State Disability Evaluation for MassHealth

Disability Evaluation Services
Commonwealth Medicine
The University of Massachusetts Medical School
Established January 1998
Today’s Agenda

• Overview of Disability Evaluation Services (DES)
• The Disability Supplement
• The Disability Determination Process
• Timeline Guidelines
• How you can assist the DES
Office of Medicaid Programs

- MassHealth
- Kaileigh Mulligan
- Children’s Cases
- Department of Corrections
- Boston Health Care for the Homeless
Department of Transitional Assistance Programs

- Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled and Children (EAEDC)
- Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)
- Learning Disability Assessment Program (LDAP)
The Disability Supplement

• MassHealth applicants who indicate that they have a disability when applying for MassHealth benefits are mailed a disability supplement.

• The supplement provides Disability Evaluation Services with information about the applicant’s disability, activity of daily living, education and work history.
Critical Supplement Elements

• Signed Medical Releases.
• Applicant demographic information.
• A complete description of the applicant’s health problems and medications.
• Information about the health care providers that have treated the applicant during the past 12 months.
Critical Elements, Continued

• Language ability and educational attainment.
• Work history including detailed information about the applicant’s most recent job.
• Appointment preferences, more than two choices may be listed.
• Activity of daily living Information.
Supplements are mailed directly to Disability Evaluation Services (DES)

Disability Evaluation Services
UMASS Medical DES
P.O. Box 2796
Worcester, Ma. 01613-2796
Processing New Supplements

• Step 1 is writing to all applicant treating sources.
• DES contacts hospitals, physicians and non-medical providers such as social workers and schools.
• Telephone calls are made to key treating sources who do not respond to written requests.
Consultative Exams (CE)

• DES prefers to utilize treating source information; however, if sufficient information is not received a CE(s) may be necessary.

• CEs are ordered if:
  An applicant has no treating provider; or information received from the applicants treating provider is insufficient or out of date.
The CE Process

• 10 -14 days prior to a CE, applicants & authorized representatives are mailed an appointment notification letter.

• This letter informs applicants of:
  The date and time of the appointment;
  The availability of transportation; and
  The availability of medical interpreters.

CE Letters are sent in English and Spanish.
The Decision Process

• Applicant medical information is reviewed by qualified professionals:
  – Registered Nurses (RN)
  – Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors
  – Physicians and Psychologists

• Determinations are based on Title XVI regulations.
The Five Step Process

- Evaluation of Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)
- Severity and Duration
- Comparison to Medical Listings
- Determination if the Applicant can Perform Past Work
- Determination if the Applicant can Perform Other Work
The DES Time Line Guideline

Actual time line varies depending on case circumstances.

**Day 1-27**
Collection of medical records.

**Day 28**
Assess the need for a CE.

**Day 29 – 54**
The CE process.

**Day 55 – 60**
Medical, Vocational & Physician Review.

Receipt of medical records = reduction in timeline.
How You Can Assist the DES

• Work with applicants to fully complete the Disability Supplement.
• Verify that medical release forms are signed and dated.
• Submit available medical records with the Disability Supplement.
• Act as an authorized representative
• Fax Medical Information to DES at 774-455-8156.
How We Can Help…

• Contact Kathleen Nichols if you have any questions about the process.

Kathleen C. Nichols  
Client Service Manager  
Disability Evaluation Services  
University of Massachusetts Medical School  
Commonwealth Medicine  
1-800-888-3420 (Customer Support)  
774-455-8293 (Office)  
774-455-8156 (Fax)