



Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Department of Children, Youth & Families • Department of Elderly Affairs • Department of Health • Department of Human Services • Department of Mental Health, Retardation, & Hospitals

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Rhode Island Receives New Federal Grant Funds of \$3.6M to Support Implementation of the Medicaid Global Waiver

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) announced that they received a \$3.6 million dollar planning grant from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) for an integrated Information Technology (IT) system to support the changes outlined in the Medicaid Global Waiver. The planning grant is funded with 90 percent federal funds and 10 percent state funds. EOHHS will begin working on implementing the grant during this fiscal year, which began July 1, 2009. An additional implementation grant, also from CMS, will provide funds to implement the goals identified in the planning phase. This second phase will begin in late 2010 and will bring millions more in federal dollars into the state.

“In the last two years, the CMS has awarded many states planning and implementation grants to improve their IT systems,” said Gary Alexander, Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. “There’s a federal initiative underway to move all states to use a consistent approach – called Medicaid Information Technology Architecture or MITA- in state Medicaid programs. Rhode Island’s award was timed nicely to be part of the beginning of the Global Waiver initiatives. Part of the problem is that we have many data systems, but they’re not integrated and not readily accessible. We have an opportunity with this federal funding to streamline business processes and IT systems to accomplish our goals and enhance the Global Waiver.”

In addition to this new grant, Rhode Island had received CMS approval to develop the CHOICES Project. CHOICES has two parts - a Data Warehouse system for comprehensive reporting and a Community Supports Management system for managing Long Term Care application processing and care management functions. These core systems will be implemented in November 2009.

The CHOICES Project complements the goals of the new planning and implementation grant from CMS. Part of this new funding will enable additional data sources to be added to the CHOICES Data Warehouse. These additions will provide a broad spectrum of information on Medicaid and related human service programs allowing better coordination and management by EOHHS agencies. In essence, it gives the state a more modern IT infrastructure for the programs and services it administers. It also provides an intuitive, integrated data source for analysis and reporting. This will also facilitate more efficient budget forecasting and program planning as well as providing state workers with more comprehensive data to assist in improving and monitoring the quality of care and utilization for Medicaid beneficiaries. In addition, this grant will for the first time in the history of the

Medicaid program allow the state to enhance its goal of transparency by informing and educating each consumer [and family if applicable] on their own health care status and utilization by issuing a periodic “healthy report update”. These innovations will lead to healthier lifestyles, consumer empowerment and greater efficiencies and savings for the state in the future.

The new grant funding from CMS will also allow the state to make changes to its business processes and IT systems allowing them to adapt to meet the organization and system needs of the Global Waiver initiatives and prepare the state for the future. This is a large task that encompasses all the EOHHS state agencies and their various data systems. It also will give the State the management tools it needs to administer the RI Medicaid Program, which has increased in complexity over the last decade. The EOHHS looks forward to using this important grant to develop more modern IT systems with the capacity to meet the changing needs of the people and community Medicaid serves.

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