



Draft Chapter: Mandated Report on Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission

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Overview

- Congressional request for MACPAC study on non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT)
- Key findings
- Topics covered in the chapter

Congressional Request

- The Senate Appropriations Committee report language for fiscal year (FY) 2020 directs MACPAC to “...examine, to the extent data are available, the benefits of NEMT from State Medicaid programs on Medicaid beneficiaries, including beneficiaries with chronic diseases including ESRD, substance abuse disorders, pregnant mothers, and patients living in remote, rural areas, and to examine the benefits of improving local coordination of NEMT with public transportation and other Federally-assisted transportation services...”
- Request has no due date and does not require recommendations

Key Findings

- Although the portion of Medicaid beneficiaries who use NEMT is relatively small, NEMT plays a vital role in facilitating access to care for those who do use NEMT
- The extent to which NEMT programs meet the needs of beneficiaries varies widely across states and within states
- States and other entities that administer NEMT benefits are engaged in efforts to improve program administration and integrity and beneficiary satisfaction
 - E.g., adoption of new technologies, introduction of transportation network companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft

Key Findings – Continued

- Needs and use of NEMT may be affected by changes in use of telehealth
- Long-term effects are unclear and will require additional data
- NEMT is likely to continue to play a central role in helping beneficiaries access care, especially medical care that must be provided in person

Background

- Origin and evolution of federal NEMT requirements
- Overview of current federal requirements and state flexibility
- Past efforts to exclude NEMT from benefit packages

MACPAC Study Components

- Environmental scan and semi-structured interviews
 - Scan of state NEMT policies (all 50 states and D.C.)
 - Interviews with Medicaid officials in six states (AZ, CT, GA, IN, MA, and TX), federal officials from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the Federal Transit Administration, and other stakeholders
- Focus groups with beneficiaries who have used NEMT
 - Eight virtual focus groups with beneficiaries in the six study states
- Analysis of administrative data on NEMT utilization and spending
 - FY 2018 Transformed Medicaid Statistical Information System (T-MSIS) data

Transportation as an Access Enabler

- Examples of transportation-related barriers
- Survey data on beneficiaries who delayed care due to transportation barriers
 - Rates of reported transportation barriers among Medicaid beneficiaries by age, income, race and ethnicity, certain health conditions
 - Characteristics of beneficiaries who reported transportation barriers

How Beneficiaries Use NEMT

Characteristics of beneficiaries who use NEMT

- NEMT utilization by eligibility group, geographic area, and dually eligible status
- Health conditions of beneficiaries who use NEMT

Medical services accessed using NEMT

- Utilization by service destination for six states
- How focus group participants use NEMT

NEMT Delivery Models

- Overview of NEMT delivery models include in-house management, third party broker, or Medicaid managed care
- Advantages and drawbacks of different approaches
- Factors states consider when choosing a delivery model or planning a change in model

Services and Providers

- NEMT utilization by mode of transportation
- Factors that determine the mode of transportation used for each ride
- Increasing use of TNCs such as Uber and Lyft
- Provider network challenges

NEMT Program Quality

- Performance issues
 - E.g., late pickups, driver no-shows, vehicles that are ill-equipped, drivers that are unprofessional
- NEMT policies that create difficulties or access barriers for beneficiaries
 - E.g., requirement to book 48 or 72 hours ahead of appointment, policies that prohibit beneficiaries from bringing children or siblings, general lack of recourse for beneficiaries when they experience problems
- Strategies to improve performance and meet beneficiary needs
 - Opportunities for states and the federal government identified by stakeholders and focus group participants

Other Program Administration Issues

- Coordination with federally funded transportation services
 - Extent to which NEMT is coordinated, barriers to coordination
- Expanding use of technology in NEMT
 - Opportunities for enhanced program integrity, better beneficiary experience
- Program integrity
 - Issues identified by federal oversight authorities
 - New requirements enacted by P.L. 116-260

The Role of NEMT in Medicaid

- Role in beneficiary health
 - NEMT helps focus group participants maintain physical and mental health, promotes independence
- Value of NEMT
 - Some studies show cost savings or return on investment
 - Increased provision of transportation benefits by Medicare Advantage plans, other payers
- Implications of COVID-19 pandemic
 - Anecdotal information on changes in utilization and future outlook
 - More information needed to study the effects of increased access to telehealth over time



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