

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

REQUEST: January 31, 2019

AGENCY: MAP
FH #: 7904553P

In the Matter of the Appeal of	:
	: DECISION
	AFTER
	: FAIR
	HEARING
from a determination by the New York City	:
Department of Social Services	:

JURISDICTION

Pursuant to Section 22 of the New York State Social Services Law (hereinafter Social Services Law) and Part 358 of Title 18 NYCRR, (hereinafter Regulations), a fair hearing was held on February 22, 2019, in New York City, before an Administrative Law Judge. The following persons appeared at the hearing:

For the Appellant



For the Managed Care Plan Center Plan for Healthy Living

Deborah Fergusson, Fair Hearing Representative

ISSUE

Was the Managed Long -Term Care Plan's determination dated January 16, 2019 to deny the Appellant's application for a Personal Care Services authorization in the amount of 24-hour per day, split-shift, 7 days per week correct?

FINDINGS OF FACT

An opportunity to be heard having been afforded to all interested parties and evidence having been taken and due deliberation having been had, it is hereby found that:

1. The Appellant, age 80 years, has been in receipt of a Personal Care Services Authorization in the amount of 9.5 hours per day, 7 days per week from a Managed Long -Term Care Plan, Centers Plan for Healthy Living (the Plan). The Appellant resides with her spouse, age 88 years.

2. On June 11, 2018 the Plan conducted a nursing assessment.
3. On November 16, 2018, the Plan received a medical request for Personal Care Services for Appellant which was completed by the Appellant's physician, and which recommends 24 hours daily continuous Personal Care Services (split shift).
4. On November 15, 2018, the Plan conducted a nursing assessment.
5. By Initial Adverse Determination dated November 27, 2018, the Managed Long-Term Care Plan determined not to increase the Appellant's PCS authorization to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, split-shift, but to continue to provide the Appellant with a PCS authorization in the amount of 9.5 hours per day, 7 days per week. The Plan determined to deny the request on the grounds that it was not medically necessary.
6. By Final Adverse Determination dated January 16, 2019, the Plan affirmed its decision to deny the Appellant's request to increase her PCS authorization to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week split-shift.
7. On January 31, 2019, the Appellant requested this fair hearing.

APPLICABLE LAW

Section 505.14(a)(1) of the regulations defines "Personal Care Services" to mean assistance with nutritional and environmental support functions and personal care functions. Such services must be essential to the maintenance of the patient's health and safety in his or her own home....".

- (2) **Continuous personal care services** means the provision of uninterrupted care, by more than one personal care aide, for more than 16 hours in a calendar day for a patient who, because of the patient's medical condition, needs assistance during such calendar day with toileting, walking, transferring, turning and positioning, or feeding and needs assistance with such frequency that a live-in 24-hour personal care aide would be unlikely to obtain, on a regular basis, five hours daily of uninterrupted sleep during the aide's eight hour period of sleep.

- (4) **Live-in 24-hour personal care services** means the provision of care by one personal care aide for a patient who, because of the patient's medical condition, needs assistance during a calendar day with toileting, walking, transferring, turning and positioning, or feeding and whose need for assistance is sufficiently infrequent that a live-in 24-hour personal care aide would be likely to obtain, on a

regular basis, five hours daily of uninterrupted sleep during the aide's eight hour period of sleep.

(5) Personal care services shall include the following two levels of care, and be provided in accordance with the following standards:

- (i) Level I shall be limited to the performance of nutritional and environmental support functions.
 - ***
 - (b) The authorization for Level I services shall not exceed eight hours per week.
 - ***
- (ii) Level II shall include the performance of nutritional and environmental support functions and personal care functions.
 - (a) Personal care functions include assistance with the following:
 - (1) bathing of the patient in the bed, the tub or in the shower;
 - (2) dressing;
 - (3) grooming, including care of hair, shaving and ordinary care of nails, teeth and mouth;
 - (4) toileting; this may include assisting the patient on and off the bedpan, commode or toilet;
 - (5) walking, beyond that provided by durable medical equipment, within the home and outside the home;
 - (6) transferring from bed to chair or wheelchair;
 - (7) turning and positioning
 - (8) preparing meals in accordance with modified diets, including low sugar, low fat, low salt and low residue diets;
 - (9) feeding;
 - (10) administration of medication by the patient, including prompting the patient as to time, identifying the medication for the patient,

bringing the medication and any necessary supplies or equipment to the patient, opening the container for the patient, positioning the patient for medication and administration, disposing of used supplies and materials and storing the medication properly;

- (11) providing routine skin care;
- (12) using medical supplies and equipment such as walkers and wheelchairs; and
- (13) changing of simple dressings.

