

STATE OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

REQUEST: November 27, 2018

AGENCY: MAP  
FH #: 7866816Z

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

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**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 December 20, 2018, in New York City, before an Administrative Law Judge. The following persons appeared at the hearing:

For the Appellant



For the Managed Long Term Care Plan Centers Plan For Healthy Living (CPHL)

Julia Rolffot, Manager of Appeals and Grievances

For the Social Services Agency (New York City Medical Assistance Program)

On papers only - Appearance waived by the Office of Administrative Hearings

**ISSUE**

Was the Managed Long-Term Care Plan's determination to deny the Appellant's request for an increase, of any kind, in the amount of Appellant's Personal Care Services (PCS) Authorization from 42 hours per week correct?

Was the Managed Long-Term Care Plan's determination not to authorize 24 hours of daily, 7-day-weekly Personal Care Services for Appellant 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 82 and certified disabled, is enrolled in a partially capitated managed long term care plan operated by Centers Plan For Healthy Living MLTC Plan (hereinafter, the “MLTC Plan”), and has been in receipt of an authorization for personal care services in the amount of 42 hours per week (7 hours per day, 6 days per week).
2. On or about October 25, 2018, Appellant requested an increase of PCS hours to Live-in 24-hour personal care services (168 hours per week, 24 hours X 7 days).
3. On October 31, 2018, the MLTC Plan completed a UAS-NY Assessment of the Appellant’s personal care needs. In part, this demonstrates that Appellant has a brain tumor, hydrocephalus, other amnesia, malignant neoplasm of the colon, heart disease and other ailments. “Member was taken to Cobble Hill Medical Center on 10/15/18 due to a fall in members home. Member was sent home the same day in stable condition.”
4. On November 16, 2018, the MLTC Plan approved a partial increase of PCS hours to the amount of 49 hours per week (7 hours per day, 7 days per week).
5. The Appellant requested an Internal Appeal and by A Final Adverse Determination Notice dated November 20, 2018, the MLTC Plan advised the Appellant of its determination to deny the Appellant’s request for an increase in PCS authorization for Live-in 24-hour personal care services, and the plan approval stays at PCS (7 hours per day, 7 days per week, a total of 49 hours per week).
6. On November 20, 2018, this fair hearing was requested.

**APPLICABLE LAW**

Part 438 of 42 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) pertains to provision of Medicaid medical care, services and supplies through Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHPs), Prepaid Ambulatory Health Plans (PAHPs) and Primary Care Case Managers (PCCMs), and the requirements for contracts for services so provided.

Section 438.210 of 42 CFR Subpart D provides, in pertinent part:

- (a) Coverage - Each contract with an MCO, PIHP, or PAHP must do the following:
  - (1) Identify, define, and specify the amount, duration, and scope of each service that the MCO, PIHP, or PAHP is required to offer.

- (2) Require that the services identified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section be furnished in an amount, duration, and scope that is no less than the amount, duration, and scope for the same services furnished to beneficiaries under fee-for-service Medicaid, as set forth in Sec. 440.230.
  - (3) Provide that the MCO, PIHP, or PAHP--
    - (i) Must ensure that the services are sufficient in amount, duration, or scope to reasonably be expected to achieve the purpose for which the services are furnished.
    - (ii) May not arbitrarily deny or reduce the amount, duration, or scope of a required service solely because of diagnosis, type of illness, or condition of the beneficiary;
    - (iii) May place appropriate limits on a service
      - (A) On the basis of criteria applied under the State plan, such as medical necessity; or
      - (B) For the purpose of utilization control, provided the services furnished can reasonably be expected to achieve their purpose, as required in paragraph (a)(3)(i) of this section; and
  - (4) Specify what constitutes “medically necessary services” in a manner that:
    - (i) Is no more restrictive than that used in the State Medicaid program as indicated in State statutes and regulations, the State Plan, and other State policy and procedures; and
    - (ii) Addresses the extent to which the MCO, PIHP, or PAHP is responsible for covering services related to the following:
      - (A) The prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of health impairments.
      - (B) The ability to achieve age-appropriate growth and development.
      - (C) The ability to attain, maintain, or regain functional capacity.
- (b) Authorization of services. For the processing of requests for initial and continuing authorizations of services, each contract must require:

