

The Elimination of LaHIPP

By: Mary Jacob

Social media is all abuzz about the elimination of LaHIPP, the Louisiana Health Insurance Premium Payment Program.

Families are crying foul with the lack of notice the state provided in

eliminating yet another much needed program created to help parents care for their children with disabilities and health care issues.

One mother wrote, "We received our letter last week. I was completely blown away since I had not heard this was coming. I was praying that it was just that we had forgotten to include something in our paperwork. This confirms it for me. Wow.... A huge blow very suddenly."

Families are being encouraged to send their state legislators copies of their official LaHIPP letters along with their own letter stating how this will impact their family.

The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council also posted the following on June 23, 2015 in their LaDDC News e-newsletter.

Approximately 1,500 Louisiana households received notice last week from the state Medicaid office that the Louisiana Health Insurance Premium Payment Program, commonly known as LaHIPP, was being eliminated effective July 1, 2015. **Individuals currently in this program will still be enrolled in Medicaid and have access to health coverage through Medicaid providers.** Children under the age of 21 are eligible to receive all services that are deemed "medically necessary."

LaHIPP
ELIMINATED



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State officials reported that the program is being eliminated due to reductions in the Fiscal Year 2016 budget passed by the legislature and signed by Governor Jindal last week and due to the fact that the overall program was no longer cost effective. LaHIPP paid all or a portion of health insurance premiums for an employee and their family if they had insurance available through their jobs, someone in the family had Medicaid, and it was cost effective for the state to do so. Insurance co-pays and deductibles were also covered. With the elimination of the program, insurance premiums, co-pays and deductibles will no longer be paid by the state.

The letter to current LaHIPP participants includes information regarding options for changing insurance coverage if that is desired by the participant. Participants were instructed to call 888-342-6207 for answers to any questions they may have.

Advocacy Works

The following press release was issued after an outcry by parents and Advocacy Center.

Department of Health and Hospitals Delays LaHIPP Discontinuation to Dec. 1

Tuesday, June 30, 2015 | **Contact:** Media & Communications:
Phone: 225.342.1532, E-mail: dhinfo@la.gov

Baton Rouge, La.—The Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) extended the discontinuation date of the Louisiana Health Insurance Premium Payment (LaHIPP) program Monday, moving the date from July 1 to Dec. 1, 2015.

DHH is moving the date in an effort to give families more time to make arrangements for the change, such as enrolling in Bayou Health or finding a new provider if their current providers do not accept Medicaid as primary payer. All Medicaid-eligible recipients will continue to keep their current form of Medicaid coverage, although some may transition from legacy fee-for-service Medicaid to a Bayou Health plan by Dec. 1. The Department also will continue to pay the applicable portion of



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the recipient's private insurance until the Dec. 1 discontinuation date.

Bayou Health, Louisiana's Medicaid managed care program, has been successful in both increasing recipients' access to care and saving the state money. Because of those successes, DHH determined it is more cost-effective to transition some LaHIPP to Bayou Health. Some LaHIPP recipients receiving home- or community-based waivers may choose to opt into a Bayou Health plan for certain services or may elect to remain on legacy fee-for-service Medicaid.

The Department is sending letters to each of the approximately 1,500 households with additional details. Recipients who have questions about these changes or would like to transition from legacy fee-for-service Medicaid into a Bayou Health plan may call DHH offices Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 1-888-342-6207.

The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals strives to protect and promote health statewide and to ensure access to medical, preventive and rehabilitative services for all state citizens. To learn more about DHH, visit www.dhh.louisiana.gov. For up-to-date health information, news and emergency updates, follow DHH's [Twitter](#) account and [Facebook](#).



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