

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING SYSTEM
FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH**

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IN THE MATTER OF:

██████████,

Appellant

Docket No. 2011- 26331 EDW

Case No. ██████████

DECISION AND ORDER

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37 upon the Appellant's request for a hearing.

After due notice, a hearing was held ██████████. ██████████, daughter, appeared on the Appellant's behalf. ██████████, Director of MI Choice Program, appeared on behalf of ██████████, the Department of Community Health's MI Choice program waiver agency (hereafter, Department). ██████████

██████████ Appeared as a witness for ██████████

ISSUE

Did the Department properly discontinue the Appellant's Home Delivered Meals under the MI Choice Waiver program?

FINDINGS OF FACT

Based upon the competent, material, and substantial evidence presented, I find, as material fact:

1. The Appellant is a ██████ year old Medicaid beneficiary, and enrolled in the MI Choice Waiver program.
2. The Appellant has been receiving up to 5 lunches per week as home delivered meals under the MI Choice Waiver program. (Exhibit 1, page 2)
3. The Appellant lives with her daughter, who is also an informal support for the Appellant and her back up caregiver. (Director of MI Choice Program and RN Care Manager Testimony)

4. The eligibility criteria for persons receiving home delivered meals through the waiver program include that the participant is unable to obtain food or prepare meals, does not have an adult living at the same residence or in the vicinity that is able and willing to prepare all meals, and does not have a paid caregiver that is able and willing to prepare meals for the participant. *Michigan Department of Community Health Minimum Operating Standards for the MI Choice Waiver Program Services, Attachment H, Last Revised August 20, 2010, Page 28.* (Exhibit 2, page 1)
5. The Appellant's daughter is in the home, but is unwilling to prepare lunches for the Appellant. (Daughter Testimony and Exhibit 5, pages 3-4)
6. The Appellant has a paid caregiver, and the authorized care tasks include meal preparation. (Exhibit 1, page 1)
7. On [REDACTED], the waiver agency issued notice to the Appellant that home delivered meals would be discontinued effective [REDACTED] (Exhibit 4, page 1)
8. On [REDACTED], the Appellant requested a formal administrative hearing. (Exhibit 5, pages 2-4)

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Medical Assistance Program is established pursuant to Title XIX of the Social Security Act and is implemented by Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). It is administered in accordance with state statute, the Social Welfare Act, the Administrative Code, and the State Plan under Title XIX of the Social Security Act Medical Assistance Program.

The Appellant is claiming services through the Department's Home and Community Based Services for Elderly and Disabled (HCBS/ED). The waiver is called MI Choice in Michigan. The program is funded through the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to the Michigan Department of Community Health (Department). Regional agencies, in this case U.P. Area Agency on Aging UPCAP Services, functions as the Department's administrative agency.

Waivers are intended to provide the flexibility needed to enable States to try new or different approaches to the efficient and cost-effective delivery of health care services, or to adapt their programs to the special needs of particular areas or groups of recipients. Waivers allow exceptions to State plan requirements and permit a State to implement innovative programs or activities on a time-limited basis, and subject to specific safeguards for the protection of recipients

and the program. Detailed rules for waivers are set forth in subpart B of part 431, subpart A of part 440, and subpart G of part 441 of this chapter.

42 CFR 430.25(b)

A waiver under section 1915(c) of the [Social Security] Act allows a State to include as “medical assistance” under its plan, home and community based services furnished to recipients who would otherwise need inpatient care that is furnished in a hospital, SNF [Skilled Nursing Facility], ICF [Intermediate Care Facility], or ICF/MR [Intermediate Care Facility/Mentally Retarded], and is reimbursable under the State Plan.

42 CFR 430.25(c)(2)

Home and community based services means services not otherwise furnished under the State’s Medicaid plan, that are furnished under a waiver granted under the provisions of part 441, subpart G of this subchapter.

42 CFR 440.180(a)

Home or community-based services may include the following services, as they are defined by the agency and approved by CMS:

- Case management services.
- Homemaker services.
- Home health aide services.
- Personal care services.
- Adult day health services
- Habilitation services.
- Respite care services.
- Day treatment or other partial hospitalization services, psychosocial rehabilitation services and clinic services (whether or not furnished in a facility) for individuals with chronic mental illness, subject to the conditions specified in paragraph (d)¹ of this section.

Other services requested by the agency and approved by CMS as cost effective and necessary to avoid institutionalization.

42 CFR 440.180(b)

1 Services for the chronically mentally ill.

It is undisputed that the Appellant has a need for personal care services.

