



Letter from the Director

Ohio's Medicaid caseload continues to grow at an unprecedented rate, putting pressure on every aspect of the program. Services provided by Ohio Medicaid must meet a wide range of consumer needs, from preventive health care to various medical services. Consumers often require specialized or unusual equipment, care or services tailored to their unique medical condition. For some services Ohio Medicaid requires prior authorization (PA) to document the consumer's medical need before purchasing expensive or complicated services or equipment. The current

process for reviewing and approving requests for prior-authorized services is almost completely paper-driven, very labor-intensive and time-consuming. Because of this, we have turned to the Medicaid Information Technology System (MITS) as the long-term solution for Medicaid prior authorization requests. I hope you find the article below helpful in understanding how MITS will automate and improve the efficiency of Medicaid PA.

—John Corlett, Ohio Medicaid Director

Bringing Medicaid Prior Authorization into the 21st Century

One of the major improvements of Ohio's new Medicaid Information Technology System (MITS) will be to automate most of the current processes used to transmit, review and approve PA requests for Medicaid services and equipment. When MITS is implemented, providers will be able to submit PA requests and required attachments over the Internet through a "Medicaid Web portal." If the request is complete and passes validation edits, it will be accepted, and providers will receive immediate confirmation of receipt and a unique "PA tracking number" that is assigned by the system. The PA tracking number is assigned to a PA for both tracking and claims payment. Although the PA tracking number is the number that is used to file a claim, providers must wait until they have the Medicaid-issued letter outlining what has and has not been approved before providing services or equipment to Medicaid-eligible consumers. Otherwise, providers risk not being paid for services rendered.

If a PA request cannot be accepted, an error message will immediately be sent to the submitting provider indicating the field in error and the error description. This will then allow the provider to make necessary corrections and resubmit the PA request.

As requests are received, they will be automatically assigned to a "work queue" managed by Medicaid clinical staff members for review and approval or denial. After a decision is made to approve or deny a request, a notice will be sent back to the provider with the PA number that should be used in filing claims. MITS will allow review of PA requests at the line-item level, rather than the current approach of approving or denying the entire PA. Therefore, a PA request letter may indicate that some items requested were approved and others were denied.

On the next page is a chart showing some of the additional features of the improved PA process once MITS is implemented.

Features and Benefits of the Prior Authorization Process Implemented with MITS

Feature	Benefits
Medicaid Web Portal Entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry of PA request via the Medicaid Web portal is facilitated through up-front edits to validate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Provider eligibility o Consumer eligibility o Service and diagnosis codes • Required documents needed for the request can be uploaded via the Medicaid Web portal • PA status (approved, denied, pending) is available on the Web portal
Automated Work Flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sends alerts to Medicaid staff tdet them know the PA has arrived • Manages the request from entry to completion • Makes automaticupdates based on business rules specific to Ohio Medicaid policy • Routes, prioritizes and escalates PA requests based on Ohio Medicaid business rules
Automated Decision Notices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generates automated decision nctices for providers and/or consumers based on the review outcome • Stores an electronic copy of the decision notice with the PA for future reference
Expedited Claims Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once a PA has been processed, the PA is immediately available for online, real-time claims processing • Units or amounts can be automatcally revised based on claims paid against the PA • Units or amounts can be automatically restored for claims that are voided or adjusted
Enhanced Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents related to the PA requestcan be viewed by ODJFS staff to facilitate questions orinquiries about the request.
Robust Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODJFS staff will have ready access to management reports, such as summaries of activity by month, analyst, denials, age of the claim, etc.

MITS Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: How will MITS improve the efficiency of prior authorization requests?

A: Requests for prior authorization will be submitted through the Medicaid Web portal. Necessary clinical or programmatic documentation can be submitted via fax or uploaded on the Web portal. MITS will also be able to incorporate information for PAs issued through other approved authorization systems, e.g. Health Care Excel. Automated work flows will expedite the review process and speed up decisions.

Q: How will providers know if their PA request has been approved?

A: Providers will continue to receive a notification letter of the result of the review. In addition, providers can check the Web portal to find out the status of the request.

Q: What is the PA tracking number?

A: The MITS system automatically assigns a “PA tracking number” when a request is submitted. Although the PA tracking number is the number that is used to file a claim, providers must wait until they have the Medicaid-issued letter outlining what has and has not been approved before providing services or equipment to Medicaid eligible consumers.

Looking for more?

For past newsletter issues, FAQs, and more information about the Medicaid Information Technology System, log on to the ODJFS Web site:
<http://jfs.ohio.gov/mits/info.stm>