



Transforming Lives. Building Community Well-Being.

Network Communication Bulletin #333

To: All Providers

From: Khristine Brewington, MS, LCMHCS, LCAS, CCS, CCJP
VP of Network Management

Date: December 19, 2023

Subject: Update: Innovations Direct Care Workers Rate Increase, New Exclusion Sanction Questions to be Added to Applications for Enrollment, Provider Recruitment Opportunity 1915(i) Services, New 1915(i) Service Changes Training, State Opioid Response: State Funded Members Health Plan Enrollment Options, New Trillium State Opioid Response (SOR) Provider Training Coming, NCTracks Call Center Closed for Holidays, Low Income Energy Assistance Program, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Training Series, Health Disparities Training, Important Information Regarding the 2023-2024 National Core Indicators Survey, Register for the Next Reentry Simulation, NC Medicaid to Extend Appendix K Temporary Flexibilities, Quest Analytics BetterDoctor Provider Outreach, Valued Providers Seal Program, Long Term Services and Supports, Need to Report Fraud, Waste, and Abuse?

UPDATE: INNOVATIONS DIRECT CARE WORKERS RATE INCREASE

The NC General Assembly appropriated \$176 million in state and federal recurring funding in the Current Operations Appropriations Act of 2023 (SL 2023-134, Section 9E.15) to raise NC Medicaid Innovations waiver services rates so that Innovations services providers can in turn raise the hourly wages of the direct care workers (DCW) they employ. While the increases vary by service type/payment methodology, they share a uniform unit increase of \$1.13 per 15-minute increment of service. These rate increases will be effective July 1, 2023, and will be included retroactively in adjusted capitation rates for Local Management Entities/Managed Care Organizations (LME/MCOs). Trillium will be required contractually to reprocess claims for dates of service on or after July 1, 2023, to ensure that providers receive the increased rates beginning on that date.

Trillium has released an [updated fee schedule](#) containing the Innovations DCW increases retroactive to July 1, 2023.

Providers can begin using the updated rates on or after December 20, 2023. Please note that member and provider-specific rates that are above the new rates will retain the higher rate and no action is required by the provider.

Additional details regarding the services impacted and the base rate assumptions can be found here: [NC Medicaid Innovations Waiver Provider Rate Increase](#)

If you have questions regarding these rate increases, please contact the Rates team at RatesFinance@TrilliumNC.org.

INNOVATIONS DCW RATE INCREASE REPROCESSING

Impacted Innovations claims submitted prior to December 20th will be reprocessed by Trillium back to July 1, 2023. There is no action needed by the provider at this time. Once processed, the updated claims will be included in the provider's Remittance Advice.

NEW EXCLUSION SANCTION QUESTIONS TO BE ADDED TO APPLICATIONS FOR ENROLLMENT

Beginning Jan. 28, 2024, five new additional exclusion sanction questions will be added to enrollment, re-enrollment, full MCRs, office administrator (OA) and re-verification applications:

- 🌱 L. Has the enrolling provider had any liability insurance carrier canceled, refused coverage, or rated up because of unusual risk or have any procedures been excluded from coverage?
- 🌱 M. Has the enrolling provider ever practiced without liability coverage?
- 🌱 N. Does the enrolling provider have any medical, chemical dependency or psychiatric conditions that might adversely affect your ability to practice medicine or surgery or to perform the essential functions of your position?
- 🌱 O. Has the enrolling provider's hospital and/or Clinic privileges ever been limited, restricted, reduced, suspended, revoked, denied, not renewed, or have you voluntarily surrendered or limited your privileges during or under the threat of an investigation or are any such actions pending?
- 🌱 P. Has the enrolling provider had a professional liability claim assessed against them in the past five years or are there any professional liability cases pending against them?

All five questions are applicable to individual providers. However; only two of the questions will be applicable to organizations:

- 🌱 L. Has the enrolling provider had any liability insurance carrier canceled, refused coverage, or rated up because of unusual risk or have any procedures been excluded from coverage?
- 🌱 M. Has the enrolling provider ever practiced without liability coverage?

Affirmative answers to exclusion sanction questions on all applications require a written explanation AND supporting documentation.

