Dear PCS Providers:

At the request of the New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD), the Centennial Care Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) are using this standard notification for messaging consistency and to reduce your administrative burden.  General questions about this notification may be directed to any MCO. Please contact any of your Provider Representatives.

***The information below is current as of the date of publication; however, we anticipate that guidance and directives will change as this health emergency evolves. We strongly encourage providers to check for updates to the*** [***Letter of Direction***](https://www.hsd.state.nm.us/LookingForInformation/centennial-care-letters-of-direction.aspx) ***(LOD) on the New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD) website daily.***

HSD has issued an LOD, which requires PCS agencies follow the guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for home-based care services. Those guidelines can be found at the web address below:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html>

The New Mexico Centennial Care MCOs encourage providers to familiarize themselves with these recommendations and check the website for updates on a regular basis, a minimum of once per week through the termination of the emergency declaration.

HSD, in collaboration with other state agencies has issued new guidance on background checks and fingerprints during the Public Health Emergency (PHE). Employees must complete applications for processing through the NM Abuse Registry and Caregiver On-Line Registry (COR). If approved, these employees can begin working.

New employees are allowed flexibility for submission of fingerprints and do not have to submit fingerprints prior to beginning to work. All employees must submit fingerprints cards within thirty (30) days of the termination of the PHE. Employees who fail the background check or fail to submit a fingerprint card within thirty (30) days of the termination of the PHE must be removed from employment immediately.

**Caregiver Shortages**

We are aware that many of our PCS agencies have had staffing challenges because of the PHE. This has been especially challenging, but not specific to, rural areas of the state. If an agency believes they may not be able to provide a caregiver for a high-risk member, it is imperative that the agency contact the member’s Care Coordinator.

**Critical Incident Reporting**

Agencies should submit Critical Incident Reports (CIRs) for members who are refusing services due to COVID-19. Please document the Primary Incident Type/Subcategory as “Neglect/Self Neglect (refusing services)” and ensure that COVID-19 is documented as the reason in both the *Narrative* as well as the *Diary Entries* to support the incident narrative. Agencies should also document actions taken with the MCO related to the refusal for services (e.g., “Forwarded to Care Coordinator for follow-up. Member is temporarily stating they do not want services due to COVID-19”).

PCS agencies may submit one CIR per week in the event a member is refusing services, or the agency is unable to provide a caregiver for authorized services related to COVID-19.

**Back-Up Plan**

Please ensure you have deployed your agency’s back-up plan to members as needed. If your agency has not yet developed your back-up plan, please ensure the following risk stratification is considered when identifying which members will receive paid caregiver services:

* The availability of natural supports
* The acuity/needs of the member; those requiring total assistance should be prioritized first, etc.
* Other resources/community benefits accessed by the member; these include resources such as Meals on Wheels, senior center supports, adult day hab, etc.

Each agency must have protocols in place for assisting and directing caregivers to COVID-19 testing sites if the caregivers are displaying symptoms and in accordance with current New Mexico Department of Health guidelines for testing. Agencies should **not** report individual’s test results to the MCOs. Agencies must have protocols in place to ensure back-up plans are implemented in the event a member’s caregiver tests positive for COVID-19.

Agencies are required to continue use of the Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) system. If a member will be receiving PCS services at an alternative location(s) for an extended period of time, please notify the EVV contact at the respective MCO to avoid potential claim delays.

Each Centennial Care MCO has developed a webpage for provider information related to the COVID-19 crisis. The MCOs encourage all providers to familiarize themselves with the information available and to check for updates at least weekly throughout the crisis.

**Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico:**

<https://www.bcbsnm.com/provider/covid-19-preparedness.html>

**Presbyterian Health Plan:**

[https://www.phs.org/providers/Pages/coronavirus-covid-19.aspx](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/www.phs.org/providers/Pages/coronavirus-covid-19.aspx__;!!LAlM4g!mj_gpEZusqGqv54iSjZ3wvmvvKBPmNfAqYUSfbabzTC-zOVykoVpGWcEYAwAxAU9VGFx_Gc$)

**Western Sky Community Care:**

[https://www.westernskycommunitycare.com/members/medicaid/covid---19-resources.html](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/www.westernskycommunitycare.com/members/medicaid/covid---19-resources.html__;!!LAlM4g!gMLOVkMaP3xYOe9Ywz67WnQuRFH-onoQWDU_uMBMTdBrz8MVlgjUHFb9YRfYvsF2mQhdzI0$)

To maintain proper dissemination of information regarding the New Mexico Medicaid program during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) health crisis, a new page has been added to the NM Medicaid Provider Portal. The [NM Medicaid COVID-19](https://nmmedicaid.portal.conduent.com/static/covid.htm) page will be updated with information and resources to ensure Medicaid services are delivered, efficiently and without interruption, to NM Medicaid clients statewide.

During this crisis, the New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD), as the administrator of the NM Medicaid program, has requested waiver authority from our federal partners to enact temporary emergency alterations to our Medicaid program. All waiver requests and the current state of approval can be found on the [NM Medicaid COVID-19 page.](https://nmmedicaid.portal.conduent.com/static/covid.htm) Also included on the page is any special guidance, billing codes, provider supplements and MCO LODs that have been issued in response to the pandemic. A link to the [NM Department of Health Coronavirus](https://cv.nmhealth.org/) web page is also available on this page.