



Assisted Living Program Changes **DOH Eases Several Requirements**

New York State's Department of Health (DOH) recently announced that several changes affecting the Assisted Living Program (ALP) have taken effect as a result of the Medicaid Redesign Team's recommendations for the 2012-2013 State Budget. These changes are in effect as of April 1, 2012, even though regulations to conform to these changes have not yet been adopted.

ALPs will no longer be limited in how many contracts they may have with Certified Home Health Agencies (CHHAs) or Long Term Home Health Care Providers (LTHHCPs). Further, ALPs may perform initial assessments (pending the development of rates and regulations, as well as CMS approval) or reassessments of residents either directly or through their contracts with CHHAs and/or LTHHCPs. ALPs may also now contract with other qualified providers for services included under the ALP Medicaid capitated rate. Home health aides will be permitted to provide all services that they have been certified to perform in the community, which may include:

- Helping a patient self-administer medications;
- Using medical equipment, supplies and devices;
- Providing special skin care;
- Changing surface wound dressings (if needed) and checking a patient's medical condition through simple measurements and tests;
- Performing maintenance exercise programs; and
- Caring for an ostomy once it achieves its normal function.

Local Social Services Districts (LDSS) no longer must authorize payment for services in advance. However, a LDSS may audit an ALP upon being notified of newly-enrolled patients to verify that such patients belong in an ALP and are eligible for Medicaid.

DOH plans to establish up to 4,718 additional ALP beds across New York by March 31, 2014, based on the proposals it received under an Opportunity for Development (OFD) that was due on July 18, 2012. It currently expects to decide on new bed awards in Fall 2012.

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