- (1) That the MCO, PIHP, or PAHP and its subcontractors have in place, and follow, written policies and procedures.
- (2) That the MCO, PIHP, or PAHP:
  - (i) Have in effect mechanisms to ensure consistent application of review criteria for authorization decisions; and
  - (ii) Consult with the requesting provider when appropriate.
- (3) That any decision to deny a service authorization request or to authorize a service in an amount, duration, or scope that is less than requested, be made by a health care professional who has appropriate clinical expertise in treating the enrollee's condition or disease....

Section 438.236 of 42 CFR Subpart D provides, in pertinent part:

- (a) Basic rule: The State must ensure, through its contracts, that each MCO and, when applicable, each PIHP and PAHP meets the requirements of this section.
- (b) Adoption of practice guidelines. Each MCO and, when applicable, each PIHP and PAHP adopts practice guidelines that meet the following requirements:
  - (1) Are based on valid and reliable clinical evidence or a consensus of health care professionals in the particular field.
  - (2) Consider the needs of the MCO's, PIHP's, or PAHP's enrollees.
  - (3) Are adopted in consultation with contracting health care professionals.
  - (4) Are reviewed and updated periodically as appropriate.
- (c) Dissemination of guidelines. Each MCO, PIHP, and PAHP disseminates the guidelines to all affected providers and, upon request, to enrollees and potential enrollees.
- (d) Application of guidelines. Decisions for utilization management, enrollee education, coverage of services, and other areas to which the guidelines apply are consistent with the guidelines.

Section 438.400 of 42 CFR Subpart F provides in part:

- (a) Statutory basis. This subpart is based on sections 1902(a)(3), 1902(a)(4), and 1932(b)(4) of the Act.

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- (1) Section 1902(a)(3) requires that a State plan provide an opportunity for a fair hearing to any person whose claim for assistance is denied or not acted upon promptly.
  - (2) Section 1902(a)(4) requires that the State plan provide for methods of administration that the Secretary finds necessary for the proper and efficient operation of the plan.
  - (3) Section 1932(b)(4) requires Medicaid managed care organizations to establish internal grievance procedures under which Medicaid enrollees, or providers acting on their behalf, may challenge the denial of coverage of, or payment for, medical assistance.
- (b) Definitions. As used in this subpart, the following terms have the indicated meanings:
- In the case of an MCO or PIHP—"Action" means--
- (1) The denial or limited authorization of a requested service, including the type or level of service;
  - (2) The reduction, suspension, or termination of a previously authorized service;
  - (3) The denial, in whole or in part, of payment for a service...

Section 438.402 of 42 CFR Subpart F provides in part:

- (a) The grievance system. Each MCO [Managed Care Organization] and PIHP [Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan] must have a system in place, for enrollees, that includes a grievance process, an appeal process, and access to the State's fair hearing system...

Section 438.406 of 42 CFR Subpart F provides in part:

(a) General requirements. In handling grievances and appeals, each MCO and each PIHP must meet the following requirements:

- (1) Give enrollees any reasonable assistance in completing forms and taking other procedural steps. This includes, but is not limited to, providing interpreter services and toll-free numbers that have adequate TTY/TTD and interpreter capability.
- (2) Acknowledge receipt of each grievance and appeal.
- (3) Ensure that the individuals who make decisions on grievances and appeals are individuals--

(i) Who were not involved in any previous level of review or decision-making; and

(ii) Who, if deciding any of the following, are health care professionals who have the appropriate clinical expertise, as determined by the State, in treating the enrollee's condition or disease.

(A) An appeal of a denial that is based on lack of medical necessity.

(B) A grievance regarding denial of expedited resolution of an appeal.

(C) A grievance or appeal that involves clinical issues.