The MI Choice waiver defines Service and Personal Care as follows:

“A range of assistance to enable program participants to accomplish tasks that they would normally do for themselves if they did not have a disability. This may take the form of hands-on assistance (actually performing a task for the person) or cueing to prompt the participant to perform a task. Personal care services may be provided on an episodic or on a continuing basis. Health-related services that are provided may include skilled or nursing care to the extent permitted by State law. Personal care under the waiver differs in scope, nature, supervision arrangements or provider type (including provider training and qualifications) from personal care services in the State plan. The differences between the waiver coverage and the State plan are that the provider qualification and the training requirements are more stringent for personal care as provided under the waiver than the requirements for this services under the State plan. Personal care includes assistance with eating, bathing, dressing, personal hygiene, and activities of daily living. This service may include assistance with preparation of meals, but does not include the cost of the meals themselves. When specified in the plan of care, this service may also include such housekeeping chores as bed making, dusting and vacuuming which are incidental to the service furnished, or which are essential to the health and welfare of the individual, rather than the individual's family. Personal care may be furnished outside the participant's home. The participant oversees and supervises individual providers on an ongoing basis when participating in SD options.”
(Emphasis supplied)

MI Choice Waiver, April 9, 2009;
Page 45

Medicaid beneficiaries are only entitled to medically necessary Medicaid covered services. See 42 CFR 440.230.

In the present case, the Appellant has been receiving up to 5 lunches as home delivered meals through the MI Choice Waiver Services program. (Exhibit 1, page 2) The eligibility criteria for persons receiving home delivered meals through the waiver program include:

- a. The participant must be unable to obtain food or prepare complete meals.
- b. The participant does not have an adult living at the same residence or in the vicinity that is able and willing to prepare all meals.
- c. The participant does not have a paid caregiver that is able and willing to prepare meals for the participant.
- d. The provider can appropriately meet the participant's special dietary needs and the meals available would not jeopardize the health of the individual.
- e. The participant must be able to feed himself/herself.
- f. The participant must agree to be home when meals are delivered, or contact the program when absence is unavoidable.

Michigan Department of Community Health, Minimum Operating Standards for the MI Choice Waiver Program Services, Attachment H, Last Revised August 20, 2010, Page 28. (Exhibit 2, page 1)

The Director of MI Choice Program explained that the Appellant's home delivered meals were discontinued because she has informal supports or agency staff available to cover her meals. It was uncontested that the Appellant lives with her daughter. The RN Care Manager asserted that the Appellant's daughter is available to prepare meals for the Appellant. The waiver agency also provided documentation that the care tasks authorized for the Appellant's paid caregiver includes meal preparation. (Exhibit 1, page 1) The RN Care Manager explained that the paid caregiver's hours could be adjusted so these aids could be there at lunch. She also stated that the Appellant's daughter is the back up staff if the paid caregiver is unavailable. (RN Care Manager Testimony)

The Appellant's daughter disagrees with the discontinuation of home delivered meals. She explained that the Appellant prefers the home delivered meals as these meals are better quality and more nutritional than the soup or cold sandwich she had prior to receiving home delivered meals. The Appellant also benefitted from the visitation she enjoyed when the meals were delivered. Even if the paid caregivers prepare meals, discontinuation of home delivered meals would result in additional responsibilities for the Appellant's daughter, such as planning the Appellant's menu and shopping for additional foods to have ready for the aids to prepare the Appellant's lunches. (Daughter Testimony and Exhibit 5, pages 3-4)

[REDACTED]
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While this ALJ sympathizes with the Appellant's circumstances, and does not doubt that the Appellant benefitted from receiving home delivered meals, she must review the action taken by the waiver agency under the existing policy. Even if the Appellant's daughter is unwilling to prepare all meals, the Appellant does not qualify for home delivered meals because she has paid caregivers for homemaker tasks, including meal preparation. The waiver agency's determination must be upheld.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based on the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, finds the Department properly discontinued the Appellant's home delivered meals under the MI Choice Waiver program.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that:

The Department's decision is **AFFIRMED**.

Colleen Lack
Administrative Law Judge
for Olga Dazzo, Director
Michigan Department of Community Health

cc:

[REDACTED]

Date Mailed: 6/29/2011

***** NOTICE *****

The Michigan Administrative Hearing System for the Department of Community Health may order a rehearing on either its own motion or at the request of a party within 30 days of the mailing date of this Decision and Order. The Michigan Administrative Hearing System for the Department of Community Health will not order a rehearing on the Department's motion where the final decision or rehearing cannot be implemented within 90 days of the filing of the original request. The Appellant may appeal the Decision and Order to Circuit Court within 30 days of the mailing date 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.