

Medicaid Matters

More than 225 participate in first meetings to inform RCO stakeholders

More than 225 healthcare providers, state agency officials and others interested in Medicaid's plan to implement Regional Care Organizations in the state participated in one of two February sessions to hear an update on the effort and ask questions of state officials.

The two meetings, held February 4 in Montgomery and February 20 in Decatur, included an update on the Agency's efforts to comply with legislation enacted in May 2013 to better control costs while improving patient care. Three more meetings are planned in March for Tuscaloosa, Birmingham and Mobile while an online session is planned as well. ([Link to schedule](#))



Talking to participants, Dr. Donald Williamson, chair of the Medicaid Transition Task Force, explained that the RCO concept will not make the state's Medicaid program cost less in the future, but will help state legislators balance the General Fund budget.

"The way that I have thought about this is fundamentally is that we are simply trying to create a managed

care entity in Alabama to improve care and reduce costs over that which would otherwise be spent in the future," he said. The point I have made repeatedly is no one believes this model is going to cause the General Fund dollars to be less in Fiscal Year 2016 than today. It's simply, hopefully going to slow the rate of growth and to make the cost more predictable." [Read more >>](#)

Section 1115 Demonstration waiver draft released for public comment

A proposed blueprint of Alabama's plan to transition Medicaid to a new healthcare delivery system is now available for public comment until Friday, April 4. Comments may be submitted by mail, email or during one of two public hearings in March. Emails may be directed to PublicComment@medicaid.alabama.gov while regular mail may be sent to the Agency's Administrative Procedures Office. Public Hearings have been scheduled for March 13 at the Agency's Central Office auditorium in Montgomery and on March 18 at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Both hearings will start at 10 a.m. After comments are received, the state will be eligible to formally submit its waiver application to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. [Click here](#) for more information and a copy of the waiver draft.

"The state is seeking approval of a Section 1115 Demonstration waiver to implement a new care delivery model that will improve upon and ensure the long-term sustainability of Alabama's Medicaid program," Acting Medicaid Commissioner Stephanie Azar said. [Read more >>](#)



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APEC provides evidence-based protocols, OB care resources

A little more than two years after a group of physicians and state health leaders launched a statewide initiative to improve perinatal outcomes and ultimately the health and welfare of women and infants throughout Alabama, the [Alabama Perinatal Excellence Collaborative \(APEC\)](#) has emerged as an exemplary resource for obstetric care and other providers throughout the state of Alabama.



The cornerstone of this effort in Alabama is the group's goal to develop and implement evidence-based obstetric care protocols, according to Alabama Medicaid Medical Director Robert Moon, M.D. He noted that APEC's ultimate goal is to improve pregnancy outcomes by providing OB care practitioners with evidence-based practice protocols and decision trees, identifying meaningful quality benchmarks, developing data collection measures, reviewing quality data and providing feedback to individual providers and institutions and developing mechanisms to help providers in achieving benchmarks.

APEC was developed in mid-2012 as a joint effort between Alabama Medicaid's Maternity Care Program, the Alabama Department of Public Health, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, the University of South Alabama, and community care providers to lower infant mortality and improve maternal and infant health.

[Click here](#) to view APEC protocols on the Alabama Medicaid website or via the APEC [peace-p.org](#) (Pregnancy Education Activation Communication Enhancement for Providers) web site. Peace-p.org provides an avenue for easy access to the protocols and direct contact with APEC leaders via personal computer, tablet, or smart phone. Follow the link provided to download the app onto a personal device; the app is designed to be compatible with iOS, Android, and Windows devices.

Medicaid's Spurlin recognized for 40 years of service to the state



Olivia Spurlin: 40 years service to the State of Alabama and counting!

For more than 40 years, Medicaid employee Olivia Spurlin of Troy has worked to help Alabama citizens access needed services. In a recent presentation, she was recognized for 40 years of service to the state of Alabama, including 20 years with the Alabama Medicaid Agency.

Assigned to the Charles Henderson Child Health Center in Troy, Olivia currently works with families applying for the Agency's SOBRA and Plan First programs. Prior to joining Medicaid in 1993, she worked more than 16 years with the Alabama Department of Human Resources and four years with the state Vocational Rehabilitation Service.

Retirement, however, is not in the plans for the Brundidge native and Troy State University graduate. "I love my job and the people that I serve," she said.

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