A thorough written explanation for each question answered affirmatively must be signed and dated by the responsible party within six months of the application date. Failure to disclose documentation related to an affirmative response will result in a denial of the application. A full explanation of the new documentation requirements can be found below:

🌱 [Update to Documentation Requirements for Exclusion Sanction Questions.](#)

PROVIDER RECRUITMENT OPPORTUNITY: 1915(i) SERVICES

Mission-driven organizations that are interested in providing 1915(i) Services to members assigned to the new Consolidated LME/MCO launching in 2024 are encouraged to apply.

Providers must meet all requirements as detailed in the relevant NC Department of Health and Human Services [Clinical Coverage Policies available on the NCDHHS Website.](#)

THE SERVICES OPEN FOR RECRUITMENT ARE LISTED BELOW:

1915(i) Service Open Description

1. Community Living and Support

Focuses on skill practice/acquisition and provides supervision/assistance for activities. This service is available for members with I/DD or TBI.

2. Individual and Transition Support

Service supports in acquiring, retaining and improving self-help, social and adapting skills to reside successfully in the community. This service is available for members with a serious emotional disturbance (SED), SMI or severe SUD.

3. Respite

Provides periodic or scheduled support and relief to the primary caregiver(s) from the responsibility and stress of caring for beneficiaries. This service is available for adult and child/adolescent members with I/DD, SED, severe SUD and TBI.

4. Supported Employment (I/DD population)

Provides initial job training and development. This service is available for members with I/DD and TBI.

5. Individual Place and Support-Support Employment (BH population)

Provides person-centered behavioral health service with a focus on employment and education. Assists in choosing, acquiring, and maintaining competitive paid employment in the community for members age 16+.

This open recruitment applies to both in-network and out-of-network providers enrolled in NC Tracks who are free of contract sanctions, fraud investigations, and/or current or previous IRS liens. More than one provider may be selected.

This recruitment is being used as a means to expand the network of qualified providers that are capable of providing these services to our Members.

This recruitment should not be interpreted as a contract (implicit, explicit, or implied), nor does it imply any form of an agreement to any potential candidate. In addition, no inference should be made that Trillium will purchase and/or implement in the future any of the programs or services proposed by the respondents.

Interested Providers should submit an application to the link below:

 [1915\(i\) Service Application](#)

 [To Submit a Questions Link](#)

NEW 1915(b)(3) TO 1915(i) SERVICE CHANGES TRAINING

NEW: 1915(b)(3) to 1915(i) Service Changes Training now available on Provider My Learning Campus

Complete this training and you will learn to:

1. Replicate the process of prior authorizations for 1915(i) services.
2. Identify the changes from 1915(b)(3) to 1915(i) service codes and modifiers.
3. Reproduce the process for transitioning members from 1915(b)(3) to 1915(i) services.

Access the training here: [Provider My Learning Campus](#).


STATE OPIOID RESPONSE: STATE FUNDED MEMBERS HEALTH PLAN ENROLLMENT OPTIONS

The Department for Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) created a new health benefit plan called the Adult Substance Opioid Use Disorder (ASOUD) for utilizing the SAMHSA SOR grant funds allocated to DHHS and is disbursed among the state's Local Management Entities/Managed Care Organizations LME/MCOs. However, there are other available Health Benefit Plan options and target populations that providers are able to utilize when enrolling a member in a health benefit plan to ensure appropriate SOR treatment services and claims payment.

It is recommended that with the Medicaid Expansion, providers should determine if the member is eligible for Medicaid first. If the member is NOT eligible for Medicaid, the provider should determine if the member meets one or all of the health benefit plan(s) eligibility criteria below.

Based on NCTracks claims payment hierarchy, it is recommended that Trillium state funded members be enrolled in all three health benefit plan options as long as they meet the eligibility criteria to ensure continuity of care and appropriate payment of claims. NCTracks uses the claims payment hierarchy to determine the order below in which claims are paid from each funding source.

