



North Carolina
Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Medical Assistance
Recipient Services MEU

801 Ruggles Drive – 2501 Mail Service Center - Raleigh, N.C. 27699-2501
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Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Mark Benton, Director
William W. Lawrence, Jr., M.D., Senior Deputy Director

July 19, 2007

Re: Medicaid Uniform Screening Tool

Dear County Director of Social Services:

Plans and procedures are underway to implement a new and important change in the process for entry into long-term care services. This change will improve access and facilitate appropriate placement decisions for applicants and recipients needing long-term care services by screening the recipient for the “best fit” long term care service. The change will be accomplished via a new web-based tool called the “Medicaid Uniform Screening Tool” (MUST).

The MUST will replace the FL2, PASARR screen, the CAP/C Referral form, nursing facility tracking form, nursing facility ventilator addendum, and the FL2 electronic forms. It will not, however, eliminate the MR2. The MUST will also eliminate the need for telephone prior approvals to Electronic Data Systems (EDS) for nursing facility level of care. Please be advised that details regarding whether a transition plan allowing for concurrent use of the preceding forms and the MUST program have not been made and will be announced at a later date.

Initial plans call for the Uniform Screening Tool to be used prior to entry to the following long term care services:

- Nursing facilities
- Adult Care Homes
- In-home personal care services (PCS)
- In-home PCS-Plus
- Community Alternatives Program for Disabled Adults (CAP/DA)
- CAP/Choice (Independence Plus Waiver)
- CAP/Children (CAP/C)
- Private Duty Nursing (PDN)

Authorized and trained screeners (local professionals including select staff within your county) will enter medical, functional, and behavioral health information into the automated web-based tool. The data will then be processed through a rules engine that contains the Medicaid clinical policies to arrive at a “best fit” service for the client, as well as other service options for which the recipient may apply. The screener and the applicant will subsequently confer together and determine which service option to select and then a referral will be made to the service provider.

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Please be aware that instructions will be provided at a later date regarding whom you may authorize and train to be your MUST screener and how to process a MUST referral. In the interim, regional training sessions will be established for agency professionals who currently assist applicants and recipients in obtaining access to long-term care services. When training sessions are announced, pre-registration for the sessions will be required.

Each agency will also need to designate one or more administrators who will be responsible for reviewing and signing a security agreement for the agency, registering the agency as a screening entity, and managing the agency's users (i.e., authorizing and terminating users). It is important that these designees also attend one of the training sessions described above.

Updates about the MUST program, regional training sessions and information on the pre-registration process, will be published to the DMA web site at: www.ncdhhs.gov/dma/; under "provider links; Bulletins." In addition, questions about the Uniform Screening Program may be sent to the following e-mail address: USPquestions@eds.com.

As always, thank you for all your efforts in helping provide appropriate services to our constituents.

Sincerely,

Mark T. Benton