PACHC Memo 16-01
(Replaces PACHC Memo 13-06)
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Human Resources

March 4, 2016

TO: Chief Executive Officers of Pennsylvania Community Health Centers FQHC,
Rural Health Clinics & Critical Access Hospitals

FROM: Cheri Rinehart, President & CEO

SUBJECT: Credentialing

SUMMARY: PACHC has received feedback from many health centers on the challenges of timely credentialing. In response, PACHC has worked with the PA Department of Human Services (DHS) to create a process to expedite credentialing by that agency and has worked with DHS to improve managed care organization (MCO) credentialing time frames through some important policy changes. In addition, our PA Primary Care Career Center has gathered information on the Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH), which offers a central system to improve credentialing efficiency and streamline processes that can be an effective way to expedite MCO credentialing. Note that CAQH has a new system, ProView, to replace the Uniform Provider Datasource (UPD).

BACKGROUND:
Timely credentialing is important to maintain access to care and the financial integrity of health centers. In the past few years, DHS, because of the confluence of a variety of issues, saw the time from application to issuance of a PROMISe identification number increase substantially, and health centers felt the impact. Since Medicaid MCOs would not initiate their credentialing process in the absence of a PROMISe number, MCO credentialing time frames also increased substantially.

CURRENT STATUS:
In response to the credentialing challenges health centers were facing, PACHC worked with DHS to develop a process for health centers to request expedited credentialing. DHS has been responsive to these requests and the process has been effective. Additionally, in response to the concerns PACHC has raised about MCO credentialing timeframes and the need for enhanced accountability, DHS took action. As part of the HealthChoices managed care organization (MCO) contracts that went into effect January 2016, DHS implemented two significant changes:

1. MCOs are now being held to a 60-day credentialing benchmark for complete applications
2. MCOs are to conduct their credentialing processes concurrently with DHS' PROMISe process to avoid unnecessary delays. Although MCOs cannot complete credentialing

absent a provider's PROMISe number, this change should help reduce overall credentialing timeframes.

In addition to DHS's expedited credentialing process and the improvements DHS anticipates from the HealthChoices contract changes, PACHC has also worked to establish relationships with the MCOs. These relationships help us advocate on behalf of health centers that are seeing prolonged credentialing times and insufficient MCO response.

One of the messages we have clearly heard from several MCOs is that health centers' participation in the system offered by the Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH) is very helpful to ensure efficient credentialing and reasonable credentialing timeframes. CAQH allows through a single portal the sharing of information needed for credentialing with all participating MCOs.

COUNCIL FOR AFFORDABLE QUALITY HEALTHCARE (CAQH):
The Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare is a non-profit alliance of health plans and trade associations that works to simplify healthcare administration through industry collaboration on public-private initiatives. CAQH strives to be a catalyst for the development of solutions that reduce administrative burden for health plans and providers. CAQH aims to develop solutions that:
- Promote quality interactions between plans, providers and other stakeholders
- Reduce costs and frustrations associated with healthcare administration
- Facilitate administrative healthcare information exchange
- Encourage administrative and clinical data integration

PACHC members and their providers will be most interested in CAQH ProView, the next generation of the Universal Provider Datasource (UPD) self-reported data set. Like UPD, CAQH ProView is a valuable credentialing tool, but it has broader use for participating organizations for network directories, claims processing, quality assurance, emergency response, member services and more. CAQH ProView offers new features that make it easier for providers to make updates, reducing the time and resources necessary to submit accurate, timely data to organizations that require that information. Time-saving features enable healthcare providers to:

- Complete and attest to multiple state credentialing applications in *one* intelligent workflow design.
- Upload supporting documents directly into CAQH ProView to eliminate the need for manual submission and to improve the timeliness of completed applications.
- Review and approve Practice Manager information before data is imported.
- Protect against delays in data processing with more focused prompts and real-time validation.
- Self-register with the system before a health plan initiates the application process.

MEMBER ACTION:

1- If you urgently need DHS to issue a PROMISe identification number for a provider you have hired, after submitting the PROMISe application to DHS, send an email to pachc@pachc.org which includes:
   - The provider's name as it appears on the application
   - The provider's NPI and/or Social Security number
   - The date the application was submitted to PROMISe
   - Reason for the request for expedited processing

2- If you are have an urgent need for MCO credentialing of a provider and have not been able to get a response from the MCO, send an email to PACHC at pachc@pachc.org with:
   - The provider's name as it appears on the application
   - The provider's NPI and/or Social Security number
   - The date the application was submitted to the MCO(s)
   - The names of MCOs from who you are seeking expedited credentialing or a status update
   - Reason for the request for expedited credentialing OR history of your attempts to get a status update from the MCO (MCO contact, dates, any response)

3. Share Successful Practices. If your health center has found ways to promote timely credentialing, please let us know so that others can benefit from these successful practices.

4. Participate voluntarily in CAQH ProView.

   New Users: If you are a new user of CAQH ProView, you will need a CAQH Provider ID Number. You will receive the ID number if you are invited by a health plan to sign up for ProView or you can self-register for ProView. (Self registration was not an option with the UPD system.) View the **CAQH ProView Provider Quick Reference Guide,** http://www.caqh.org/sites/default/files/solutions/proview/guide/PR-QuickRef.pdf, for complete instructions on completing the application, reviewing your data, and allowing access to your information.

   Previous UPD Users: You must activate your CAQH ProView account. Go to https://proview.caqh.org/pr and enter your UPD username and password. You will be prompted to create a new username and password and take other steps to complete setting up your ProView account, complete the application, and review your data. See the **CAQH ProView Provider Quick Reference Guide**, http://www.caqh.org/sites/default/files/solutions/proview/guide/PR-QuickRef.pdf.

All Users: You must complete the process by attesting to the accuracy of your data and submitting any supporting documents required. Every 120 days you will receive a notice from CAQH to attest that your information is still correct.

Providers should view the series of CAQH ProView provider videos: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FMlRaz1EzTU&feature=youtu.be.

Practice Managers and Credentialing Staff: CAQH ProView provides the capability for you to manage the information of all of your providers. See the CAQH ProView Practice Manager Quick Reference Guide at http://www.caqh.org/sites/default/files/solutions/proview/guide/PM-QuickRef.pdf. You can also view the Practice Manager YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZpZwSnTDh-s&feature=youtu.be.

Medicaid MCOs that offer plans in Pennsylvania that currently participate in CAQH ProView include:

> Aetna Better Health
> AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania
> AmeriHealth Northeast
> Blue Cross of Northeastern PA
> Geisinger Health Plan
> Health Partners
> Independence Blue Cross
> Keystone First
> UnitedHealthcare

For a complete list of CAQH participating plans and other organizations go to: http://www.caqh.org/solutions/caqh-proview-list-participating-organizations

To view the Pennsylvania Medicaid Managed Care Organization directory go to: http://www.dhs.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/communication/s_002108.pdf

PACHC ACTION: PACHC will continue to advocate for the development of DHS and MCO processes that support timely credentialing and will communicate your requests for expedited credentialing. In addition, the PA Primary Care Career Center will continue to work with you to meet your recruitment needs and respond to questions you might have about CAQH or other credentialing issues.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Questions on DHS's expedited credentialing process or PACHC support and advocacy on this issue may be directed to Cheri Rinehart at cheri@pachc.org. Questions on other credentialing issues and CAQH may be directed to Judd Mellinger-Blouch, Director, PA Primary Care Career Center, at judd@pachc.org.