(b) Special requirements for appeals. The process for appeals must:

(1) Provide that oral inquiries seeking to appeal an action are treated as appeals (to establish the earliest possible filing date for the appeal) and must be confirmed in writing, unless the enrollee or the provider requests expedited resolution.

(2) Provide the enrollee a reasonable opportunity to present evidence, and allegations of fact or law, in person as well as in writing. (The MCO or PIHP must inform the enrollee of the limited time available for this in the case of expedited resolution.)

(3) Provide the enrollee and his or her representative opportunity, before and during the appeals process, to examine the enrollee's case file, including medical records, and any other documents and records considered during the appeals process.

(4) Include, as parties to the appeal--

(i) The enrollee and his or her representative;

Section 4403-f of the Public Health Law pertains to Managed Long Term Care Plans.

Article 49 of the Public Health Law pertains to Utilization Review and External Appeal.

## OBLIGATIONS OF THE CONTRACTOR

### A. Provision of Benefits

1. The Contractor agrees to provide covered services set forth in Appendix G in accordance with the coverage and authorization requirements of 42CFR 438.210; comply with professionally recognized standards of health care and implement practice guidelines consistent with 42CFR 438.236; and comply with the requirements of 438.114 regarding emergency and post-stabilization services to the extent that services required to treat an emergency medical condition are within the scope of covered services in Appendix G.

2. Benefit package services provided by the Contractor under this Contract shall comply with all standards of the State Medicaid Plan established pursuant to State Social Services Law Section 363-a and shall satisfy all applicable requirements of the State Public Health and Social Services Law. Non-covered services for which the Enrollee is eligible under the Medicaid Program will be paid by the Department on a fee-for-service basis directly to the provider of service.

3. The Contractor agrees to allow each Enrollee the Choice of Participating Provider of covered service to the extent possible and appropriate.

4. The Contractor agrees to maintain and demonstrate to the Department's satisfaction, a sufficient and adequate network for the delivery of all covered services either directly or through subcontracts. The Contractor shall meet the standards required by 42CFR 438.206 for availability of services; and 42CFR 438.207 for assurances of adequate capacity; and applicable sections of Public Health Law and regulations. If the network is unable to provide necessary services under this Contract for a particular Enrollee, the Contractor agrees to adequately and timely furnish these services outside of the Contractor's network for as long as the Contractor is unable to provide them within the network.

Appeal - a request for a review of an action taken by the Contractor.

Section B of Appendix K of the Managed Long Term Care Contract, provides in part:

## B. APPEALS

An Appeal is a request for a review of an action taken by a plan.

Expedited Appeal – the plan determines or the provider indicates that a delay would seriously jeopardize the enrollee's life or health or ability to attain, maintain or regain maximum function or the action was the result of a concurrent review of a service authorization request. A member may also request an expedited review of an appeal. If an expedited review is not requested, the appeal will be treated as a standard appeal.

Plans must designate one or more qualified personnel who were not involved in any previous level of review or decision-making to review the appeal, and if the appeal pertains to clinical matters, the personnel must include licensed, certified or registered health care professionals. The plan may deny a request for an expedited review, but it must make reasonable efforts to give oral notice of denial of an expedited review and send written notice within 2 calendar days of oral request. The appeal is then handled as a standard appeal. A member's disagreement with plan's decision to handle as a standard appeal is considered a grievance – see Grievance Procedures.

An appeal may be filed orally or in writing. If oral, the plan must provide the member with a summary of the appeal in writing as part of acknowledgement or separately. The date of the oral request for both standard and expedited appeals is treated as the date of the appeal.

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Note: New York has elected to require that a member exhaust the plan's internal appeal process before an enrollee may request a State Fair Hearing.

Section 2 of Appendix K of the Managed Long Term Care Contract sets forth language relating to the managed long-term care demonstration grievance and appeal process which must appear in the Contractor's Member Handbook. This language includes:

### *State Fair Hearings*

If we did not decide the appeal totally in your favor, you may request a Medicaid Fair Hearing from New York State within 60 days of the date we sent you the notice about our decision on your appeal.