1. **Adult Substance Opioid Use Disorder (ASOUD)** - Adults who are ages 18 and over with a primary opioid use disorder covered under ASOUD in the Benefit Plan Diagnosis Array AND who would benefit from assessment, initiation, engagement, treatment, continuity of treatment services, and/or supports for relapse prevention and recovery stability, AND who meet one of the following criteria:
 - 🌱 The individual is new to Opioid Treatment
 - 🌱 The individual is not currently in treatment for Opioid Use Disorder
2. **Adult Substance Abuse Injecting Drug User/Communicable Disease (ASCDR)** - Adults who are ages 18 and over with a primary substance use disorder covered in the Benefit Plan Diagnosis Array AND who would benefit from assessment, initiation, engagement, treatment, continuity of treatment services, and/or supports for relapse prevention and recovery stability, AND who meet one of the following three criteria:
 - 🌱 Currently (or within the past 30 days) injecting a drug under the skin, into a muscle, or into a vein for non-medically sanctioned reasons; OR
 - 🌱 Infected with HIV, tuberculosis, or hepatitis B, C, or D, Page 10 of 12; OR

 Meet criteria for severe opioid use disorder, are addicted at least one year before admission, and who are enrolled in an opioid treatment program.

- 3. Adult Substance Abuse Treatment Engagement and Recovery (ASTER)** - Adults who are ages 18 and over with a primary substance use disorder covered in the Benefit Plan Diagnosis Array AND who would benefit from assessment, initiation, engagement, treatment, continuity of treatment services, and/or supports for relapse prevention and recovery stability.

NEW!! TRILLIUM STATE OPIOID RESPONSE (SOR) PROVIDER TRAINING COMING SOON IN 2024

Trillium Health Resources has created a NEW SOR Provider training tailored to all Trillium contracted SOR providers. We anticipate the new SOR training becoming available on or after January 1, 2024 through the Trillium Provider Learning Campus.

The new SOR training contains a wealth of information that will prove valuable to your agency, current SOR clinicians, and new hires going forward.

LOOKOUT for future announcements as soon as the training becomes available on the Trillium Provider Learning Campus.

NCTRACKS CALL CENTER CLOSED FOR HOLIDAYS

The NCTracks Call Center will be closed on Monday, Dec. 25, Tuesday, Dec. 26, and Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2023 in observance of the Christmas holiday. The NCTracks Call Center will also be closed on Monday, Jan. 1, 2024 for the New Year's holiday. Please note, the Pharmacy Call Center will remain open, operating on a normal holiday schedule (7AM – 6PM).

In keeping with the published NCTracks checkwrite schedule, there will be no checkwrite on Dec. 26, 2023. The last checkwrite of the year will be on Dec. 19, 2023 and the first checkwrite of 2024 will be on Jan. 3, 2023.

The 2023 and 2024 checkwrite schedules can be found under Quick Links on the [NCTracks Providers Webpage](#).

 [NCTracks Home](#)

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally-funded program that provides for a one-time vendor payment to help eligible households pay their heating bills.





Households including a person aged 60 or older or disabled persons receiving services through the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services are eligible to sign up for assistance from Dec. 1 – 31. All other households may apply from Jan. 1 – March 31 or until funds are exhausted.

 [More Information](#)

FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER TRAINING SERIES

FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS IN 2024

This presentation will provide an update on FASD.

-  We will include discussion of two brief screening tools.
-  Red Flag indications for screening will be discussed.
-  A discussion of FASD across the lifespan will be included.
-  The concept of intervention in the context of the FASD developmental trajectory will be covered.

[See details and register](#)

HEALTH DISPARITIES TRAINING

According to the World Health Organization, International Day of Persons with Disabilities was first recognized by the United Nations and is celebrated every year on December 3.

This day is about promoting the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities at every level of society and development. And to raise awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of political, social, economic, and cultural life.

See more information about the [Health Disparities Training](#).




IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THE 2023-2024 NATIONAL CORE INDICATORS SURVEY

Every year Trillium Health Resources and other LME/MCOs across the state assist the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) with an annual survey of members who receive Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities services. This survey uses standard measures (core indicators) to assess the outcomes of services provided. Areas of concern addressed by the indicators include employment, member rights, service planning, community inclusion, choice, and health and safety.

The survey results are used to inform policy decisions designed to improve the system.

