



OCT 13 1992

DALLAS REGIONAL MEDICAL SERVICES LETTER NO 92 - 102

TO: State Agencies Administering Approved Medical Assistance Plans

SUBJECT: Medicaid Coverage of Investigations to Determine the Source of Lead

This is in response to requests for clarification received from several States concerning the Medicaid coverage of investigations to determine the source of lead. Such investigations are performed on behalf of children who have been diagnosed as having elevated blood lead levels.

Section 4385 of the State Medicaid Manual (SMM), Preventive Services, currently indicates that investigations to determine the source of lead is one example of a preventive service. After lengthy discussions, we have concluded that investigations to determine the source of lead performed on behalf of children with elevated blood lead levels are not accurately characterized as a preventive service. Therefore, we will be revising Part IV of the SMM to delete the reference to lead investigations as a preventive service.

In addition, while we are removing lead investigations from the preventive services section of the manual, we want to stress that such investigations may be covered under the existing Medicaid rehabilitative services benefit. Regulations at 42 CFR 440.130(d) indicate that "rehabilitative services includes any medical or remedial services recommended by a physician or other licensed practitioner of the healing arts, within the scope of his practice under State law, for maximum reduction of physical or mental disability and restoration of a recipient to his best possible functional level." We believe that locating the source of lead is a remedial service and an integral part of the management and treatment of a child diagnosed with an elevated blood lead level. Because lead investigations to determine the source of lead meet the definition of a rehabilitative service, and always have, we can assure the continuity of reimbursing for these services under the existing rehabilitative services option.

Because there is no existing SMM material on the Medicaid rehabilitation services benefit and because we do not anticipate issuing SMM instructions on the rehabilitative services benefit

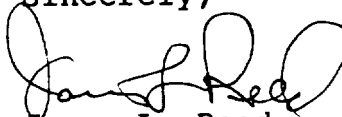
until after we publish revised rehabilitative services regulations, we do not intend to clarify this policy in the **SMM** soon. However, we do plan to address this issue in the preamble of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on rehabilitation services that we are currently working on.

One State asked how these investigations fit the provider requirements of a preventive service as being provided by a physician or other licensed practitioner of the healing arts. Because we are clarifying our policy to indicate that investigations to determine the source of lead for a child diagnosed with an elevated blood lead level are rehabilitative services, not preventive services, this question is no longer relevant. Rehabilitation services need only be recommended by a physician or practitioner of the healing arts, not provided by that individual.

Another State asked us to clarify how the investigations to determine the source of lead are patient-oriented and coverable as a Medicaid service. As indicated above, the investigations no longer have to meet the definition of a preventive service. However, we believe the investigations to determine the source of lead are patient-oriented. We will not reimburse for investigations for all Medicaid children, only those children diagnosed with an elevated blood lead level requiring interventions. In addition, Medicaid will not reimburse for environmental testing, community-wide studies or abatement of lead.

If you have any questions, please contact Pat **Lawton**, or your Medicaid State Representative at (214) 767-3693.

Sincerely,



James L. Reed

Associate Regional Administrator
Division of Medicaid