

**Testimony**  
**Department of Human Services**  
**Government Services Committee**  
**Representative Ken Svedjan, Chairman**  
**April 22, 2010**

Chairman Svedjan, members of the Government Services Committee, I am Maggie Anderson, Director of Medical Services Division for the Department of Human Services. I am here today to provide information about Medicaid eligibility relating to veterans.

Eligibility for Medicaid is determined the same for all applicants, and there is no distinction made between veterans and other applicants. Issues that specifically relate to veterans include:

- Veterans, or their spouses, may receive income from the Veteran's Administration (VA) which is counted as income in determining Medicaid eligibility.
- Veterans, or their spouses, may receive medical care payments from the VA, such as Aid and Attendance benefits, Homebound benefits, or Reimbursement for Unusual Medical Expenses. These payments are specifically for medical expenses and are applied toward the individual's cost of care before Medicaid payment is made.
- Veterans in long term care may receive a reduced "Improved Pension" of \$90 if they have no dependants and if they reside in a Medicaid approved facility. Federal law requires that state Medicaid programs disregard the full \$90 Improved Pension.
- Veterans may choose to receive medical care at VA medical facilities, however, due to freedom of choice, Medicaid does not

mandate that they receive care at the VA facilities.

- Veterans may choose to obtain prescription drugs through the VA, however, due to freedom of choice, Medicaid does not mandate that they obtain them through the VA.
- Insurance coverage provided through the VA is treated like any other third party resource when determining Medicaid payment of services.

The Department is currently in the process of finalizing an electronic federal match with the VA to identify and verify federal benefits received, including the availability of insurance benefits. This federal match is known as the PARIS match, and all states are required to participate in the match. The match also provides information on other federal government pensions as well as identifying individuals who may be seeking benefits through more than one state. We expect to have these federal matches finalized within the next 60 days.

### Applying for Medicaid

Eligibility for Medicaid is determined at the county social service offices. Application forms are available from many sites as well as electronically. Applicants have a choice of three application forms to apply for assistance and will soon have an online application option. These options are available to all Medicaid applicants, including veterans.

- A short application is available for individuals with families who want to apply only for healthcare coverage.
- A short application is available for aged, blind, and disabled individuals who only want to apply for health care coverage.

- A combined application is available for individuals who also want to apply for other economic assistance programs.
- Individuals will soon be able to complete and submit an application electronically through an online application system that is currently being developed.

An application for assistance guidebook is provided to all applicants for assistance. The guidebook provides information about the Department's programs, helpful application information, and informs applicants about their rights.

Information, brochures, and Fact Sheets about Medicaid are provided on the Department's website at:

<http://www.nd.gov/dhs/info/pubs/medical.html>.

I would be happy to address any questions that you may have.