***Your assistance and participation is crucial to the success
of this project***

Requirements for Member Participation in the Survey:

-  Must have an intellectual or developmental disability diagnosis
-  Must receive a Medicaid Funded service from an agency providing I/DD services
-  Must be at least 18 years old

If you are a provider of services for members that meet requirements of participation for the survey, please email Surveys@TrilliumNC.org with the email address for the best contacts to coordinate this survey for your agency. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at Surveys@TrilliumNC.org or 1-866-998-2597 and ask for Jennifer Kelly.

REGISTER FOR THE NEXT REENTRY SIMULATION

Save the date of January 30, 2024 on your calendars for a Reentry Simulation to be held in Elizabeth City, NC from 8:30a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

-  [Registration is open](#)

NC MEDICAID TO EXTEND APPENDIX K TEMPORARY FLEXIBILITIES UNTIL FEB. 29, 2024

-  [NC Medicaid Extend Appendix-K Temporary Flexibilities Until February 29, 2024](#)

Flexibilities extended while the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services reviews the Innovations and Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver amendments.

To avoid a disruption in care and support consumers and their families, NC Medicaid is extending Appendix K temporary flexibilities until Feb. 29, 2024, while the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) reviews the Innovations and Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver amendments.

For more information, please see [Update: TBI Waiver 1915 \(c\) and Appendix K Flexibilities](#) or [Update: Innovations 1915\(c\) and Appendix K Flexibilities](#).

QUEST ANALYTICS BETTERDOCTOR PROVIDER OUTREACH

Trillium Health Resources has contracted with Quest Analytics for network adequacy and provider directory accuracy.

On our behalf, Quest Analytics conducts provider outreach to validate the data on Trillium's Member-facing Provider Directory. Quest Analytics utilizes BetterDoctor as a solution for Provider Directory accuracy and outreach efforts. BetterDoctor will contact providers by fax, mail, email, and/or a telephone call on a quarterly basis.

The provider letter will explain the process and request the provider validate the data contained in Trillium's Member-facing Provider Directory. The providers will validate and update their data via their input into the BetterDoctor portal.

The Network team will review the validated data and will work with the provider to resolve any inaccurate data issues. If you have any questions about Member-facing Provider Directory validation and outreach, email TrilliumProviderDirectory@TrilliumNC.org or call 1-855-250-1539.

VALUED PROVIDERS SEAL PROGRAM

Visit the [Valued Providers Seal Program](#) web page for more information about the Contracted, Comprehensive Behavioral Health, Large Agency, Evidenced-Based Treatment, Comprehensive I/DD and Integrated Care Provider Seals.



After receiving this recognition, sharing such dedication and innovative care should be as easy as possible.

The [Valued Providers Seal Program Tool Kit](#) is designed for just that. This resource provides tips for sharing news of provider seals on websites, social media, newsletters, and emails, along with pre-written posts and messages.

Trillium can see the impact providers make on our members and communities. We hope the tool kit serves to ensure those members and communities can see it as well.

Contact us at SealProgram@TrilliumNC.org for questions about the Valued Providers Seal Program. Providers can apply for one or multiple seals!

LONG TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Trillium is currently recruiting for Long-Term Services and Supports Member Advisory Committee members that will (LTSS MAC) provides stakeholder input and advice regarding the LTSS covered services under Trillium's Health Resources- Behavioral Health and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Tailored Plan that meets all the provisions noted in 42 C.F.R. § 438.110.

Your opinion counts, we would like to become a member and solicit your feedback on the elements of LTSS. The LTSS MAC meets at least quarterly.

The LTSS MAC reviews and provides feedback on relevant Trillium's quality reports. The committee's input will serve as an early warning system for emerging issues related to member experience and quality of care.

Specific concerns shared by the LTSS MAC will be referred to Trillium's Quality Management department, which will help coordinate resolutions, refer for investigations as needed, and report to Trillium's Quality Improvement Committee

If you are interested in serving on this committee, please complete [on-line form](#).

NEED TO REPORT FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE?

EthicsPoint is a secure and confidential system available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for reporting suspected violations of fraud, abuse and confidentiality breaches. You can access EthicsPoint through website submission at [EthicsPoint - Trillium Health Resources](#) or by calling toll free 1-855-659-7660.

Any questions about this Communication Bulletin *that does not already have an email listed for questions from that specific section*, 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.