

1915(b) WAIVER RENEWAL

IA HEALTH LINK (MANAGED CARE)

SUMMARY

The Department of Human Services (DHS) operates the state's Medicaid managed care program under 1915(b) waiver authority which began in April 2016. Today, nearly 700,000 Iowans receive the medical care they need through one of two Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) as part of the IA Health Link program.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved the initial waiver for five years. This is scheduled to expire March 31, 2021.

The Department has submitted its extension application with CMS to continue to operate the IA Health Link program for another five years. This process required the state to conduct an independent assessment of its managed care program and submit the findings to CMS. DHS contracted with its external quality review organization, Health Services Advisory Group, Inc. (HSAG) and Optumas to meet this requirement. This assessment looked at access, quality of care, and the cost-effectiveness of the program. This report is posted on the DHS website.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The Department has submitted an extension application with CMS to operate the IA Health Link program for another five years. The Department posted its 1915(b) waiver extension application for public review and comment in October, and the Department received no comments.

IS ANYTHING CHANGING?

No, there are no modifications to the current program design being proposed through this extension.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon approval from CMS, the state's managed care program would continue for another five years, effective April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2026.