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What they are saying...

Advocates, partners, providers and legislators on the rollout of the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care program

TALLAHASSEE, FL – On August 1, 2014, the Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency) completed the rollout of Statewide Medicaid Managed Care, also known as the SMMC program. Comprised of two sub-components, Long-term Care and Managed Medical Assistance, the SMMC program now provides health care services to over 3 million recipients. This month, the Agency is celebrating the culmination of three years of planning, coordination and implementation of the new program by asking its partners and stakeholders to share their experiences.

“We were very excited to roll out Statewide Medicaid Managed Care in the three remaining regions and put the finishing touches on an implementation plan that has been three years in the making,” said Agency Secretary Liz Dudek. “This was certainly a team effort. Without the support of our legislative sponsors and the contributions made by advocates, community partners and health care providers, this level of success would not have been possible. We are truly thankful for all of the effort that went in to transforming the way we provide better health care for Florida’s Medicaid recipients.”

Here is what stakeholders had to say...

Representative Matt Hudson, Chair House Healthcare Appropriations Committee

“What began as an idea to achieve better health outcomes, create more patient choice and increase accountability to taxpayers resulted in reforms that now serve as a model for the nation. For the first time in our history, we will know exactly what we are getting for our health care investment, and our tough requirements for managed care plans mean the plans that spend wisely and improve patient health will succeed - the plans that don’t, won’t.

“I congratulate the Agency for Health Care Administration on its smooth rollout of these reforms, the most significant changes to this program since the 1960s. I am proud of our work and look forward to continuing efforts to make Florida’s Medicaid program the most innovative in the nation.”

Senator Denise Grimsley, Chair Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services

“With the rollout of Florida’s Statewide Medicaid Managed Care program now complete,

Floridians across the state who depend on Medicaid for access to care now have an expanded catalog of services not previously available through fee-for-service Medicaid. These efficiencies and corresponding accountability measures will improve the access and quality of care available to patients, while holding plans and providers accountable to both Medicaid patients and to the taxpayers who fund this important program.

“I appreciate the efforts of Secretary Dudek and her staff who worked diligently to implement the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care program and look forward to continuing to work with the agency in the upcoming months as we help our constituents with this transition.”

Emmett Reed, Executive Director
Florida Health Care Association

“We want to commend the Agency for Health Care Administration for their efforts over the past year to implement two significant managed care programs for Floridians. We appreciate them allowing us to be a partner in the process to ensure a smooth transition and help providers maintain their focus on resident quality care.

“While there have been challenges along the way, AHCA has continued to keep us informed and welcomed our input on areas of concern, as well as the development of policies and procedures. As these managed care programs continue to evolve and change to best meet the needs of long term care residents and those who care for them, we look forward to working with the agency so that continued quality care remains the benchmark for success.”

Bruce Rueben, President
Florida Hospital Association

"The Florida Hospital Association commends the Agency for Health Care Administration on its commitment to ensuring the successful implementation of the roll-out of Statewide Medicaid Managed Care. We look forward to the continued partnership to provide the highest quality care to our patients and communities."

Jesse Fry, Advocacy Chairman
Florida HIV/AIDS Advocacy Network

“Rolling out Medicaid managed care region by region worked well for the HIV/AIDS treatment advocacy community. That gave us time to prepare patients and case management for the changes.

“Avoiding disruptions in care and treatment is critical for people living with HIV and AIDS.

Successful management of HIV is often the result of doctor-patient relationships built over years, even decades. Florida Medicaid has shown commitment to community of care. They know the value of the relationships these patients have established over the years with Medicaid providers and have made provisions that allow the majority of patients to continue to receive treatment from their current providers.

“As long as AHCA and CMS continue to write a waiver for managed care that acknowledges the importance of these relationships, that will be a good sign that the managed care model can deliver quality care for HIV/AIDS patients.”

Shaddrick Haston, CEO
Florida Assisted Living Association

“The Florida Assisted Living Association recognizes the tremendous undertaking placed on the Agency for Health Care Administration to implement Statewide Medicaid Managed Care. Throughout the process, Secretary Dudek, Deputy Secretary Senior and Assistant Deputy Secretary Kidder have been tremendous in getting rollout information out to our members. We know that AHCA will have the same determination and resolve as they continue to operationally support Statewide Medicaid Managed Care moving forward.”

Anne Swerlick, Deputy Director of Advocacy
Florida Legal Services

“AHCA staff should be applauded for making incredible efforts to reach out and listen to stakeholders during the preparation and roll-out of the waiver. We also appreciate the hard work of AHCA and federal officials to strengthen Medicaid consumer protections in the waiver. However, whenever there are big system changes like this one, Medicaid beneficiaries, particularly those with the greatest needs, face new challenges to accessing care. We are hopeful that the Agency will proactively identify these consumer barriers and address them in a timely and systemic way.”

Joan Alker, Executive Director
Georgetown University Center for Children and Families

“On paper, I think this is one of the stronger agreements that we’ve seen with the federal government and I think that reflected the very high level of concern with Florida’s Medicaid managed care.”

Source: [Associated Press, July 2014](#)



Chris J. Butchart, D.D.S.
Healthcare Provider

“The roll out of the program has gone very well. The new program has had some benefits when compared to the traditional fee-for-service Medicaid program. This is especially true with regards to the access to care for specialists. Under the old system it was very difficult to find specialists for patients. The dental plans have made the access to these specialists especially oral surgeons very easy and often personally assist the patients in finding specialists.

“All of the insurance companies have worked hard in cooperation with me as a provider to make the transition as smooth as possible. All of the plans have shown their dedication by providing personal representatives that respond promptly to any concerns. I have been very impressed with their dedication to the success of the program.”

Sean Schwinghammer, Director of Legislative Affairs
The Caring Group

“The thoughtfulness, professionalism, outreach and responsiveness of AHCA regarding the implementation of Medicaid Reform was outstanding and surpassed our expectations.

“I am very proud of AHCA and all the professionals there who worked tirelessly to implement Medicaid Reform. Providers know that we have been heard and that Patients will be better off as a result of AHCA’s hard work.”

David Pollack, President
Molina Healthcare of Florida, Inc.

“Molina Healthcare of Florida has been pleased with the seamless rollout and implementation of Florida’s SMMC program. As a result of our strong partnerships with the State, providers and community-based organizations, we have delivered on our commitment to provide Florida’s Medicaid population with high-quality health care. We are pleased to be able to assist new enrollees in the MMA program with a high-touch, innovative care model, allowing access to care management and assistance in coordinating services in various government programs, including Long-term Care and Medicare.”

Rosy Cozad, President and CEO
Amerigroup Florida

“The Statewide Medicaid Managed Care (SMMC) program has completed the managed care implementation for all 67 counties. Amerigroup Florida is happy to report that our Medicaid enrollees have experienced a smooth transition and the implementation is a huge success. Through

careful planning and collaboration, Medicaid enrollees received the care and support they needed that ensured continuity of care. This was facilitated by AHCA's timely and frequent information to the managed care organizations, Medicaid enrollees, stakeholders and providers of care.

“It is a privilege to work with an Agency, stakeholders and providers of care that share a deep, mutual interest in improving the lives of Floridians, and we look forward to continuing to provide real solutions across our state that offer better access, quality outcomes and care coordination for Medicaid enrollees.”

The Agency for Health Care Administration is committed to better health care for all Floridians. The Agency administers Florida's Medicaid program, licenses and regulates more than 45,000 health care facilities and 34 health maintenance organizations, and publishes health care data and statistics at www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov. Additional information about Agency initiatives is available via Facebook (AHCAFlorida), Twitter (@AHCA_FL) and YouTube (/AHCAFlorida).

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