

April 2024: *The Latest in LTSS*



In a collaborative effort, leadership members from various agencies in our region have partnered to compile and distribute streamlined communication to our stakeholders about steps being taken to address challenges occurring in Colorado's Long-Term Services and Supports system. Our main goal is to keep you informed with relevant updates through these newsletters at least once per month, but we will provide more frequent updates should additional urgent information need quick distribution.

We invite you to actively share this information with your stakeholders, ensuring widespread distribution. All issues of this newsletter can be found on the TRE website [here](#).

The Latest

TRE has been made aware that some of the "fixes" established by HCPF and OCL are not currently working as intended. An example is the PAR fixes implemented which were intended to resolve denied billing for Providers. TRE is actively engaging with HCPF to provide feedback on the continued challenges and determine a resolution for those ongoing issues. We understand the impact this is having on many of our partners and ultimately on people in services. We will continue to be the strongest advocates in our ongoing conversations with HCPF about necessary resolution to these issues. As these issues continue to surface, please continue to let us know to help inform our advocacy.

- **APR 10: Office of Community Living Updates Newsletter.** Numerous Provider Updates [Office of Community Living Updates: April 10, 2024 \(constantcontact.com\)](#)
- **APR 2: HCPF has implemented temporary system updates to ease billing challenges related to missing Prior Authorization Requests (PARs) and missing benefit plan or Level of Care (LOC) certification entry.** Read the fixes along with necessary action steps [here](#).
- **APR 1: Members were initially notified of coverage termination effective March 31st, but instead of termination, all affected members have been reinstated as of April 1st.** Read the full memo [here](#).
- **HCPF LTSS Provider Webinar. A presentation to providers on the work being done to stabilize the LTSS system amidst several concurrent changes and the impacts on provider payments.** To ensure that the most relevant topics are covered, providers can use this form [April 25, 2024 - LTSS Provider Webinar Topic Suggestions/Questions \(google.com\)](#) to submit questions or topic suggestions. Submissions will be collected until Thursday, April 18.

What Members Should Know

- If members have questions about the most recent coverage termination, all affected members have been reinstated as of April 1st. If members were impacted, they should have received an email notification between Saturday, March 23rd and Friday, March 29th. Physical notices were sent via mail between Monday, March 25th and Monday, April 1st. Members can also access information at their PEAK account mailbox. The memo above contains instructions to do this in English and Spanish.
- Visit the HCPF Landing Page for updates or to send an escalation [here](#).
- If members are not currently receiving OCL and HCPF emails, they can [sign up here](#).

What Providers Should Know

If a provider has an issue with billing and is seeking support from TRE, please use the following to submit those requests:

- Submit the requests to this single email address TREbillingissue@tre.org - (versus sending your request to numerous individual staff).
- Please send the information below to document your issues and attach it to your email, providing the following for EACH person: (submit all individuals requiring follow-up in a single email).
 - Member's First and Last Name
 - Medicaid ID
 - Service you are billing for
 - Units billed
 - Billing code used
 - Billing modifier used
 - Dates being billed and denied
 - Billing Denial Code/reasoning
- HCPF has reinstated the allowance of virtual meetings to obtain LOCs and other typically in-person activities. TRE will be utilizing this strategy as needed.
- Provider referrals from TRE will now go out to all Providers across El Paso, Park, Pueblo, and Teller counties and will include PASAs and SEP Providers. Providers should review the referral to ensure they are an approved provider for the area in which the person lives, and the services indicated. It is encouraged for all providers to consider becoming approved in all 4 counties of our region. You will still be able to select only the individuals you choose to serve.

State Level Action

Health Care Policy and Financing has announced several strategies to address ongoing issues with the CCM and eligibility. There are both short-term and long-term strategies being explored.

