Non-Emergent Medical Transportation (NEMT) in Colorado

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Our Mission

Improving health care equity, access and outcomes for the people we serve while saving Coloradans money on health care and driving value for Colorado.

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What We Do

The Department of Health Care Policy & Financing administers Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid program), Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) and other health care programs for Coloradans who qualify.

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Objectives

- Overview of NEMT
- NEMT Administration in Colorado
- Q&A

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What is NEMT?

- Non-emergent medical transportation (NEMT) is transportation to and from medically necessary services covered by Health First Colorado for members who have no other means of transportation, including free transportation.

- NEMT can be used for trips to Medicaid covered services at Medicaid-enrolled places of service. NEMT must be used to access the closest qualified Health First Colorado provider willing and able to treat the member.

- The appropriate mode of transportation is the least costly mode suitable to the member's condition. Mileage reimbursement is also available, and out-of-state travel when necessary.

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What NEMT Isn't

- Emergency Medical Transportation (EMT) - As the name implies, NEMT is only for non-emergency services.

- Non-Medical Transportation (NMT) – Transportation for members on Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers to access their communities/to receive HCBS services.

- In Colorado, NEMT cannot be used to pick up prescriptions.

- Durable Medical Equipment (DME) pickup is not typically covered.

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What We Spend on NEMT Claims

NEMT Expenditure by Year and Fund Source						
Year	Total Funds	General Fund	HAS Fee	BCCP	Old Age Pension	Federal Funds
FY 2017-18	$37,748,356	$18,870,381	$56	$0	$0	$18,877,919
FY 2018-19	$49,619,511	$21,514,720	$3,271,851	$2,008	$185	$24,830,747
FY 2019-20	$51,333,497	$9,459,351	$16,150,917	$12,298	$61	$25,710,870
FY 2020-21	$57,040,549	$19,122,648	$9,396,548	$701	$0	$28,520,651

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Other NEMT Expenditures

	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21
Claims/Benefit	$37,748,356	$49,619,511	$51,333,497	$57,040,549
Vendor Contracts*	$1,192,725	$1,859,208	$488,171	$2,917,234
PUC Expenditures	$93,027	$98,369	$66,889	$41,539
Personnel and Administrative^	$132,641	$157,654	$129,725	$40,029

*Vendor Contracts include both Veyo and IntelliRide as NEMT brokers
^Administrative costs current through May 2021 payroll

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Colorado NEMT Administration

- Operated under the Medicaid State Plan
- Colorado NEMT services are fee-for-service statewide
- **Transportation only to/from Medicaid covered services**
- Historically, administration of NEMT was provided in three ways:
  - County Departments of Human Services
  - Multi-County Collaboratives
  - State-Contracted Broker (ASO) – IntelliRide
    - Historically, only covered a nine-county region

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What Does a Broker Do?

- Maintains a network of enrolled transportation providers.
- Fields member calls, checks member eligibility, and confirms that a trip is allowable; from there, schedules rides for members.
- Dispatches scheduled trips to NEMT providers.
- Pays provider claims, then submits claims to the Department for reimbursement.
- Processes and mails checks to friends and family members who drive members.

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Benefits of Broker Administration

- Uniform benefit administration
- Single point of contact for members and providers
- Means that counties do not have to use their limited resources on NEMT administration

Broker Expansion

- Counties told us that they faced challenges administering NEMT
- The Department lacked meaningful data on the benefit outside of the nine-county broker area
- Administration varied depending on where a member lived
- To address these concerns, the Department asked for, and received, funding to expand its broker model to the entire state

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Expansion Process

- In early 2020, the Department posted a Request for Proposals (RFP) for its statewide brokerage

- We received only one responsive bid (IntelliRide)

- IntelliRide was ultimately awarded the contract

- Due to time constraints, the Department took a phased approach to expansion; all counties were onboarded by the end of September 2020

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Successes

- The Department has been able to administer the benefit uniformly throughout all 64 counties
- IntelliRide recruited providers in counties that previously did not have any
- IntelliRide ensured that people received safe transportation during the Public Health Emergency
- IntelliRide has been a valuable partner in getting people to vaccine appointments

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Challenges and Feedback

- Many NEMT providers felt that the Department gave control of their businesses to a third party
- Providers already performed many administrative functions
- Members were confused by the new process; some were upset at a perceived disruption of longstanding relationships with local NEMT providers
- Increased call volume resulting from the expansion led to increased hold times
- Delays in processing mileage reimbursement

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Response to Feedback

- In May, based on continued feedback from members and providers, the Department began exploring options to address concerns with benefit administration

- The Department and IntelliRide agreed to a reduction in scope beginning in August

- IntelliRide will still be full service for the original nine-county region

- In the rest of Colorado, scheduling, administrative tasks, and billing will go back to local NEMT providers

- IntelliRide will still handle mileage reimbursement and out of state travel requests for members statewide

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Work Left to Do

- Still need dedicated providers for a small number of counties

- Need to constantly improve call center hold times

- Need to reduce the amount of time it takes to process mileage reimbursement

- Still, we have received encouraging feedback on our new direction from members, providers, and advocates

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Questions?

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Thank you!

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