If your appeal involved the reduction, suspension or termination of authorized services you are currently receiving, and you have requested a Fair Hearing, you may also request to continue to receive these services while you are waiting for the Fair Hearing decision. You must check the box on the form you submit to request a Fair Hearing to indicate that you want the services at issue to continue. Your request to continue the services must be made within 10 days of the date the appeal decision was sent by us or by the intended effective date of our action to reduce, suspend or terminate your services, whichever occurs later. Your benefits will continue until you withdraw the appeal; the original authorization period for your services ends; or the State Fair Hearing Officer issues a hearing decision that is not in your favor, whichever occurs first.

The model contract for partially capitated MLTC plans advises that Social and environmental supports are services and items that support the medical needs of the Enrollees and are included in an Enrollee's plan of care. These services and items include but are not limited to the following: home maintenance tasks, homemaker/chore services, housing improvement, and respite care. Pursuant to Appendix G, Social and environmental supports may be provided through care management. Care management is a process that assists Enrollees to access necessary covered services as identified in the care plan. It also provides referral and coordination of other services in support of the care plan. Care management services will assist Enrollees to obtain needed medical, social, educational, psychosocial, financial and other services in support of the care plan irrespective of whether the needed services are covered under the capitation payment of this Agreement.

Person Centered Service Plan (or plan of care) is a written description in the care management record of member-specific health care goals to be achieved and the amount, duration and scope of the covered services to be provided to an Enrollee in order to achieve such goals. The person centered individual service plan is based on assessment of the member's health care needs and developed in consultation with the member and his/her informal supports. The plan includes consideration of the current and unique psycho-social and medical needs and history of the Enrollee, as well as the person's functional level and support systems. Effectiveness of the person centered service plan is monitored through reassessment and a determination as to whether the health care goals are being met. Non-covered services which interrelate with the covered services identified on the plan and services of informal supports



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necessary to support the health care goals and effectiveness of the covered services should be clearly identified on the person centered service plan or elsewhere in the care management record.

MLTC policy memo 13.09(a) reminds Plans of MLTC Policy 13.09: *Transition of Semi-Annual Assessment of Members to the Uniform Assessment System for New York* which indicates that effective October 1, 2013, the Uniform Assessment System for New York (UAS-NY) will replace the Semi-Annual Assessment of Members (SAAM).

As per the statewide implementation plan, Plans must use the UAS-NY for all new members who are scheduled to enroll effective **October 1, 2013**; the SAAM assessment must **not** be used for these new enrollees. Additionally, the UAS-NY must be used for *all* reassessments beginning **October 1, 2013**.

All SAAM assessments conducted from June 16, 2013 through September 30, 2013 must be submitted to the Department of Health by October 31, 2013 via the regular SAAM submission process.

MLTC policy memo 13.09(b) advises in part:

**1. Is it permissible for an MLTC Plan to have the nurse complete the 22 items to calculate the Nursing Facility Level of Care in order to determine if the individual meets the initial eligibility for one of the MLTC products? If the individual scores below a 5, the individual would not be assessed using the full UAS-NY Community Assessment.**

No. All MLTC Plans (Partial Capitation, PACE and MAP) are required to conduct the full UAS-NY Community Assessment. The purpose of this tool, in use across all long term care programs and provider types, is to obtain consistent information related to Medicaid recipient care needs. The Department of Health will use this information to effectively inform future community based long term care policy for its entire population. Additionally, this assessment will be used by MLTC Plans to demonstrate reasons for denial of enrollment at Fair Hearings and as such will need to present a clear and consistent representation of the Medicaid recipient's total health care needs to justify their action.

It is important to note that the Nursing Facility Level of Care is not a determining factor for all Partial Capitation MLTC eligibility. Please refer to the MLTC contract for the full eligibility criteria.

