



Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) 516 West Loockerman St., Dover, DE 19904
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September 30, 2024

Planning and Policy Unit
Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance
1901 North DuPont Highway/P O Box 906
New Castle, DE 19720-0906

RE: 28 DE Reg. 230 DHSS/DMMA/DDDS Renewal of 1915(i) Pathways State Plan Amendment Regulations (September 1, 2024)

To Whom It May Concern:

The Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) has reviewed the Delaware Health and Social Services/Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance (DHSS/DMMA) proposal to amend the Medicaid State Plan in reference to the Pathways to Employment program. The amendment will extend the waiver of choice of provider, by restricting Pathways services to a designated number of contracted providers, as it has done in the past. Council **supports** the proposed amendment; however, we would like to share the following observations.

Council notes that the only change of consequence is to increase target numbers of people served. The target for this Year 5 of the current period is 875.

Pathways utilization is currently at less than capacity. Council would like to take this opportunity to ask DMMA and the other DHSS divisions what efforts DHSS will be undertaking to increase public awareness and participation in this program. Council would also like to request data regarding utilization, including breakdown by disability. DMMA might consider expanding services to include people with mental health disorders and substance use disorders, who are currently not eligible, even though they are eligible to be served under state plan 1915(i).

Additionally, DMMA could chose to expand financial eligibility (which is currently 150% FPL) up to 300% of the SSI standard for individuals who are on other waivers, which would allow more people to participate and work themselves out of poverty. Council encourages DMMA to expand eligibility to optional categorically eligible people.

Lastly, Council would ask that DMMA consider the reimbursement rates for personal care services, which are set below DMMA HHA rates. Setting a higher reimbursement rate would help to address personnel shortages by offering a living wage.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our support, recommendations and requests for information. Please feel free to contact Pam Weir or me should you have any questions on our comments.

Sincerely,

Ann C Fisher

Ann C. Fisher
Chairperson

ACF: kpc