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Aging & Independence

PROGRAM INSTRUCTION (PI)

AGE PI – 25-01
Ref PI – 18-03

TO: Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs)
Executive Directors
Program Managers
Nurse Managers

FROM: Lynn C. Vidler, Senior Director, Operations & Policy, Home Care, MBA, BSW

DATE: January 30, 2025

RE: ENHANCED COMMUNITY OPTIONS PROGRAM (ECOP)

Purpose:

The Executive Office of Aging and Independence (AGE) is issuing this Program Instruction (PI) to clarify requirements for the Enhanced Community Options Program (ECOP). This PI supersedes and replaces EOEA-PI-18-03 as well as any other previously issued communications regarding the requirements addressed herein.

Background and Program Implications:

The Enhanced Community Options Program was implemented in 1993 to provide a higher level of services in the community to older adults who are ineligible for MassHealth Standard and meet the clinical requirements for nursing facility services. The goal of the program is to address the needs of nursing facility eligible older adults who require enhanced service plans to live safely and independently within the community setting of their choosing.

ECOP Eligibility Criteria:

ECOP provides an enhanced service package to consumers who are assessed to need certain types of services to live in the community. These identified services include home health services, supportive home care aide, personal care, homemaker, home delivered meals, transportation, adult day health services, and/or other Home Care Program services as defined in 651 CMR 3.02. Individuals who meet the home care eligibility criteria as defined in 651 CMR 3.04 are eligible to access services through ECOP with the exception of consumers found eligible for the Home Care Percent Based program.

Enrollment in ECOP is available to older adults who are ineligible for MassHealth Standard. All older adults eligible for MassHealth Standard who are nursing facility eligible must be enrolled in the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver. Consumers who are eligible for MassHealth Standard but are not waiver eligible may be eligible for ECOP as noted below.

To be eligible for enrollment in ECOP, consumers must meet the following criteria:

- Be determined eligible for the Home Care Program as defined in the Home Care Program regulations 651 CMR 3.04(2), (3), (4), and (5)
- Receiving Home Care services for which the cost of services actually provided is at least two (2) times the current monthly Home Care Program Basic rate established by regulation at 101 CMR 417.00
- Be determined clinically eligible for nursing facility services as outlined in the MassHealth regulations 130 CMR 456.409, and as determined by an in-person assessment performed by an ASAP Registered Nurse (RN). The assessment must be performed utilizing an assessment tool approved by AGE
- Be determined ineligible for MassHealth Standard, or be determined eligible for, or already enrolled in, MassHealth Standard but be determined ineligible for the Frail Elder Waiver (e.g., a consumer who is aged 60-64 but not disabled, a consumer who is aged 60-64 but not financially eligible for the waiver, or a consumer accessing State-Funded MassHealth Standard through the Community-Based Long Term Services and Supports (CB-LTSS) Screening)

If the consumer has received an in-person assessment by an ASAP RN as documented in a Comprehensive Data Set (CDS) within the prior six months, an in-person reassessment is not required unless there has been a change in the consumer's condition, such as ADL/IADL change, that may justify an in-person assessment to determine ECOP eligibility. If an in-person assessment is not required, the ASAP RN must contact the consumer and/or family to provide notice indicating the consumer meets nursing facility level of care and is eligible for the ECOP Program. A consumer's eligibility to support an ECOP level of care must be documented in the following sections of the AGE designated cloud-based data enterprise system:

- The CDS including the Nursing Module,
- Journal Entry outlining the MassHealth regulations 130 CMR 456.409 which support the consumers clinical eligibility criteria

Required Actions:

The ASAP must confirm the consumer meets the program eligibility requirements described in this PI.

The ASAP must identify consumers who may be eligible for ECOP through an interdisciplinary team that will:

- Conduct an in-person assessment
- Determine ECOP clinical eligibility by the ASAP RN within 10 days of referral;
- Conduct ECOP clinical eligibility re-determination by the ASAP RN within 13 months of previous ECOP clinical determination;
- Actively engage the consumer and their family members to determine a person-centered comprehensive plan of care that includes case management, home care services, and other formal and informal supports;
- Coordinate all services the consumer receives through their ECOP plan of care, including coordination with other services and supports the consumer receives both formal and informal;
- Conduct on-going interdisciplinary case management activities;

- Conduct in-person Case Management reassessments as needed and at least once every three months;
- The ASAP RN shall determine continued nursing facility eligibility annually via an in-person assessment using the CDS;
- Complete the CDS at the 6-month reassessment and 12-month annual re-determination visit schedule and more frequently as required by changes in the consumer's circumstances, functional impairments, or service need; and
- Conduct a consumer status reassessment at every home visit or through contact with the case manager or ASAP RN and more frequently as required by changes in the consumer's circumstances, functional impairments, or service needs; and complete a CDS documenting the assessment

Consumers enrolled in ECOP who do not meet the eligibility criteria for ECOP at Reassessment or at annual Re-determination, but who do meet Home Care Program eligibility criteria, must be transferred to the Home Care Basic Program. As set forth in 651 CMR 3.07: If the ASAP makes a decision to deny, terminate, or reduce Home Care Program services, the ASAP must notify the consumer of their right to seek review of the decision. Additionally, the ASAP must inform the consumer when there has been a change in the source of funding of the consumer's services. The consumer does not have the right to appeal the change in the source of funding.

Effective Date: This PI is effective as of February 1, 2025.

Contact: If you have any questions about this program instruction, please contact Devon Garon, Director of Home and Community Program at Devon.Garon@Mass.Gov.