

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

P.O. Box 30763, Lansing, MI 48909
(877) 833-0870; Fax: (517) 373-4147

IN THE MATTER OF:

██████████,

Docket No. 15-019410 MHP
Case No. ██████████

Appellant

_____ /

DECISION AND ORDER

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and 42 CFR 431.200 *et seq.*, following the Appellant's request for a hearing.

After due notice, a hearing was held on ██████████. Appellant appeared and testified. ██████████, Lead Grievance and Appeal Team appeared and testified on behalf of Priority Health Choice of Michigan (Priority Health or MHP or Respondent).

Respondent's Exhibit A pages 1-31 were admitted as evidence.

ISSUE

Did the MHP properly deny the Appellant's request for out of network provider services?

FINDINGS OF FACT

Based on the competent, material, and substantial evidence presented, the Administrative Law Judge finds as material fact:

1. ██████████ Choice of Michigan is a Qualified Health Plan contracted with the State of Michigan Comprehensive Health Care Program.
2. Appellant is a Medicaid benefit recipient who was an enrolled member of ██████████ Choice of Michigan at the time of the request for services and continues to be enrolled.
3. The ██████████ Choice member handbook and certificate of coverage were sent at the time of enrollment.
4. The Member Handbook outlines covers limitations, prior authorization requirements, limitations and exclusions, and pharmacy guidelines.

5. On ██████████, ██████████ received a Prior Authorization request from Appellant's physician for out of network provider services to see ██████████ Rheumatologist.
6. Upon review of the information provided, the request for coverage was denied because the service may be obtained by a Priority Health network provider.
7. On ██████████, Notice of Denial was sent to Appellant and the physician stating that there is no documentation showing the service is not able to be provided by a network provider or that there are no network providers within the member's local service area.
8. On ██████████, Appellant filed a request for a hearing with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to contest the Department's negative action.

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.

On May 30, 1997, the Department received approval from the Health Care Financing Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, allowing Michigan to restrict Medicaid beneficiaries' choice to obtain medical services only from specified MHPs.

The Respondent is one of those MHPs.

The covered services that the Contractor has available for enrollees must include, at a minimum, the covered services listed below. The Contractor may limit services to those which are medically necessary and appropriate, and which conform to professionally accepted standards of care. The Contractor must operate consistent with all applicable Medicaid provider manuals and publications for coverages and limitations. If new services are added to the Michigan Medicaid Program, or if services are expanded, eliminated, or otherwise changed, the Contractor must implement the changes consistent with State direction in accordance with the provisions of Contract Section 2.024.

Although the Contractor must provide the full range of covered services listed below they may choose to provide services over and above those specified. The covered services provided to enrollees under this Contract include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Ambulance and other emergency medical transportation
- Blood lead testing in accordance with Medicaid Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) policy
- Certified nurse midwife services
- Certified pediatric and family nurse practitioner services
- Chiropractic services
- Diagnostic lab, x-ray and other imaging services
- Durable medical equipment (DME) and supplies
- Emergency services
- End Stage Renal Disease services
- Family planning services (e.g., examination, sterilization procedures, limited infertility screening, and diagnosis)
- Health education
- Hearing and speech services
- Hearing aids
- Home Health services
- Hospice services (if requested by the enrollee)
- Immunizations
- Inpatient and outpatient hospital services
- Intermittent or short-term restorative or rehabilitative services (in a nursing facility), up to 45 days
- Restorative or rehabilitative services (in a place of service other than a nursing facility)
- Medically necessary weight reduction services
- Mental health care – maximum of 20 outpatient visits per calendar year
- Out-of-state services authorized by the Contractor
- Outreach for included services, especially pregnancy-related and Well child care
- Parenting and birthing classes
- Pharmacy services
- Podiatry services
- Practitioners' services (such as those provided by physicians, optometrists and dentists enrolled as a Medicaid Provider Type 10)
- Prosthetics and orthotics
- Tobacco cessation treatment including pharmaceutical and behavioral support
- Therapies (speech, language, physical, occupational) excluding services provided to persons with development disabilities which are billed through Community Mental Health Services Program (CMHSP) providers or Intermediate School Districts.
- Transplant services

- Transportation for medically necessary covered services
- Treatment for sexually transmitted disease (STD)
- Vision services
- Well child/EPSTD for persons under age 21 [Article 1.020 Scope of [Services], at §1.022 E (1) contract, 2010, p. 22].

(1) The major components of the Contractor's utilization management (UM) program must encompass, at a minimum, the following:

- (a) Written policies with review decision criteria and procedures that conform to managed health care industry standards and processes.
- (b) A formal utilization review committee directed by the Contractor's medical director to oversee the utilization review process.
- (c) Sufficient resources to regularly review the effectiveness of the utilization review process and to make changes to the process as needed.
- (d) An annual review and reporting of utilization review activities and outcomes/interventions from the review.
- (e) The UM activities of the Contractor must be integrated with the Contractor's QAPI program.

(2) Prior Approval Policy and Procedure

The Contractor must establish and use a written prior approval policy and procedure for UM purposes. The Contractor may not use such policies and procedures to avoid providing medically necessary services within the coverages established under the Contract. The policy must ensure that the review criteria for authorization decisions are applied consistently and require that the reviewer consult with the requesting provider when appropriate. The policy must also require that UM decisions be made by a health care professional who has appropriate clinical expertise regarding the service under review. [Contract, *Supra*, p. 49].

As stated in the Department-MHP contract language above, a MHP "must operate consistent with all applicable Medicaid Provider Manuals and publications for coverages and limitations."

The ██████████ Handbook and Certificate of Coverage and the State of Michigan Medicaid Provider Manual provided rules and standard which the MHP must follow. In the instant case, the conditions required for coverage were not met based upon the medical information submitted with the Prior Authorization request. The Medicaid Health Plan (MHP) does not have discretion to approve Appellant's request without documentation that the service cannot be provided by network providers. The decision to deny the request for authorization must be upheld. ██████████ has identified

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many (45) approved gastroenterology specialty providers in the [REDACTED] Network of Providers within 50 miles of Appellant's address.

Appellant has failed to satisfy the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the MHP improperly denied the requested service. The decision to deny the request for out of network services must be upheld under the circumstances.

DECISION AND ORDER

Based on the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, the Administrative Law Judge finds that the MHP's original denial of the Appellant's request for out of network services was proper.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that:

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



Landis Y. Lain

Administrative Law Judge
for Nick Lyon, Director
Michigan Department of Health and Human
Services

LYL/[REDACTED]

cc: [REDACTED]

Date Signed: January 8, 2016

Date Mailed: January 8, 2016

***** NOTICE *****

The Michigan Administrative Hearing System 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 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.