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DHS Announces Medicaid Modernization Contracts

(Des Moines, Iowa) - The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) announced Friday that contracts have been signed with the winning bidders for Governor Branstad's Medicaid Modernization initiative.

"Together with these four partners, we are modernizing the Medicaid program in a way that focuses on patients' individual needs and on providing a higher quality of care," said Iowa Medicaid Director Mikki Stier.

She noted that this new approach is aimed at improving quality and access, promoting outcomes and accountability and creating a more predictable and sustainable Medicaid budget.

"With the help of these experienced partners, Medicaid members will receive better coordinated care so that they get the services they need to become healthier. An overall healthier Medicaid population will drive down program costs," Stier said. "This is good for Medicaid members and for Iowa's taxpayers who support this critical program."

Contracts for the new, patient-centered care coordination effort have been signed with the following managed care organizations (MCOs):

- Amerigroup Iowa, Inc.
- AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa, Inc.
- UnitedHealthcare Plan of the River Valley, Inc.
- WellCare of Iowa, Inc.

Under the new IA Health Link program, savings come from improving Medicaid members' health so there are fewer emergency room visits, hospitalizations and surgeries, and from eliminating unnecessary or duplicative services. And, the MCOs will be able to offer preventive services above and beyond what the traditional Medicaid program has been able to offer.

The Department is working with the MCOs as they establish provider networks to serve nearly 600,000 Iowans through the IA Health Link program. DHS has held nearly 90 public and stakeholder meetings since announcing the modernization initiative, with dozens of additional ones scheduled and more being added. Find schedules here:

<http://dhs.iowa.gov/node/1049>

“We want Iowans to understand this care coordination effort and Medicaid members to know that they have a choice in which MCO manages their care,” said Stier. “This is how modern health plans work and how nearly 40 other states are managing all or part of their Medicaid programs. Iowa is moving beyond the status quo to a system that allows for more choice and accountability.”

The state’s MCO partners had the following to share about their work with Iowa:

Amerigroup Iowa, Inc.: “We are committed to making this transition as seamless as possible for Iowa’s Medicaid population, while also working closely with the state to improve the quality of care and health outcomes for our members,” said Jeff Jones, Amerigroup Iowa Chief Operating Officer. “Amerigroup brings years of experience serving Medicaid recipients across the country, and it is a privilege to serve the Iowa community.”

AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa, Inc.: “Core to AmeriHealth Caritas’ mission is that every individual should have access to quality health care and services,” said Russell Gianforcaro, president of AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa. “It is a privilege for us to bring our more than 30 years of experience to Iowa and continue our work with the Department of Human Services, providers and community partners across the state in removing barriers to health care and improving services for those who are most in need.”

UnitedHealthcare Plan of the River Valley, Inc.: “We are honored to partner with the Iowa Department of Human Services as one of the companies supporting the IA Health Link program for Medicaid beneficiaries,” said Kimberly Foltz, CEO UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Iowa. “We look forward to helping more Iowans receive access to the programs, benefits and services they need to live healthier lives.”

WellCare of Iowa, Inc.: “WellCare is excited to participate in the launch of Iowa’s Medicaid Managed Care program,” said Lauralie Rubel, WellCare’s Iowa state president. “We look forward to partnering with the state, providers and communities to help ensure our members get the care they need, when and where they need it, to deliver better health outcomes and lower the costs of care for Iowans.”

Information on Medicaid Modernization can be found on the [dedicated web page](#). A special [informational toolkit](#) is available to stakeholders. Please also see listings of community and enrollment events and webinars on the [DHS website](#).

For more information

Iowa Department of Human Services
Amy Lorentzen McCoy
515-281-4848
amccoy@dhs.state.ia.us

Amerigroup Iowa, Inc.
Ross Jacobs
ross.jacobs@anthem.com
470-891-9892

AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa, Inc.
Joshua Brett
215-863-5458
jbrett@amerihealthcaritas.com

UnitedHealthcare Plan of the River Valley, Inc.
Molly McMillen
molly.mcmillen@uhc.com
952-931-6029

Wellcare of Iowa, Inc.
Crystal Walker
Crystal.Walker@wellcare.com
813-206-2697