- **CCM Interventions:** HCPF has brought the leadership of AssureCare to Colorado to meet with and learn from CMA staff the issues being experienced with the CCM. These meetings are being held 3/11-3/15 and a report on the next steps and identified solutions are expected by 3/18. HCPF will be disseminating a Known Issues Tracker very soon (within a week).
- **Protecting Coverage for LTSS Members:** HCPF is pursuing several solutions through several system and process changes to mitigate payment delays for providers and ease the backlog and capacity challenges experienced by counties and CMAs.
- **Expedited Backlog Processing:** HCPF will expedite an eligibility system change to process the backlog of Level Of Care (LOC) Certification entries.
- **Preventing Termination During Processing:** HCPF will implement a system change to prevent financial eligibility terminations for missing the LOC while the LOC is being processed.
- **Temporarily Pausing Terminations:** HCPF will temporarily pause terminations for all reasons for LTSS members for two months past the member's original termination date, unless the termination is for a member who has moved out of state or has passed away. This system change will replace the 60-day extension for the renewal period for Long-Term Care (LTC), individuals on Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) and Buy-In recipients who have yet to return their renewal packet on time. Instead, the system will apply a two-month extension for **all** denial reasons. A notice will be sent to members to let them know they have a two-month extension.
- **Reinstating Eligibility:** Until the eligibility system change described above can be implemented, HCPF will continue to reinstate eligibility for all LTSS members when their eligibility is set to end, like what occurred in February 2024 when HCPF reinstated eligibility for LTSS members after a system update unintentionally terminated their coverage. Once HCPF reinstates a member's eligibility, they will remain active until their case can be properly processed through the two eligibility system changes described above.
- **Monitoring and Reversing Inappropriate Terminations:** If the member's eligibility is still pending due to missing documentation or verifications after the two-month extension, county workers may manually implement a pause by applying a Good Faith Extension, further delaying termination until the member's case can be fully reviewed. HCPF reissued guidance to county workers on the Good Faith Extension on March 1, 2024, and will be monitoring this closely to watch for any inappropriate terminations and work to reverse those identified.
- **ARPA funding to CMAs** - to aid with CCM clean up and data entry needs.
- **Prior Authorization Request (PAR) Extension:** HCPF will extend PARs for LTSS eligible members who do not have a current PAR in the claims payment system for an additional year.
- **Benefit Plan Extension:** HCPF will extend the member's current benefit plan (e.g., HCBS BI-Brain Injury) for an additional year. This will allow HCPF's claims payment system to continue to pay for services if necessary, information has not been provided through the HCPF Bridge system.
 - If providers are unable to locate a PAR in the Provider Portal, providers should verify eligibility for the LTSS benefits and provide services as they have traditionally provided and submit a claim for services, so HCPF has a timely record of the service being billed. Providers can also call 844-235-2387 for breaks in PARS and the Bridge.

Local Action

- Communication Workgroup monthly meetings
- Active Participation in State Level problem-solving
- Collaboration across Partners/Stakeholders
- Provider/Member Portal in progress to streamline processes and access to status of services – anticipated launch is 7/1/24.
- Commitments to staff for support and well-being

Resources and What You Can Do

- HCPF Website: Stabilizing Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) – This landing page can be accessed by Members, Providers, CMAs and other Partners to learn about the status of efforts and remedies. You can also find all previous communications from HCPF here. [Stabilizing Long-Term Services and Supports \(LTSS\) | Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing](#)
- Sign up for OCL and HCPF Communications
 - If you are not currently receiving these emails, [sign up here](#). [See a list](#) of all HCPF newsletters you can subscribe to.
- Need printed resources for your members? CCHA can help. Visit this link for educational materials, flyers, and posters available to providers at no cost: [CCHA | Free Educational Materials](#)

As the Regional Accountable Entity (RAE), Colorado Community Health Alliance is responsible for reducing barriers that members experience when accessing care. CCHA services are part of an individual's **Health First Colorado benefits**, so there is **no cost to members**.

CCHA Referrals

- Referral form can be found here:
 - Online: www.cchacares.com/for-providers/ccha-provider-support/

Call CCHA Member Support:

- **Region 7** (El Paso, Park and Teller counties)
 - Email: R7Referral@cchacares.com
 - Local: 719-598-1540
 - Toll free: 1-855-627-4685

- Follow TRE on its primary social media platform, Facebook, [here](#)

What The Acronyms Mean

- Acronym Guide: [Office Of Community Living Acronym Glossary | Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing](#)
- Member = person in services

- CCM = Care and Case Management system (statewide Member health record). This replaced the Benefits Utilization System (BUS)
- HCPF = Health Care Policy and Financing
- CMA = Case Management Agencies. Formerly CCBs and SEPs.
- CMRD = Case Management Redesign
- DSA = Direct Service Area. This is how CMRD designated CMAs. TRE works with both DSA 11 (El Paso, Park, and Teller Counties) and DSA 12 (Pueblo County).
- LTSS = Long Term Services and Supports. Also known as HCBS (Home and Community Based Services) or LTC (Long Term Care).