

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 447.205, the Georgia Department of Community Health is required to give public notice of any significant proposed change in its methods and standards for setting payment rates for services.

CHANGE IN EFFECTIVE DATE

The following changes in methods and standards for setting payment rates for services will be changed from an effective date of service of July 1, 2008 to an effective date of service of July 1, 2009, subject to state fund availability and federal approval.

Nursing Facilities (originally noticed on June 12, 2008 and approved on July 10, 2008)

- The nursing facility's property rate component will be reimbursed based on a fair rental value (FRV) methodology.
- The 2007 cost report, using the reporting format and underlying instructions established by the Department, will be used to determine a facility's allowable cost that will be the basis for computing a rate.
- Additional incentive fees paid to providers who meet specific criteria for quality measures as determined by the Department. Current incentives for Nurse Staff Hours/Participation in Quality Initiative will not be affected by this change in effective date.

Dentists (originally noticed on May 8, 2008 and approved on June 12, 2008)

- Dental reimbursement rates will be increased by 2.5%.

Physicians (originally noticed on May 8, 2008 and approved on June 12, 2008)

- Physician services will be reimbursed based on 80% of the 2007 RBRVS as specified by Medicare for the Atlanta area for participating Medicare providers. Medicaid and PeachCare for Kids providers subject to this change include: Physicians, Physician Assistants, Nurse Midwives, Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Podiatrists, Oral Maxillofacial Surgeons, providers of Children's Intervention Services and Children's Intervention School Services, Psychologists, Optometrists, and providers of Family Planning. The update does not apply to providers billing for speech therapy, dialysis professional services, or the following CPT codes: 99296, 99294, 99299, 99300, 99431, 99298, 99436, 99433, 92586, 99440, 31500, 76811, 76820, 99238, 99293, 59409, 76819, 59515, and 59514.
- Payments for global maternity delivery physician services as billed under CPT codes 59400, 59510, 59610, and 59618 will be increased by 5%.

Healthcheck (originally noticed on May 8, 2008 and approved on June 12, 2008)

- Health Check reimbursement rates will be increased by 2.5%.

Digital Mammography (originally noticed on May 8, 2008 and approved on June 12, 2008)

- Digital mammography services will be reimbursed based on 80% of the 2007 RBRVS as specified by Medicare for the Atlanta area for participating Medicare providers.

Inpatient Hospitals (originally noticed on May 8, 2008 and approved on June 12, 2008)

- Current DRG base rates for designated trauma hospitals Levels I through III will be increased by 3.68%. DRG base rates for all other hospitals will be increased by 2.7746%. This change will not result in cost based settlements for inpatient claims.

Outpatient Hospitals (originally noticed on May 8, 2008 and approved on June 12, 2008):

- The percentage of cost coverage will be increased to 90.7% for designated trauma hospitals Levels I through III and 88.3% for all other hospitals.
- The hospital-specific, annual percentage of charges, used to determine interim reimbursement amounts, will be recalculated to consider the increase in cost coverage to 90.7% of cost for designated trauma hospitals Levels I through III and 88.3% for all other hospitals.
- Payments to out-of-state enrolled hospitals will be made at the statewide average percentage of charges that will be paid to Georgia hospitals being reimbursed at 88.3% of costs.
- The flat rate for non-emergency use of the Emergency Room will be increased from \$50 to \$60.
- Critical Access Hospitals, historically minority owned hospitals or state-owned hospitals are not affected by this public notice and will continue to be reimbursed in accordance with current policy.

Home Health (originally noticed on May 8, 2008 and approved on June 12, 2008)

- The cap for home health services will be increased to \$90 and reimbursement will be the lesser of the cap or 100% of cost, according to the FY2006 cost reports.

Independent Care Waiver Program (originally noticed on May 8, 2008 and approved on June 12, 2008)

- Reimbursement rate for personal support provided through the Independent Care Waiver Program will be increased by 3%.

Emergency Ambulance (originally noticed on May 8, 2008 and approved on June 12, 2008)

- Medicaid covered procedure codes in the Emergency Ambulance Program will be reimbursed based on 86% of the CY 2007 Medicare fee schedule for Georgia Locality 01.

Effective July 1, 2009, Care Management Organizations are required to increase their current per unit reimbursement rates for their contracted providers to effect a rate change comparable to the proposed change in fee-for-service rates to occur July 1, 2009.

Public Notice (continued) – Change in Effective Date
August 28, 2008

The purpose of this change is to reflect the Department’s Amended FY 2009 Budget Proposal. This change is estimated to reduce FY 2009 expenditures as follows:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>State</u>
Aged, Blind, and Disabled	(\$97,834,283)	(\$35,083,373)
Low Income Medicaid	(63,321,100)	(22,706,943)
PeachCare for Kids	<u>(5,133,507)</u>	<u>(1,284,916)</u>
Total	(\$166,288,890)	(\$59,075,232)

This change is estimated to increase annual expenditures, beginning July 1, 2009, as follows:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>State</u>
Aged, Blind, and Disabled	\$101,834,764	\$35,591,250
Low Income Medicaid	67,559,358	23,611,996
PeachCare for Kids	<u>5,039,581</u>	<u>1,236,713</u>
Total	\$174,433,704	\$60,439,959

This public notice is available for review at each county Department of Family and Children Services office. An opportunity for public comment will be held on **September 16, 2008**, 1 p.m., at the Department of Community Health (2 Peachtree Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303) in the 5th Floor Board Room. Individuals who are disabled and need assistance to participate during this meeting should call (404) 656-4479. Citizens wishing to comment in writing on any of the proposed changes should do so on or before **September 26, 2008**, to the Board of Community Health, Post Office Box 38406, Atlanta, Georgia 30334.

Comments submitted will be available for review by the public at the Department of Community Health, Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., in Room 4074, 2 Peachtree Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303.

Comments from written and public testimony will be provided to the Board of Community Health prior to the **October 9, 2008** Board meeting. The Board will vote on the proposed changes at the Board meeting to be held at 10:30 a.m. at the Department of Community Health (2 Peachtree Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303) in the 5th Floor Board Room.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THIS 28th DAY OF AUGUST, 2008

Rhonda M. Medows, M.D., Commissioner