Section 505.14(b) of the Regulations provides that when a social services district receives a request for personal care services, it must determine whether the individual is eligible for Medical Assistance. The initial authorization for services shall be based on:

- a physician's order from the patient's physician based on the patient's current medical status as determined by a medical examination within 30 days of the request for Personal Care Services;
- a social assessment which must include a discussion with the patient to determine perception of his/her circumstances and preferences, an evaluation of the potential contribution of informal caregivers, such as family and friends, to the patient's care, and consideration of the number and kind of informal caregivers available to the patient, ability and motivation of informal caregivers to assist in care, extent of informal caregivers' potential involvement, availability of informal caregivers for future assistance, and acceptability to the patient of the informal caregivers' involvement in his/her care. The social assessment is completed by the Agency. When live-in 24-hour personal care services is indicated, the social assessment shall evaluate whether the patient's home has adequate sleeping accommodations for a personal care aide.
- a nursing assessment. The nursing assessment is completed by a nurse from a certified home health agency or by a nurse employed by the local social services department or by a nurse employed by a voluntary or proprietary agency under contract with the local social services department. The nursing assessment must be completed within 5 working days of the request and must include the following:
 - (1) a review and interpretation of the physician's order;
 - (2) the primary diagnosis code;
 - (3) an evaluation of the functions and tasks required by the patient;

- (4) the degree of assistance required for each function and task;
 - (5) an evaluation whether adaptive or specialized equipment or supplies including, but not limited to, bedside commodes, urinals, walkers and wheelchairs, can meet the patient's need for assistance with personal care functions, and whether such equipment or supplies can be provided safely and cost-effectively.
 - (6) the development of a plan of care in collaboration with the patient or his/her representative; and
 - (7) recommendations for authorization of services.
- an assessment of the patient's appropriateness for hospice services and an assessment of the appropriateness and cost effectiveness of using adaptive or specialized medical equipment or supplies covered by the Medicaid Program including, but not limited to, bedside commodes, urinals, walkers, wheelchairs and insulin pens; and

Where there is a disagreement between the physician's order and the social, nursing and other required assessments, or there is a question about the level and amount of services to be provided, or if the case involves the provision of continuous Personal Care Services or live-in 24-hour personal care services as defined in paragraph (a)(2) and (a)(4), respectively, of this section, an independent medical review of the case must be completed by the local professional director, by a physician designated by the local professional director, or by a physician under contract with the Agency to review personal care services cases, who shall make the final determination about the level and amount of care to be provided.

Section 505.14(a)(3)(iii) of the regulations provides that Personal care services, including continuous personal care services and live-in 24-hour personal care services as defined in paragraphs (2) and (4), respectively, of this subdivision, shall not be authorized to the extent that the patient's need for assistance can be met by the following:

- (1) voluntary assistance available from informal caregivers including, but not limited to, the patient's family, friends, or other responsible adult;
- (2) formal services provided or funded by an entity, agency or program other than the medical assistance program; or

GIS 12 MA/026 provides as follows concerning the availability of 24 hour, split-shift personal care services in connection with the case of Strouchler v. Shah:

It is the Department's policy that 24-hour split-shift care should be authorized only when a person's nighttime needs cannot be met by a live-in aide or through either or both of the following: (1) adaptive or specialized equipment or supplies including, but not limited to, bedside

commodes, urinals, walkers, wheelchairs, and insulin pens, when the social services district determines that such equipment or supplies can be provided safely and cost-effectively; and (2) voluntary assistance available from informal caregivers or formal services provided by an entity or agency.

When a person's nighttime needs cannot be met by the use of adaptive or specialized equipment or supplies or voluntary assistance from informal caregivers or formal services, a determination must be made whether the person needs 24-hour split-shift care (included within the regulatory definition of "continuous personal care services") or live-in 24-hour personal care services. Under Section 505.14, this depends on whether the person needs "some" or "total" assistance with toileting, walking, transferring, or feeding, and whether these needs are "frequent" or "infrequent", and able to be "scheduled" or "predicted".

The intent of the regulation is to allow the identification of situations in which a person's needs can be met by a live-in aide and still allow the aide to have an uninterrupted five hours for sleeping. The Department is considering changes to the regulations to better achieve this goal.

In the meantime, the Department provides the following clarifications:

1. The fact that a person's needs are predictable does not preclude the receipt of 24-hour split-shift care, if the person has a documented medical need for the tasks to be performed with a frequency that would not allow a live-in aide to perform them and still obtain an uninterrupted five hours of sleep.

2. The need for turning and positioning and/or the need for diaper changes, by themselves, neither preclude nor justify the receipt of 24-hour split-shift care. In order to receive 24-hour split-shift care, the person must have a documented medical need for those tasks to be performed so frequently that a live-in aide cannot provide them and still obtain an uninterrupted five hours of sleep.

3. A person with a documented medical need for turning and positioning may, if otherwise appropriate, qualify for either 24-hour split-shift care or live-in care depending on the frequency at which turning and positioning is required at night, regardless of whether the person has a nighttime need for transferring.

4. When determining whether a person requires 24-hour split-shift care or live-in care, the local professional director must consider whether the physician's order and other required assessments document the following:

- The existence of a medical condition that directly causes the person to need frequent assistance with personal care services tasks during the night;
- The specific task or tasks with which the person requires frequent assistance during the night;

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- The frequency at which the person requires assistance with these tasks during the night;
- Whether the person requires similar assistance with these tasks during the daylight hours and, if not, why not;
- The informal supports or formal services that are willing, able and available to provide assistance with the person's nighttime tasks;
- The person's ability to use adaptive or specialized equipment or supplies to meet his or her documented medical need for assistance with nighttime tasks; and whether the person's physician has documented that, due to the person's medical condition, he or she could not safely use the equipment or supplies; and
- Whether a live-in aide would likely be able to obtain an uninterrupted five hours of sleep were live-in services to be authorized.

