


November 2, 2023

Medical Care Advisory Committees (MCACs) and Beneficiary Engagement

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Overview

- Background on MCACs
- Key findings
- Policy options
- Next steps



Background on MCACs

- Federal regulations require every state to have a MCAC to advise the state Medicaid agency (42 CFR 431.12)
- CMS released a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) that would change federal MCAC rules:
 - Rename MCACs to Medicaid Advisory Committees (MACs);
 - Expand the scope of topics to be addressed outside of health and medical care services;
 - Establish Beneficiary Advisory Groups (BAGs); and
 - Require state agencies to publicly post information related to MAC and BAG activities

Key Findings

States Seek More Guidance on Effectively Engaging Beneficiaries

- State resource challenges limit additional engagement efforts
- Beneficiaries seek more technical assistance from state Medicaid agencies to engage in MCAC discussions
- State Medicaid officials had questions about the use of financial incentives
- The NPRM suggests more guidance will be released with best practices for meaningful beneficiary engagement

Diverse Beneficiary Representation is Lacking

- Federal rules require beneficiary membership, but do not specifically speak to the diversity of those beneficiaries
- The majority of states explicitly require beneficiary representation or consumer group representation
- Few states require representation from historically marginalized groups
- The NPRM encourages states to consider diverse representation in their recruitment efforts, but does not mandate it

Beneficiary Recruitment is Challenging

- State Medicaid agencies note difficulties in finding beneficiaries to participate in MCACs
- State recruitment strategies include web advertising, recruiting beneficiaries who are active in other committees, and working with community-based organizations
- Some interviewees cited that applications can be long, complex, and overly formal, and can deter beneficiaries from applying
- The NPRM indicates additional guidance on recruitment strategies is forthcoming

Policy Options

Policy Options

Challenge

Policy Option

States seek more guidance on how to effectively engage beneficiaries

1

CMS should issue guidance and provide technical assistance to address the challenges experienced by states

Diverse representation is lacking

2

State Medicaid agencies should include diverse beneficiary representation by recruiting beneficiary members from across their Medicaid population

Beneficiary recruitment is challenging

3

State Medicaid agencies should reduce barriers to and the burden on beneficiaries in engaging in MCACs

Policy Option 1: Issue CMS Guidance

- CMS should issue guidance and provide technical assistance to address the challenges experienced by states in:
 - Recruiting beneficiary MCAC participants;
 - Facilitating beneficiary engagement in MCAC meetings; and
 - Providing financial arrangements to facilitate beneficiary participation in MCACs
- Rationale:
 - States described a need for specific guidance and technical assistance from CMS about how to leverage MCACs to obtain beneficiary input to inform their program policies and operations

Policy Option 2: Include Diverse Beneficiary Representation

- In implementing requirements in 42 CFR § 431.12(d)(2) that MCAC membership include beneficiaries, state Medicaid agencies should include diverse beneficiary representation by recruiting beneficiary members from across their Medicaid population, including those from historically marginalized communities
- Rationale:
 - Engaging beneficiaries from historically marginalized backgrounds allows them to share their unique experiences and concerns

Policy Option 3: Reduce Beneficiary Burden

- In implementing requirements in 42 CFR § 431.12(e) to further the participation of beneficiary members, state Medicaid agencies should reduce barriers to and the burden on beneficiaries in engaging in MCACs by:
 - Streamlining application requirements and processes; and
 - Offering support to facilitate beneficiary participation in MCAC proceedings
- Rationale:
 - Addressing barriers and providing beneficiaries with additional assistance may help to facilitate their MCAC participation

Next Steps

- Commission discussion and feedback on policy options
- Return with draft chapter for March report to Congress

Policy Options for Discussion

Challenge

Policy Option

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