

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



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September 4, 2020

Senator Gratwick, Chair
Representative Hymanson, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: Quarterly Update pursuant to PL 2019, Ch. 130 – Q4, SFY 2020

Senator Gratwick, Rep Hymanson, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

The Legislature passed LD 195, *An Act To Continue MaineCare Coverage for Parents During the Rehabilitation and Reunification Process*, in the First Regular Session. The bill requires the Department to submit a waiver request to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to seek approval for Medicaid coverage of a parent who has one or more children removed from the home but remains engaged in reunification efforts. It also directs the Department to report quarterly to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services on the Department's progress in seeking a waiver.

In early February 2019, DHHS initiated the process to seek a 1115 Demonstration Waiver from CMS to allow federal match for services delivered to members ages 21-64 who are being treated in an "Institute for Mental Disease" for Substance Use Disorder (SUD). This waiver is intended to allow MaineCare funding to more fully support the SUD continuum of care.

The Department has incorporated the directive under LD 195 into this 1115 request, along with other pilot proposals intended to support parents with SUD to achieve successful reunification with their children. The Department considers the 1115 waiver the most likely way to get this request approved, as LD 195 carries a fiscal cost and would not be budget neutral (a requirement of federal Medicaid waivers) on its own.

The 1115 waiver request is still under review with CMS. The last update from CMS was that CMS staff are preparing this request (along with other requests in the same waiver) for CMS leadership review. The Department has answered all the questions from CMS, and is awaiting next steps.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Probert'.

Michelle Probert
Director, MaineCare Services