DISCUSSION

The Appellant, age 80 years, has been in receipt of a Personal Care Services Authorization in the amount of 9.5 hours per day, 7 days per week from a Managed Long -Term Care Plan, Centers Plan for Healthy Living (the Plan). The Appellant resides with her spouse, age 88 years.

The Plan's primary diagnosis for the Appellant is Alzheimer's disease. The Plan's records also indicate that the Appellant also suffers from low vision in her eyes, and is totally incontinent of bowel and urine.

On June 11, 2018 the Plan conducted a nursing assessment. On November 15, 2018, the Plan conducted another nursing assessment.

On November 16, 2018, the Plan received a medical request for Personal Care Services for Appellant which was completed by the Appellant's physician, and which recommends 24 hours daily continuous Personal Care Services (split shift).

By Initial Adverse Determination dated November 27, 2018, the Managed Long- Term Care Plan determined not to increase the Appellant's PCS authorization to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, split-shift, but to continue to provide the Appellant with a PCS authorization in the amount of 9.5 hours per day, 7 days per week. The Plan determined to deny the request on the grounds that it was not medically necessary.

By Final Adverse Determination dated January 16, 2019, the Plan affirmed its decision to deny the Appellant's request to increase her PCS authorization to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week split-shift on the grounds that it was not medically necessary. The Agency's Notice indicated that based on the November 15, 2018 assessment the Appellant's abilities to perform

physical functioning stayed the same or improved since her prior assessment on June 11, 2018, and therefore her Personal Care hours would stay the same.

As stated in the above cited regulations, when determining the need for live-in care, the Plan must consider the existence of a medical condition that directly causes the person to need frequent assistance with personal care services tasks during the night. Said regulations also require that the Plan must also consider the specific tasks with which the person requires assistance during the night, and the frequency.

The Appellant's Representative and witness, the Appellant's daughters vigorously disputed the Plan's findings that the Appellant's abilities to perform physical functioning stayed the same or improved. They also disputed the Plan's findings that the split shift is not medically necessary. They testified that the Appellant suffers from severe dementia, severe cognitive impairment, cannot take verbal cues, is unable to ambulate, and that her ability to perform ADLs has deteriorated rather than improved. Additionally, they testified that the Appellant has abnormal gait and mobility, disorientation and has had three falls since August 2018 and on October 21, 2018 fell on her head and was hospitalized due to the fall. They noted that their father is elderly and is unable to assist with the Appellant's care. Furthermore, they testified that the Appellant is incontinent of bowel and urine, suffers from a sleep disorder, frequently wakes up at night, frequently needs assistance during the night for toileting, and other tasks; insisting that her night time needs cannot be scheduled. As supporting evidence, they presented letters from the Appellant's physicians and notes from the Appellant's home health aides. Significantly also, they presented the Plan's Care Management Report Notes which stated that the Appellant is confused, disoriented with Severe Cognitive impairment, diagnosed with Alzheimer's, suffers low vision in both eyes, fully incontinent of urine and feces, has history of falling, abnormalities of gait and mobility, fatigue, disorientation, mood affective disorder and sleep disorder. Said testimonial and documentary evidence is found to be credible because it is detailed, persuasive and supported by the Plan's own records. The evidence in this case establishes that the Appellant's night time needs cannot be scheduled and that a home attendant would be unable to get five uninterrupted hours of sleep which the regulations require for live-in 24-hour personal care.

The regulations require that at a fair hearing concerning the denial of an application for or the adequacy of Medical Assistance benefits, the Appellant must establish that the denial of assistance or benefits were not correct or that the Appellant is eligible for a greater amount of assistance or benefits. A review of the record, shows that the Plan's denial of the Appellant's request for increased personal care services to 24 -hour split shift, 7 days per week was not correct and cannot be sustained.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Managed Long -Term Care Plan's determination dated January 16, 2019 to deny the Appellant's application for a Personal Care Services authorization in the amount of 24-hour per day, split-shift, 7 days per week was not correct.

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1. The Agency is directed to immediately provide the Appellant with a Personal Care Services authorization in the amount of 24-hour per day, split-shift, 7 days per week.
2. The Agency is directed to notify the Appellant and her representatives in writing upon compliance with this decision after fair hearing.

Should the Agency need additional information from the Appellant in order to comply with the above directives, it is directed to notify the Appellant's Representative promptly in writing as to what documentation is needed. If such information is requested, the Appellant's Representative must provide it to the Agency promptly to facilitate such compliance.

As required by 18 NYCRR 358-6.4, the Agency must comply immediately with the directives set forth above.

DATED: Albany, New York
03/13/2019

NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

By

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. C. Olowe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Commissioner's Designee