



December 2, 2021

Members of the Montana State Boards of Dentistry, Medical Examiners, Nursing, and Pharmacy

Dear Board Member:

After careful consideration, the Department of Labor and Industry is shifting administration of the medical assistance program internally in lieu of a contracted service provider. As you are aware, the department has utilized a contractor for these services for several years, on behalf of the Boards of Dentistry, Medical Examiners, Nursing, and Pharmacy. The current contract ends on December 31, 2021, and departmental services will begin immediately.

The department anticipates a smooth transition, maintaining assistance for licensees, protection of the public, and efficient use of board resources. As you have come to expect, the department will continue to provide a comprehensive monitoring report to each board.

Administering the medical assistance program internally allows for more direct monitoring of participant progress in concert with the board's adjudicative process. Department compliance specialists will handle monitoring while clinical professionals, working independently from the Department, handle all evaluation and treatment processes directly with the participant. Additional efficiencies will also be gained by providing a wider variety of choices available to program participants who require an extensive range of clinical and treatment services.

Compliance specialists will initially coordinate referrals to licensed clinical professional evaluators. From that point, clinical professionals will perform the evaluation, make treatment recommendations, and coordinate referrals to treatment facilities and/or counseling professionals as prompted from the initial clinical evaluation. Compliance specialists will monitor a participant's ongoing progress, to include toxicology testing and other documentation from clinical providers as to the participant's continued recovery.

The department intends to use a third-party testing administrator to coordinate testing for participants enrolled in the medical assistance program. This crucial component of the medical assistance program involves having established relationships and access to testing laboratories and extensive years of experience with assisting and collaborating with medical assistance. To make this changeover as seamless as possible for existing and new participants, the department will initially use the same testing administrator that the current medical assistance program contractor used.

I look forward to further discussing this transition with each board at their first regularly scheduled full board meeting in the new year.

Todd Younkin

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Administrator