

PUBLIC NOTICE

Planning for Healthy Babies (P4HB) Demonstration Amendment Proposal

The Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) hereby notifies the public of its intent to submit a request to amend the Planning for Healthy Babies (P4HB) 1115 Demonstration to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The proposed amendment seeks to include provisions allowing the state to reimburse legally responsible individuals (including legally responsible family caregivers) for the provision of medically necessary personal care services to children under age 21 enrolled in the Georgia Pediatric Program (GAPP) effective on or after April 1, 2024.

Pursuant to the procedures outlined in 59 Fed. Reg. 49249, DCH is required to give a 30-day public notice and comment period allowing interested parties to provide input on the proposed amendment to the Planning for Healthy Babies 1115 Demonstration. This notice provides details about the proposed amendment and serves to open the 30-day public comment period which closes on January 16, 2024.

P4HB Description, Goals, and Objectives

P4HB provides family planning and family planning-related services to eligible women ages 18 through 44 and inter-pregnancy care (IPC) services including primary care and primary care case management for eligible women who have delivered a very low birth weight baby¹.

The goal of this Demonstration is to reduce Georgia's low birth weight rate, to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies in Georgia, and to reduce Georgia's Medicaid costs by reducing the number of unintended pregnancies by women who otherwise would be eligible for Medicaid pregnancy-related services. Services will be delivered through the Georgia Families Care Management Organizations (CMOs).

The objective of this Demonstration is to assist the State of Georgia in reducing its low-birth-weight rates by providing preconception and inter-conception care that promotes birth spacing and appropriately timed pregnancies. P4HB members may have children enrolled in the Georgia Pediatric Program.

Background and Basis for Proposed Amended Provisions

The Georgia Pediatric Program (GAPP) is Medicaid's in-home nursing program designed to serve eligible members under age 21 who require medically necessary nursing care and/or personal care support services. GAPP services are approved through Georgia's Title XIX Medicaid State Plan. Since the program's implementation in 2002, nursing services and personal care support services have been rendered by enrolled provider agencies. Legally responsible parents and caregivers were prohibited from providing personal support services².

During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE), DCH submitted a request to CMS to allow the state to reimburse legally responsible individuals (including legally responsible family caregivers)

¹ Georgia's P4HB Demonstration is effective through December 31, 2029.

² Section 1905(a) of the Social Security Act prohibits reimbursement of legally responsible caregivers.

for the provision of medically necessary personal support services to children under age 21 enrolled in the Georgia Pediatric Program (GAPP). This request was made to ensure the delivery of care to Georgia's most vulnerable population in light of the unforeseen circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 PHE. Pursuant to 42 CFR 431.416(g), DCH was exempt from conducting a state public notice and input process.

CMS approved the request and subsequently extended the authority through March 31, 2024 via the existing Planning for Healthy Babies 1115 Demonstration. Accordingly, legally responsible caregivers are able to be reimbursed, by enrolled GAPP providers, for the provision of medically necessary personal care services.

Due to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 PHE, including the existing workforce shortage, DCH intends to seek approval from CMS to continue the flexibility allowing legally responsible persons to provide 1905(a)(24) personal care services to children under age 21 enrolled in the Georgia Pediatric Program (GAPP). DCH, its agent, or its provider organization will be required to make a reasonable assessment that the caregiver is capable of rendering the services. The requested amendment is limited to the provision of personal care services and does not include the provision of skilled nursing services.

This amendment will not impact the current payment methodology for GAPP personal care support services or GAPP program operations. The payment methodology will remain the same as outlined in the *Part II, Policies and Procedures for the Georgia Pediatric Program* manual. Should there be any changes in the methods and standards for setting payment rates, a public notice will be issued and an opportunity for public comment provided.

This amendment will not impact the objectives and goals of the Planning for Healthy Babies Demonstration.

Public Hearings and Public Input Procedure

This public notice is available for review at each county Division of Family and Children Services office.

There will be two opportunities for public comment **via Zoom audio**. There will be **no in-person** attendance at the Department of Community Health (DCH).

#1: December 18, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89512248150?pwd=MjZRTXE0OCtuU1V6cjA1VW10R3ZTUT09>

Meeting ID: 895 1224 8150

Passcode: 467933

+13017158592,,89512248150#,,,,*467933# US (Washington DC)

+13052241968,,89512248150#,,,,*467933# US

Meeting ID: 895 1224 8150

Passcode: 467933

#2: December 21, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84869936411?pwd=Y0N1a3VOdGZBempzU2xXMjl2UXNMUT09>

Meeting ID: 848 6993 6411

Passcode: 833908

+13052241968,,84869936411#,,,,*833908# US

+13092053325,,84869936411#,,,,*833908# US

Meeting ID: 848 6993 6411

Passcode: 833908

Individuals who are disabled and need assistance to participate during this meeting should call (404) 656-4479 at least three (3) business days prior to the scheduled public hearing to ensure any necessary accommodations can be provided.

Individuals wishing to comment in writing on any of the proposed changes should do so on or before **January 16, 2024**, to the Board of Community Health, Post Office Box 1966, Atlanta, Georgia 30301-1966. You may also email comments to Danisha Williams, danwilliams@dch.ga.gov or fax to 404-651-6880.

Comments submitted will be available for review by submitting a request via email to Danisha Williams, danwilliams@dch.ga.gov.

If the proposed changes are presented to the Board for final action, relevant comments from written and public testimony will be provided to the Board. The Board expects to vote on the proposed changes at the Board meeting to be held on **February 8, 2024** at 10:30 a.m. at the Department of Community Health unless withdrawn or withheld by the Department for further review.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THIS 14th DAY OF DECEMBER 2023
Russel Carlson, Commissioner