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Report Highlights

Progress Report: Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

Louisiana Department of Health

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Why We Conducted This Audit

We evaluated whether the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) has improved its oversight of the Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) program since our December 2015 performance audit. Our 2015 audit found that LDH did not always provide sufficient oversight of the NEMT program because it (1) did not routinely analyze NEMT claims to monitor the program for improper payments, (2) did not conduct onsite monitoring of non-ambulance providers, and (3) never monitored ambulance providers to ensure that supporting documentation existed for their rides. In its response, LDH stated that the issues cited in the report would be addressed by moving NEMT into the state's Medicaid managed care model on December 1, 2015. This audit focused on whether these issues have been addressed.

What We Found

Overall, we found that LDH is still not providing sufficient oversight of the NEMT program.

- LDH has not provided the managed care organizations (MCOs) with sufficient guidance to administer the NEMT program and has weakened or eliminated controls that previously existed in the program.** Specifically, LDH did not update the transportation provider manual before the MCOs began administering the program, and it did not ensure that the MCOs used consistent coding to identify NEMT services and providers in the encounter data. In addition, LDH no longer requires documentation from medical providers supporting the occurrence and need for transportation, it does not ensure that MCOs store ride verification forms electronically as required by their contracts, and it does not require that MCOs review NEMT documentation to verify that their transportation brokers are enforcing program rules.
- LDH is not routinely analyzing NEMT encounter data to ensure the MCOs are in compliance with their contracts and identifying potentially improper payments that violate NEMT program rules. As a result, we identified potential improper payments similar to those found during our December 2015 audit.** Specifically, we identified \$4.3 million in rides where there was no medical claim on the date of the service, \$1.2 million in rides that potentially should have been identified as value-added services and excluded from calculation of capitation rates, and \$310,581 in rides that should have been paid by nursing facilities and hospice providers.

NEMT is non-emergency transportation provided for Medicaid recipients to and from a Medicaid medical provider. The program provides transportation when all other reasonable means of free transportation have been explored and are unavailable. In calendar years 2016 through 2018, 150,673 recipients received NEMT services through the managed care program at a cost of approximately \$151 million.

View the full report, including management's response, at www.la.gov.