



MEDICAL ASSISTANCE BULLETIN
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA * DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

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EFFECTIVE DATE:
September 1, 2004

SUBJECT: Encouraging Hospitals to Register as Community Partners and to Use Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Access to Social Services While Assisting Individuals Applying for Social Services

BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David S. Feinberg".

David S. Feinberg
Deputy Secretary for Medical Assistance Programs

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to encourage hospitals to register as a Community Partner and to use the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Access to Social Services (COMPASS) Program to apply on behalf of or to assist individuals applying for healthcare coverage and social service programs.

SCOPE:

This bulletin applies to all hospitals enrolled in the Medical Assistance Program, in either the Fee-for-Service or Managed Care delivery systems.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

COMPASS, first offered in October 2001, is an online application service that enables Pennsylvanians to apply for a broad range of social service programs and services through a single access point for a wide variety of programs including healthcare coverage, food stamps and cash assistance benefits, long-term care, home and community based services for individuals with mental retardation and low-income home energy assistance.

COMPASS provides seamless customer interaction via the internet and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. COMPASS offers preliminary information with regard to the potential for eligibility but does not directly determine who is or is not eligible.

PROCEDURE:

Hospitals that help fill out applications on behalf of or assist Pennsylvania residents to apply for healthcare coverage and social service programs can apply to be COMPASS Community Partners. The COMPASS Community Partner View allows hospitals to initiate and actively track applications they submit and also provides access to COMPASS Power User, which is a streamlined version of the COMPASS application.

COMPASS Power User gathers the identical information that is captured on a regular COMPASS application but uses fewer screens, thereby reducing the time to complete a COMPASS application. COMPASS Power User allows Community Partners to more efficiently enroll eligible individuals in a variety of healthcare and social service programs.

An additional benefit of COMPASS is the Enhanced Community Partner Process, which allows the Community Partner to assist the applicant in providing proof of certain items such as validation of identity, pregnancy, income and resources. This is used only for Medical Assistance and/or Food Stamp Applications.

Forms to register as a Community Partner can be downloaded from the COMPASS website at <http://www.compass.state.pa.us/> or are available by contacting the Department of Public Welfare's, Office of Income Maintenance, Division of Health Services at (717) 772-7809.

COMPASS can also be accessed through the PA PowerPort at <http://www.state.pa.us/>, PA Keyword: COMPASS.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

The Appropriate Toll Free Number for Your Provider Type

Visit the Office of Medical Assistance Programs website at www.dpw.state.pa.us/omap