

To: All Providers of State and Medicaid Funded Services
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Subject: SPECIAL BULLETIN COVID-19 #94: Second Increase in Therapeutic Leave Days for ICF/IDD Facilities Due to COVID-19

SPECIAL BULLETIN COVID-19 #94: SECOND INCREASE IN THERAPEUTIC LEAVE DAYS FOR ICF/IDD FACILITIES DUE TO COVID-19

Effective March 10, 2020, through the conclusion of the North Carolina declared state of emergency related to the COVID-19 crisis, NC Medicaid is temporarily increasing the number of therapeutic leave days for Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF-IIDs) from 60 days to **120 days**.

This is a change from the previous increase to 90 days.

NC Medicaid continues to waive the requirement of approval needed for more than 15 consecutive days.

If the attending physician determines that a therapeutic leave could potentially place a beneficiary at greater risk of COVID-19 compared to staying in the ICF or that they therapeutic leave is medically/clinically inappropriate, then the beneficiary/guardian will be informed that therapeutic leave is not recommended.

If the beneficiary/guardian removes the beneficiary against the advice of the attending physician, the provider may then choose to discharge the beneficiary with contractually agreed upon notice.

At the time of the initiation of the extended leave request the provider should document the leave in the record, confirm with the beneficiary/guardian the intent to return to the facility, and any specific instructions related to meeting the IDD and physical health care needs of the beneficiary.

The provider should check in with the beneficiary/guardian at least every 15 days and document this check.

ICF-IIDs shall reserve a therapeutically absent beneficiary's bed.

If the beneficiary is hospitalized during the therapeutic leave, the ICF-IDD may continue to bill therapeutic leave.

During the time of therapeutic leave, the ICF-IDD is still responsible for coordinating care for the beneficiary.

Please note that providers may request that beneficiaries who choose extended therapeutic leave remain with their family to reduce potential exposure.

Providers who choose to allow beneficiaries to return to their facility prior to the end of this crisis may implement [screening procedures recommended by the CDC](#) to determine if the beneficiary may return to the facility.

Any questions about this Communication Bulletin may be sent to the following email:

NetworkManagement@TrilliumNC.org. These questions will be answered in a Q&A format and published on Trillium's website.