFR 416.905

In general, claimant has the responsibility to prove that he is disabled.

Claimant’s impairment must result from anatomical, physiological, or psychological abnormalities which can be shown by medically acceptable clinical and laboratory diagnostic techniques. A physical or mental impairment must be established by medical evidence consisting of signs, symptoms, and laboratory findings, not only claimant’s statement of symptoms. 20 CFR 416.908; 20 CFR 416.927. Proof must be in the form of medical evidence showing that the claimant has an impairment and the nature and extent of its severity. 20 CFR 416.912. Information must be sufficient to enable a determination as to the nature and limiting effects of the impairment for the period in question, the probable duration of the impairment and the residual functional capacity to do work-related physical and mental activities. 20 CFR 416.913.

In determining whether an individual is disabled, 20 CFR 416.920 requires the trier of fact to follow a sequential evaluation process by which current work activity, the severity of the impairment(s), residual functional capacity, and vocational factors (i.e., age, education, and work

experience) are assessed in that order. When a determination that an individual is or is not disabled can be made at any step in the sequential evaluation, evaluation under a subsequent step is not necessary.

First, the trier of fact must determine if the individual is working and if the work is substantial gainful activity. 20 CFR 416.920(b). In this case, claimant reports that he is not working. Accordingly, claimant may not be eliminated from MA at this step in the sequential evaluation process.

Secondly, the trier of fact must determine if claimant has a severe impairment which meets the durational requirement. Unless an impairment is expected to result in death, it must have lasted or be expected to last for a continuous period of at least 12 months. 20 CFR 416.909. In this case, claimant fractured his left ribs and suffered pleural effusions in March of 2008. Claimant was hospitalized for his fractures and discharged on March 21, 2008. At discharge, he was encouraged to only perform light work as tolerated. The discharge instructions indicated that claimant could return to work after having a follow-up appointment with his family doctor in one week. Thereafter, there is no record of additional medical treatment. There is nothing in the hearing record to suggest that claimant has limitations which resulted or are expected to result in the inability to do any substantial gainful activity for a continuous period of not less than 12 months. The record fails to present the required medical data and evidence necessary to support a finding that claimant has an impairment which prevented or has prevented any substantial gainful activity for the 12-month durational requirement. Accordingly, the undersigned finds that the department has properly determined that claimant is not eligible for MA based upon disability.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that claimant is not “disabled” for purposes of the Medical Assistance program.

Accordingly, the department’s determination in this matter is hereby AFFIRMED.

/s/

Linda Steadley Schwarb
Administrative Law Judge
for Ismael Ahmed, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: 4/16/09

Date Mailed: 4/20/09

NOTICE: Administrative Hearings may order a rehearing or reconsideration on either its own motion or at the request of a party within 30 days of the mailing date of this Decision and Order. Administrative Hearings will not order a rehearing or reconsideration on the Department's motion where the final decision cannot be implemented within 90 days of the filing of the original request.

The Claimant may appeal the Decision and Order to Circuit Court within 30 days of the mailing of the Decision and Order or, if a timely request for rehearing was made, within 30 days of the mailing date of the rehearing decision.

LSS/cv

cc:

