

Expedited authorization requests downgraded to standard timeframes

This communication applies to the Medicaid programs for Simply Healthcare Plans, Inc. (Simply) and Clear Health Alliance (CHA) as well as the Florida Healthy Kids (FHK) program for Simply.

42 CFR 438.210(d)(2)(i) states the following regarding expedited request for authorization: “For cases in which a **provider** indicates, or the **MCO, PIHP, or PAHP** determines, that following the standard timeframe could seriously jeopardize the **enrollee's** life or health or ability to attain, maintain, or regain maximum function, the **MCO, PIHP, or PAHP** must make an expedited authorization decision and provide **notice** as expeditiously as the **enrollee's** health condition requires and no later than 72 hours after receipt of the request for service.”

In compliance with our Statewide Medicaid Managed Care Managed Medical Assistance contract, Simply and CHA must review and render decisions on expedited service authorization requests within 48 hours of the request for an authorization. Our FHK contract, in compliance with 42 CFR 438.210, requires that we render decisions on expedited authorization requests within 72 hours after the receipt of the request for authorization.

Both Simply and CHA have been receiving a significant volume of requests for expedited authorizations which do not meet the statutory requirements for an expedited review. For this reason, effective October 1, 2021, we will be utilizing our ability to downgrade requests for authorizations received as expedited to a standard authorization request, when the expedited request does not meet the definition and requirements of **42CFR438.210 (d)(2)(i)**. **This means that expedited requests for authorizations not supported by clinical rational for an expedited review will be processed as standard authorizations.** This will allow us prioritize urgent service authorization requests appropriately and improve turnaround time on nonurgent, standard service requests.

Some of the high volume expedited requests that will be impacted by this change includes but is not limited to the services listed below:

- Therapy services (occupational, speech therapy, physical therapy, and home therapy)
- Circumcision
- Cranial remolding helmet
- Sleep studies
- Genetic testing
- Chronic pain management for spinal/facet injections
- Vein ablation
- Foot orthotics
- Knee braces
- Plastic or reconstructive procedures
- Cochlear implants
- Screening colonoscopy

<https://provider.simplyhealthcareplans.com>

<https://provider.clearhealthalliance.com>

Simply Healthcare Plans, Inc. is a Managed Care Plan with a Florida Medicaid contract. Simply Healthcare Plans, Inc. dba Clear Health Alliance is a Managed Care Plan with a Florida Medicaid contract.

Simply Healthcare Plans, Inc. is a Managed Care Plan with a Florida Healthy Kids contract.

SFLPEC-2709-21 July 2021