

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING SYSTEM
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 201261352
Issue No.: 2009
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: October 24, 2012
County: Saginaw

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Janice G. Spodarek

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, an in-person hearing was held on October 24, 2013. Claimant was represented by [REDACTED], of [REDACTED] of Troy, MI.

ISSUE

Did the Department of Human Services (DHS) properly deny Claimant's Medical Assistance (MA) application?

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 3/27/12, Claimant applied for MA with the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS).
2. Claimant did not apply for retro MA.
3. On 4/16/12, the MRT denied.
4. On 4/20/12, the DHS issued notice.
5. On 6/25/12, Claimant filed a hearing request.
6. On 8/6/12, the State Hearing Review Team (SHRT) denied Claimant. Pursuant to the Claimant's request to hold the record open for the submission of new and additional medical documentation, on 3/8/13 SHRT once again denied Claimant.

7. Claimant has been denied SSI with the Social Security Administration (SSA) approximately 4 times. Claimant testified that she was denied in 2012 for verifications reasons.
8. Claimant is a [REDACTED]-year-old [REDACTED] standing 5'1 and weighing 170 pounds. Claimant's BMI is 32.1 classifying Claimant as obese under the body mass index. Claimant indicated that this is a normal weight for her.
9. Claimant testified that she does not have any alcohol/drug abuse problem or history. Claimant's labs repeatedly indicate Claimant has high AST/SGOT; ALT/SGPT. Claimant smokes. Claimant has a nicotine addiction.
10. Claimant has a [REDACTED] and can drive an [REDACTED]
11. Claimant has a [REDACTED]
12. Claimant is not currently working. Claimant last worked at the Salvation Army. Claimant's work history is medium, unskilled.
13. Claimant alleges disability on the basis of hepatitis C, herniated discs, arthritis, diabetes, and depression.
14. The 8/6/12 SHRT findings and conclusions of its decision are adopted and incorporated by reference herein/to the following extent:

Medical Summary:

3/12 hospital admission indicates Claimant treated for chest pain. Blood pressure 116/67. Physical exam normal. Mood and affect normal. Fully oriented and demonstrated intact memory. EKG was negative for ischemia. Stress test was negative.

Analysis:

Evidence in file does not document a severe impairment. Medical history indicates diabetes and hepatitis C; however, physical exams, lab findings, and testing are normal. Therefore, Claimant does not have severe mental or physical impairment.

Recommendation:

Denied per 20 CFR 416.921(a). Exhibit 136.

15. The 3/813 subsequent SHRT decision is adopted and incorporated by reference herein/to the following extent:

...New Medical....

2008-2010 office visits – Claimant was treated for hepatitis C, back pain, hypertension, headaches. Physical exams are within normal limits.

Analysis:

Evidence in file does not document a severe impairment. Medical history indicates diabetes and hepatitis C; however, the physical exams, lab findings and testing are normal. Therefore, Claimant does not have a severe mental or physical impairment.

Recommendation:

Denied per 20 CFR 416.921(a).

16. Claimant was admitted on 3/10/12 with a fever. Claimant was admitted with chest pains, hepatitis C and diabetes mellitus. Claimant's condition was guarded. Claimant was discharged in stable condition. Physical exam normal, mood and effect normal, fully oriented, [REDACTED] was negative for ischemia, stress test negative.
17. Claimant testified at the administrative hearing that she essentially is able to engage in most of her activities of daily living including her bathroom and grooming needs. Claimant complains that her hands "sometimes lock up on her due to arthritis." Claimant's symptoms are not documented in the great bulk of the medical evidence.

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).

In order to receive MA benefits based upon disability or blindness, Claimant must be disabled or blind as defined in Title XVI of the Social Security Act (20 CFR 416.901). DHS, being authorized to make such disability determinations, utilizes the SSI definition of disability when making medical decisions on MA applications. MA-P (disability), also is known as Medicaid, which is a program designated to help public assistance

Claimants pay their medical expenses. Michigan administers the federal Medicaid program. In assessing eligibility, Michigan utilizes the federal regulations.

Relevant federal guidelines provide in pertinent part:

"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.

The federal regulations require that several considerations be analyzed in sequential order:

...We follow a set order to determine whether you are disabled. We review any current work activity, the severity of your impairment(s), your residual functional capacity, your past work, and your age, education and work experience. If we can find that you are disabled or not disabled at any point in the review, we do not review your claim further.... 20 CFR 416.920.

The regulations require that if disability can be ruled out at any step, analysis of the next step is not required. These steps are:

1. If you are working and the work you are doing is substantial gainful activity, we will find that you are not disabled regardless of your medical condition or your age, education, and work experience. 20 CFR 416.920(b). If no, the analysis continues to Step 2.
2. Does the client have a severe impairment that has lasted or is expected to last 12 months or more or result in death? If no, the client is ineligible for MA. If yes, the analysis continues to Step 3. 20 CFR 416.909(c).
3. Does the impairment appear on a special Listing of Impairments or are the client's symptoms, signs, and laboratory findings at least equivalent in severity to the set of medical findings specified for the listed impairment that meets the duration requirement? If no, the analysis continues to Step 4. If yes, MA is approved. 20 CFR 416.920(d).

4. Can the client do the former work that he/she performed within the last 15 years? If yes, the client is ineligible for MA. If no, the analysis continues to Step 5. Sections 200.00-204.00(f)?
5. Does the client have the Residual Functional Capacity (RFC) to perform other work according to the guidelines set forth at 20 CFR 404, Subpart P, Appendix 2, Sections 200.00-204.00? This step considers the residual functional capacity, age, education, and past work experience to see if the client can do other work. If yes, the analysis ends and the client is ineligible for MA. If no, MA is approved. 20 CFR 416.920(g).

