

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
STATE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS AND RULES  
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR THE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 2011-11629  
Issue No: 2001  
Case No: [REDACTED]  
Load No:  
Hearing Date:  
March 24, 2011  
Genesee County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Jay W. Sexton

**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 telephone hearing was held on March 24, 2011, in Flint. Claimant did not appear. Claimant was represented by [REDACTED].

The department was represented by Justin Best (AP Worker).

The Administrative Law Judge appeared by telephone from Lansing.

**ISSUES**

- (1) Did the department correctly process claimant's MA application for March 15, and May 15, 2010?
- (2) Does the Administrative Law Judge have jurisdiction to remedy Bridges malfunctions, including the nonpayment of benefits to an MA client who meets all DHS eligibility requirements?

**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 June 30, 2010, claimant's representative [REDACTED] filed an application for MA benefits to cover a hospital admission (March 15, 2010).

- (2) The caseworker properly processed claimant's application and determined that claimant met the MA deductible requirement for the March 15, 2010 admission.
- (3) The caseworker made the necessary notations on the Bridges system to establish that claimant's MA deductible had been met for the month of March and notified Bridges to issue payment for the March 15, 2010 admission.
- (4) On July 13, 2010, a Bridges Notice was entered on the system showing that claimant met her MA deductible. However, the Bridges system refused to authorize payments.
- (5) On February 11, 2011, the caseworker obtained a ticket from the Bridges Network notifying the network that claimant's hospital bill had not been paid, even though, claimant met all MA eligibility requirements.
- (6) Subsequently, the Bridges system notified the caseworker that claimant's ticket was considered a "high emergent" ticket.
- (7) On June 30, 2010, claimant filed an MA application for MA coverage of a hospital admission dated May 5, 2010.
- (8) The caseworker processed claimant's case and determined that claimant met her MA spend-down of \$1,396 for the May 5, 2010 admission.
- (9) The caseworker notified the Bridges system that claimant was eligible for payment of her May 5, 2010 hospital bill.
- (10) The Bridges system refused to grant benefits, in spite of the fact that the caseworker, on July 13, 2010, notified Bridges that all MA eligibility requirements had been met.
- (11) On February 11, 2011, the caseworker obtained a Bridges ticket (high emergent) in an effort to provide claimant with MA services to which he was entitled. The Bridges administrator indicated that there was no timeframe for the correction of the Bridges error which was documented by the caseworker on February 11, 2011 regarding the March and May 2010 hospital admissions.
- (12) On December 6, 2010, claimant filed a timely hearing request.

### **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).

The preponderance of the evidence in the record establishes that the department correctly processed claimant's MA application, for the purpose of obtaining hospital coverage for a March 15 and May 5, 2010 admission.

After preparing an MA eligibility budget, the caseworker determined that claimant met her MA spend-down for March and June (\$1,396) and was eligible to receive MA benefits for the purpose of paying two hospital bills. However, due to a longstanding intractable Bridges malfunction, the caseworker has been unable to obtain an eligibility certification from the Bridges system even though the caseworker has done all of the processing correctly and has determined that claimant is financial eligible for MA benefits.

Finally, the caseworker contacted the Bridges administrator and requested that the necessary changes be made to the system so that claimant's hospital bills for March and May can be paid. As of February 11, 2011, the Bridges system has refused payment on claimant's March and May hospital bills and has indicated there is no timeframe for correcting the Bridges error.

The undersigned Administrative Law Judge is required to limit his jurisdiction to those matters which are specifically authorized under the current Delegation of Authority issued by the Director. The Delegation of Authority states as follows:

Administrative law judges have no authority to make decisions on constitutional grounds, overrule statutes, overrule promulgated regulations or overrule or make exceptions to the department policy set out in the program manuals. Delegation of Hearing Authority, February 2011, per PA 1939, Section 9, Act 280.

The Michigan Administrative Code (MAC) R 400.903 states the following:

- (1) An opportunity for a hearing shall be granted to an applicant who requests a hearing because his claim for assistance is denied or is not acted upon with reasonable promptness, and to any recipient who was aggrieved by an agency action resulting in the **suspension, reduction, discontinuance, or termination** of assistance.

**DECISION AND ORDER**

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that the caseworker correctly processed claimant's application for MA benefits and that the department's computer system (Bridges) refuses to authenticate her eligibility and refuses to authorize payment for her hospital stays on March 15 and May 5, 2010. The non-payment of claimant's hospital bills is a violation of DHS policy and practice.

Accordingly, the DHS's action is REVERSED and remanded. Claimant's MA-P application is remanded to Genesee DHS to reprocess and to issue all benefits to which claimant is entitled, forthwith.

SO ORDERED.

/s/ \_\_\_\_\_  
Jay W. Sexton  
Administrative Law Judge  
For Maura D. Corrigan, Director  
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: May 26, 2011

Date Mailed: May 27, 2011

**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 receipt of the Decision and Order or, if a timely request for rehearing was made, within 30 days of the receipt date of the rehearing decision.

JWS/tg

cc:

