

IMPORTANT NOTICE

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH INSURANCE IS CHANGING

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Recently you received a "Notice" about your child who is currently enrolled in NC Health Choice. The NC General Assembly passed legislation that will move children birth through 5, currently eligible for NC Health Choice, to the Medicaid Program effective January 1, 2006. **Your child will be insured continuously throughout this transition.** You will not need to reapply for child health insurance again until the "end date" noted on your NC Health Choice Insurance Card. When your child turns 6, he/she will be evaluated once again for Health Choice. This will be done by the local department of social services (DSS).

There are some important facts you need to know about this change:

- Medical services are very similar, but there are some differences. "A Consumer's Guide to North Carolina Medicaid: Health Insurance Programs for Families and Children" handbook will be mailed to you in January and also can be downloaded from the following web site: <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dma/Forms/famchld.pdf>. (use this one on the Spanish side of the letter: <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dma/spanish/consguidespan.htm>). This handbook explains the services covered by the Medicaid program.
- Check with your child's health care providers to be sure they accept Medicaid. Tell them that on January 1, your child will be enrolled in the Medicaid program. If your current providers do not accept Medicaid, you may call the DMA Customer Service Center (1-888-245-0179) or your local department of social services (DSS) for a list of providers who accept Medicaid where you live.
- You will receive a Medicaid card for your child each month beginning in early January. You must take this card with you every time your child sees a health care provider or has a prescription filled. There are no enrollment fees or co-pays with your child's Medicaid.
- If your child has "special" care like nursing care, therapy, formula, or medical equipment, your doctor will need to ask Medicaid to approve that care. Medicaid calls this a "prior approval request." Check with your child's doctor to be sure he has "prior approval".
- Medicaid has a managed care program called Carolina ACCESS. This means your child will have a medical home (primary care provider or PCP) who will coordinate your child's care. This is important to make sure your child gets all the necessary medical care he needs. You can choose your child's PCP from a list of participating providers. Contact your caseworker at the DSS for a complete list. **(Enclosed is a Carolina ACCESS Fact Sheet. This tells you more about Carolina ACCESS).**
- The "end-date" for your child's Medicaid will be the same as it was for NC Health Choice. You will receive a notice before the "end-date" to let you know when it is time to renew.

Questions? Call your local department of social services. Or you can call the CARE-LINE, Information and Referral Service, Monday-Friday, except state holidays, by calling 1-800-662-7030 (English/Spanish) or 1-877-452-2514 (Note: this is a TTY number that is only answered for the deaf or hearing impaired). In the Triangle area, call 919-855-4400 (English/Spanish) or 919-733-4851 (TTY for hearing impaired).

Carolina ACCESS The Benefits of Being a Member

Medicaid has a program called Carolina ACCESS. It is North Carolina's Medicaid managed care program. Carolina ACCESS links enrolled members with a medical home and a primary care provider (PCP) who coordinates medical care.

What is a medical home?

A medical home:

- ✓ Is the one place you take your child for all their health care needs – regular check-ups, shots, sick visits, accidents, and for treatment of special health needs. They will also coordinate health care with other doctors who may need to treat your child.
- ✓ Can be a doctor's office, a community health clinic or a local health department. Because the staff knows you, your child and your child's health history, they are able to offer the very best care for your child.
- ✓ Provides a PCP you can call for help when you need to. You no longer have to take your child to the emergency department when the problem does not threaten his life or his health without immediate treatment.
- ✓ Provides treatment and/or medical advice 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Getting Medical Care as a member of Carolina ACCESS:

- You can choose your child's medical home from a list of participating providers. Contact your caseworker at the local department of social services for a complete list of participating providers. The name of the medical home will appear on your child's Medicaid card every month.
- Your child is eligible for all the services that Medicaid covers. Medicaid's program for children is called Health Check. Health Check pays for well child check-ups based on a schedule of visits. Your child's PCP can tell you what this schedule is. Well child visits help prevent illness and find problems early. The program sends letters to remind you when your child's check-ups are due. Health check covers services that your child needs to correct a health problem, improve the problem, prevent it from getting worse, or help the child live with the problem.
- Your child will need to see his PCP for most of his health care services. If your child needs to see a specialist, his PCP will refer him. Health Check/Health Choice services are very similar.
- The name of his medical home will be printed on his Medicaid card. When you get this card, check to make sure all the information is correct. IF not, call your caseworker at the department of social services.
- When you receive the Medicaid card with the name of the medical home printed on the card, call and make an appointment to have your child seen. Do not wait until he is sick. Children need to have regular checkups to help keep them healthy.

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