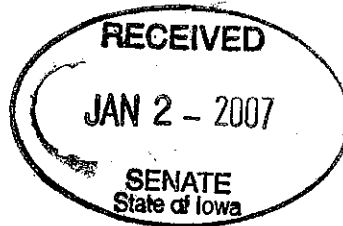




STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KEVIN W. CONCANNON, DIRECTOR



December 28, 2006

Michael Marshall
Secretary of Senate
State Capitol
LOCAL

Margaret Thomson
Chief Clerk of the House
State Capitol
LOCAL

Dear Mr. Marshall and Ms. Thomson:

Enclosed please find copies of reports to the General Assembly relative to **an update on the status of assessing the physical and dental health of adults and children with Mental Retardation or Developmental Disabilities in the Medicaid system.**

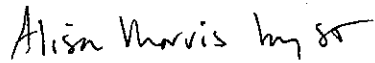
These reports were prepared pursuant to directive contained in **HF 841, 2005 Iowa Acts**. HF 841 mandated that the Department of Human Services "shall work with the university of Iowa colleges of medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, and public health, and the university of Iowa hospitals and clinics to determine whether the physical and dental health of recipients of medical assistance who are persons with mental retardation or developmental disabilities are being regularly and fully addressed and to identify barriers to such care. The department shall report the department's findings to the governor and the general assembly by January 1, 2007."

To implement this mandate, DHS included this project as one of several objectives in Iowa's successful Real Choices Systems Transformation proposal to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). In July 2006, CMS gave final approval for \$150,000 to be allocated for this Health Assessment study. The Iowa Medicaid Enterprise then approached the Iowa Health and Disability Resource Center at the University of Iowa (IHDRC)--an interdisciplinary Center with representation from all the health sciences colleges identified in the legislative language cited above—to conduct the research. The IHDRC has assembled a research team and begun the work. The attached Interim Progress Report summarizes the study design and research questions, initial analyses, and project timelines. It is anticipated that the final report will be completed by October 31, 2007.

No similar study has ever been completed in Iowa. DHS looks forward to sharing the findings related to access, utilization, and quality of medical and dental care for Iowans with mental retardation or developmental disabilities.

Please contact Deborah Johnson at 515-725-1012 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alisa Morris" followed by a stylized flourish.

Alisa Morris
Legislative Liaison

Enclosure

cc: Dennis Prouty, Legislative Service Agency
Peter Matthes, Senate Minority Caucus
Dick Oshlo, Senate Majority Caucus
Brad Trow, House Minority Caucus
Zeke Furlong, House Majority Caucus

**Access, Utilization, and Quality of Medical and Dental
Care for Iowans with Mental Retardation or
Developmental Disabilities (MR/DD)**

Interim Progress Report

December 2006

*Prepared for the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise
By the Iowa Health and Disability Resource Center
The University of Iowa*

Background

In response to the legislation in HF 841, the Iowa Health and Disability Resource Center at the University of Iowa is assisting the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise in developing a strategy for assessing the quality of medical and dental care received by Iowans with mental retardation or developmental disabilities (MR/DD). This assessment is being completed in two phases. Phase 1 is using data from Medicaid claims to determine the type and frequency of medical and dental services received by children and adults with MR/DD. This analysis will identify any significant gaps in care in comparison to accepted standards of care. Phase 2 of this study will be designed to collect and analyze health care documentation that cannot be readily obtained through Medicaid billing claims. It is expected that these data will be obtained through auditing medical records for targeted samples of Medicaid recipients who represent populations found in Phase 1 to be at risk for inadequate medical and/or dental care.

Research Team

The University of Iowa research team is being led by Dr. Peter Damiano of the Public Policy Center and the College of Dentistry and by Dr. Scott Lindgren of the Center for Disabilities and Development and the Carver College of Medicine. Other faculty members participating in this project include Dr. Ray Kuthy and Dr. Dianne McBrien.

Initial Analyses

Initial analyses have focused on identifying the frequency and type of disabilities shown by Medicaid-eligible individuals. Preliminary findings indicate that there are 14,252 Iowans with MR/DD conditions who were Medicaid-eligible for at least 11 months in 2005. This group represents only 6% of the total group of patients who were Medicaid-eligible for at least 11 months during that same time period. For the MR/DD patients, 49% were 21 years of age or younger, while 51% were 22 years of age or older. Only 5% of this group was over age 65. The group was 56% male and 44% female. The five most frequent diagnoses within the MR/DD group were Mental Retardation (26%), Developmental Delays (14%), Cerebral Palsy (12%), Down Syndrome (9%), and Autism (6.5%). Almost 50% of these individuals were in some type of "institutional" program (vs. only 12% of the total sample of Medicaid-eligible patients). On the other hand, only 12% of the MR/DD sample was eligible for TANF, in contrast to 64% of the total sample of Medicaid-eligible individuals.

Preliminary analysis has documented a highly significant association ($p < .001$) between gender and disability, with more males showing major disabilities than females. This is true especially for conditions such as autism and mental retardation. The group of patients with mental retardation has the highest mean age of any of the MR/DD diagnoses (mean = 38.14 years), while those patients with developmental delays are the youngest (mean = 12.75 years). Individuals with mental retardation have the highest rate of institutional programming, and those with developmental delays have the highest rates of TANF and foster programming. The significant differences in age and program eligibility for several of the most prevalent MR/DD diagnoses will require separate analyses of the health care utilization data for those subgroups as the project moves forward.

Primary Remaining Research Questions

1. What is the utilization of medical and dental services by children and adults with MR/DD in the Iowa Medicaid program?
2. How does the utilization of medical and dental services for children and adults with MR/DD compare to non-MR/DD populations or to other established benchmarks for medical/dental utilization?
3. What is the volume of medical and dental services received by children and adults with MR/DD in the Iowa Medicaid program?
4. Within the MR/DD population, are there specific patient types or groups that are especially likely to not receive adequate medical or dental care?
5. Are there specific services or procedures that are less likely or more likely to be provided to children or adults with MR/DD?

Study Timelines

It is planned that Phase 1 of this research will be completed by June 31, 2007. Phase 2 will involve selective medical record audits to fill gaps in the data available through analyses of Medicaid claims. It is anticipated that Phase 2 will be completed by October 31, 2007.