**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services**
**Division of Medical Assistance**

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Ambassador (Ret.)
Secretary DHHS

Robin Gary Cummings, M.D.
Deputy Secretary for Health Services
Director, Division of Medical Assistance

March 26, 2015

Dear County Director of Social Services:

Re: Medicaid Recertifications

In an effort to continue to reduce the number of Medicaid cases currently overdue for recertification, the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services has identified a number of effective practices implemented by County Departments of Social Services that resulted in their achieving timely processing goals for completing recertifications.

DHHS would like to share some of these as they help streamline your department's operations, enhance efficiency and improve customer satisfaction.

**Caseworker Operations**

In some county departments, caseworkers were able to work more efficiently if they had work stations which were isolated from other office distractions. Staggered work hours also allows staff to remain working in the system from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. Transitioning to a Universal Worker Concept and allocating laptops to staff who work at remote locations also allows work to continue during early mornings and evenings, weekends, inclement weather and other "non-traditional" hours. Hiring caseworkers who wished to obtain additional work hours (moonlighting) from other counties has proven to be effective in several counties.

**Logistics**

Some DSS locations were able to attack the recertification backlog by establishing Call Centers. Others created a "Triage Unit" for applications and recertifications, in which employees processed paperwork only and did **not** see any walk-in clients. Others used a specialized division of labor method, creating "customer care specialists" who either answered incoming phone calls **or** saw walk-in applicants/beneficiaries, but not both.

**Networking**

Several of our DSS offices have coordinated and shared best practices, lessons learned and other implementation strategies with other counties. This includes the establishment of productivity benchmarks.

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While a number of counties are already current in completing Medicaid recertifications, others are expected to become current in the coming weeks. The Department will continue the automatic extension process for MAGI-related Family Medicaid recertifications through April, 2015 and will re-assess the need for continued automatic extensions on a month-by-month basis through June, 2015.

These automatic one-month extensions will be made when the county has not:

1) Terminated for ineligibility or failure to provide information, or

2) Determined ongoing eligibility and assigned a new certification period.

County staff should **not** manually extend these cases if the recertification has not been completed. NC FAST will continue providing reports that will identify these cases. No automatic extensions will be made after June, 2015.

Counties should continue to process Adult Medicaid recertifications and, if not completed, you must continue to perform manual extensions.

If you have questions regarding this information, please contact the Operational Support Team at ost.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

Wayne E. Black
Director, Division of Social Services

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