At application Claimant has the burden of proof pursuant to:

...You must provide medical evidence showing that you have an impairment(s) and how severe it is during the time you say that you are disabled. 20 CFR 416.912(c).

Federal regulations are very specific regarding the type of medical evidence required by Claimant to establish statutory disability. The regulations essentially require laboratory or clinical medical reports that corroborate Claimant's claims or Claimant's physicians' statements regarding disability. These regulations state in part:

...Medical reports should include --

- (1) Medical history.
- (2) Clinical findings (such as the results of physical or mental status examinations);
- (3) Laboratory findings (such as sure, X-rays);
- (4) Diagnosis (statement of disease or injury based on its signs and symptoms).... 20 CFR 416.913(b).

...Statements about your pain or other symptoms will not alone establish that you are disabled; there must be medical signs and laboratory findings which show that you have a medical impairment.... 20 CFR 416.929(a).

...The medical evidence...must be complete and detailed enough to allow us to make a determination about whether you are disabled or blind. 20 CFR 416.913(d).

Medical findings consist of symptoms, signs, and laboratory findings:

- (a) **Symptoms** are your own description of your physical or mental impairment. Your statements alone are not enough to establish that there is a physical or mental impairment.
- (b) **Signs** are anatomical, physiological, or psychological abnormalities which can be observed, apart from your statements (symptoms). Signs must be shown by medically acceptable clinical diagnostic techniques. Psychiatric signs are medically demonstrable phenomena which indicate specific psychological abnormalities e.g., abnormalities of behavior, mood, thought, memory, orientation, development, or perception. They must also be shown by observable facts that can be medically described and evaluated.
- (c) **Laboratory findings** are anatomical, physiological, or psychological phenomena which can be shown by the use of a medically acceptable laboratory diagnostic techniques. Some of these diagnostic techniques include chemical tests, electrophysiological studies (electrocardiogram, electroencephalogram, etc.), roentgenological studies (X-rays), and psychological tests. 20 CFR 416.928.

It must allow us to determine --

- (1) The nature and limiting effects of your impairment(s) for any period in question;
- (2) The probable duration of your impairment; and
- (3) Your residual functional capacity to do work-related physical and mental activities. 20 CFR 416.913(d).

Information from other sources may also help us to understand how your impairment(s) affects your ability to work. 20 CFR 416.913(e).

...You can only be found disabled if you are unable 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. See 20 CFR 416.905. Your impairment must result from anatomical, physiological, or psychological abnormalities

which are demonstrable by medically acceptable clinical and laboratory diagnostic techniques.... 20 CFR 416.927(a)(1).

It is noted that Congress removed obesity from the Listing of Impairments shortly after the removal of drug addition and alcoholism. This removal reflects the view that there is a strong behavioral component to obesity. Thus, obesity in-and-of itself is not sufficient to show statutory disability.

Applying the sequential analysis herein, Claimant is not ineligible at the first step as Claimant is not currently working. 20 CFR 416.920(b). The analysis continues.

The second step of the analysis looks at a two-fold assessment of duration and severity. 20 CFR 416.920(c).

After careful review of the substantial and credible evidence on the whole record, the undersigned Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) concurs with the SHRT decision in finding the Claimant not disabled pursuant to 20 CFR 416.921(a).

In reaching this conclusion, it is noted that Claimant has had a number of tests and lab reports which are essentially normal, negative or without significance under the MA-P statutory disability program – during Claimant’s hospitalization Claimant’s blood pressure 116/67. Physical exam normal. Mood and affect normal. Claimant was fully oriented and demonstrated intact memory. An EKG was negative for ischemia and a stress test was negative.

Regarding Claimant’s hepatitis C, Claimant was treated and there does not appear to be any evidence to indicate that the hepatitis C interferes with Claimant’s ability to engage in work or work like settings.

Claimant’s physical exams are within normal limits.

There is no indication that Claimant has any mental depression which interferes with her ability to function on a daily basis and/or to engage in work or work like settings.

Claimant has the burden of proof from Step 1 to Step 4. 20CFR 416.912(c). Federal and state law is quite specific with regards to the type of evidence sufficient to show statutory disability. 20 CFR 416.913. This authority requires sufficient medical evidence to substantiate and corroborate statutory disability as it is defined under federal and state law. 20 CFR 416.913(b), .913(d), and .913(e); BEM 260. These medical findings must be corroborated by medical tests, labs, and other corroborating medical evidence that substantiates disability. 20 CFR 416.927, .928. Moreover, complaints and symptoms of pain must be corroborated pursuant to 20 CFR 416.929(a), .929(c)(4), and .945(e). Claimant’s medical evidence in this case, taken as a whole, simply does not rise to statutory disability by meeting these federal and state requirements. 20 CFR 416.920; BEM 260, 261.

For these reasons, for the reasons state above, statutory disability is not shown.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that the department's actions were correct.

Accordingly, the department's determination in this matter is UPHELD.

/s/

Janice G. Spodarek
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura D. Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: 5/6/13

Date Mailed: 5/6/13

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.

Claimant may request a rehearing or reconsideration for the following reasons:

- A rehearing **MAY** be granted if there is newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the original hearing decision.
- A reconsideration **MAY** be granted for any of the following reasons:
- misapplication of manual policy or law in the hearing decision,
- typographical errors, mathematical error , or other obvious errors in the hearing decision that effect the substantial rights of the Claimant;
- the failure of the ALJ to address other relevant issues in the hearing decision

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Request must be submitted through the local DHS office or directly to MAHS by mail at
Michigan Administrative Hearings
Reconsideration/Rehearing Request
P.O. Box 30639
Lansing, Michigan 48909-07322

JGS/tb

cc:

