Learning Objectives

- Identify general Medicaid-covered non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) benefits
- Identify methods States can use to authorize available NEMT options
- Identify common medical transportation fraud and abuse issues

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Defined

Under Federal law, State Medicaid agencies (SMAs) must:
- Ensure necessary transportation to and from providers
- Use the most appropriate form of transportation
- Include coverage for transportation and related travel expenses necessary to attend medical appointments
Unmet Transportation Need

Unmet transportation needs can include:

• Not having a valid driver’s license
• Not having a working vehicle available in the household
• Not being able to drive because of a medical condition
• Other situations, such as no money for gas

Emergency Transportation Is Different

• Medical needs are immediate
• Symptoms are severe
• Symptoms may be life-threatening (for example, heart attack)
• Symptoms may be due to a serious event (for example, automobile accident)

State Rules for Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

• May vary by State
• Require providers to have a Medicaid contract
State Rules for Non-Emergency Medical Transportation—Continued

- Loaded mileage—beneficiary must be in the vehicle
- Appropriate location
- Wait times are not usually reimbursable

Types of Transportation

- Wheelchair vans
- Taxis
- Stretcher cars
- Buses
- Other SMA approved transportation

Knowledge Check

For a transportation provider to receive reimbursement for furnished services, a transported beneficiary must:

A. Have his or her own car
B. Be ineligible for Medicaid
C. Be eligible for Medicaid
D. Take an ambulance
Transportation Entities

- States
- Brokers
- Managed care plans
- Transportation companies

Transportation Drivers

Drivers must be:
- Licensed
- Qualified
- Competent
- Courteous

Qualified Vehicles

- Proof of ownership
- Legally licensed
- Current license plates
- Safe
- Well-maintained
- Liability insurance
Knowledge Check

True or False?

State Medicaid transportation services can only be furnished by the State.

Fraud and Abuse in Medical Transportation

Most transportation providers want to do the right thing. Those providers:

- Bill claims properly
- Follow Medicaid rules
- Understand fraud schemes
- Take time to learn preventive strategies

Fraud and Abuse in Medical Transportation—Fraud

A Medicare beneficiary:

- Drove himself and others to dialysis appointments, but allowed an ambulance company owner to bill for ambulance rides with their medical IDs
- Received kickbacks for referring patients to the ambulance company

An owner of a Massachusetts medical transportation company:

- Billed for rides for deceased beneficiaries
- Was sentenced to 18 months in prison and ordered to repay over $475,000
Fraud and Abuse in Medical Transportation—Abuse

Two ambulance companies in Connecticut:

- Allegedly provided ambulance transportation for dialysis patients who did not have a medical need for ambulance transportation
- Paid almost $600,000 to settle these allegations

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Fraud Scheme—Services Not Rendered

- Not all NEMT fraud is perpetrated by professional providers
- The parent of a patient:
  - Was authorized to transport her child for treatment
  - Billed Medicaid for trips that did not take place
  - Was sentenced to 30 days in jail and ordered to pay $21,500

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Fraud Scheme—Services Not Rendered

- NEMT company owner billed for cancelled trips, used beneficiary information without permission to bill for services never provided, and upcoded trips
- Transportation company upcoded regular livery services as ambulette services; $300,000 settlement
Fraud Scheme—Vehicles

Owner of a transportation company forged forms that authorized taxi transportation to show more expensive ambulette transportation; $200,000 settlement

Fraud Schemes—Travel Vouchers

Taxi driver:
- Accepted Medicaid vouchers for nonmedical locations
- Purchased unused vouchers
- Charges exceeded actual services
- Lifetime exclusion

Unqualified Drivers and Other Fraud Schemes

- Company whose owner falsified drivers' documentation was fined $10,000
- Other transportation fraud schemes include:
  - Billing for personal assistance when none was provided
  - Coding all 911-dispatched city ambulances at the advanced life support rate regardless of the beneficiary's condition
Tips for Preventing Medical Transportation Fraud

- Document what the State wants
- Verify documented services
- Bill correctly

Tips for Preventing Medical Transportation Fraud—Documentation

Follow State documentation requirements. At a minimum include:
- Beneficiary’s name
- Medicaid identifier
- Locations of pickup and drop-off
- Date and time of pickup and drop-off
- Loaded mileage

Tips for Preventing Medical Transportation Fraud—Verify Services

It is management’s responsibility to:
- Verify information
- Make random survey calls
Tips for Preventing Medical Transportation Fraud—Billing Accurately

Form CMS-1500 includes a notice that filing a false claim may lead to:

- Criminal penalties
- Civil penalties

Final Action—Check for Excluded Individuals and Parties

- Use the List of Excluded Individuals and Entities (LEIE)
- Use the System for Award Management (SAM) Exclusions Extract
- Check monthly

Report It!

- SMA and Medicaid Fraud Control Unit
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General (HHS-OIG)
  Phone: 1-800-447-8477 (1-800-HHS-TIPS)
  TTY: 1-800-377-4950
  Fax: 1-800-223-8164
  Email: HHSTips@oig.hhs.gov
  Website: https://forms.oig.hhs.gov/hotlineoperations
Conclusion

We are all enlisted to prevent fraud and abuse!

Questions

Please direct questions or requests to: MedicaidProviderEducation@cms.hhs.gov

To see the electronic version of this presentation and the other products included in the “Non-Emergency Medical Transportation” Toolkit, visit the Medicaid Program Integrity Education page at https://www.cms.gov/Medicare-Medicaid-Coordination/Fraud-Prevention/Medicaid-Integrity-Education/edmic-landing.html on the CMS website.

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April 2016