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

Section 505.14(a) of the Regulations provides in part that:

- (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.
- (a) Nutritional and environmental support functions include assistance with the following:
- (1) making and changing beds;
  - (2) dusting and vacuuming the rooms which the patient uses;
  - (3) light cleaning of the kitchen, bedroom and bathroom;
  - (4) dishwashing;
  - (5) listing needed supplies;
  - (6) shopping for the patient if no other arrangements are possible;
  - (7) patient's laundering, including necessary ironing and mending;
  - (8) payment of bills and other essential errands; and
  - (9) preparing meals, including simple modified diets.
- (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 specified in clause (i)(a) of this paragraph 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 of 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.

**NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
OFFICE OF HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAMS**

**Guidelines for the Provision of Personal Care Services in Medicaid Managed Care**

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**I. Accessing the benefit**

- a. Request for Service: A member, their designee, including a provider or a case manager on behalf of a member, may request PCS. The MCO must provide the member with the medical request form (M11Q in NYC, DOH-4359 or a form approved by the State, for use by managed long term care plans (MLTC), and the timeframe for completion of the form and receipt of request...
- b. Nursing and Social Assessment:
  - i. Initial assessment  
Once the request is received the MCO is responsible for arranging an assessment of the member by one of its contracted providers. This may be a certified home health agency, CASA, licensed home health agency (LHCSA), registered nurses from within the plan or some other arrangement. The initial assessment must be performed by a registered nurse and repeated at least twice per year.
  - ii. Social Assessment  
In response to recent requirements by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) MCOs must also have a social assessment performed. The social assessment includes social and environmental criteria that affect the need for personal care services. The social assessment evaluates the potential contribution of informal caregivers, such as family and friends, to the member's care, the ability and motivation of informal caregivers to assist in the care, the extent of informal caregivers' involvement in the member's care and, when live-in 24 hour personal care services are indicated, whether the member's home has adequate sleeping accommodations for a personal care aide.  
  
This nursing assessment and the social assessment can be completed at the same time. The forms in New York City are the M27-r Nursing Assessment Visit Report and Home Care Assessment form. For the rest of the state, the forms are the DMS-1 and DSS 3139...
- c. Authorization of services: The MCO will review the request for services and the assessment to determine whether the enrollee meets the requirements for PCS and the service is medically necessary. An authorization for PCS must include the amount, duration and scope of services required by the member. The duration of the authorization period shall be based on the member's needs as reflected in the required assessments. In determining the duration of the authorization period the MCO shall consider the member's prognosis and/or potential for recovery; and the expected length of any informal caregivers' participation in caregiving. No authorization should exceed six (6) months. There is a more detailed discussion about authorization of services and timeframes for authorization, notices and rights when there is a denial of a request for PCS below.
- d. Arranging for Services: The MCO is responsible for notifying and providing the member with the amount, duration and scope of authorized services. The MCO

must also arrange for the LHCSA to care for the member. The MCO will provide the LHCSA with a copy of the medical request, the assessment and the authorization for services. The LHCSA will arrange for the supervising RN and the personal care services worker to develop the plan of care based on the MCO's authorization.

## **II. Authorization and Notice Requirements for Personal Care Services**

- a. Standards for review. Requests for PCS must be reviewed for benefit coverage and medical necessity of the service in accordance with PHL Article 49, 18 NYCRR §505.14 (a), the MMC Model Contract and these guidelines. As such, denial or reduction in services must clearly indicate a clinical rationale that shows review of the enrollee's specific clinical data and medical condition; the basis on which request was not medically necessary or does not meet specific benefit coverage criteria; and be sufficient to enable judgment for possible appeal. If the determination results in a termination or reduction, the reason for denial must clearly state what circumstances or condition has changed to warrant reduction or termination of previously approved services.
- b. Timing of authorization review.
  - i. An MCO assessment of services during an active authorization period, whether to assess the continued appropriateness of care provided within the authorization period, or to assess the need for more of or continued services for a new authorization period, meets the definition of concurrent review under PHL § 4903(3) and must be determined and noticed within the timeframes provided for in the MMC Model Contract Appendix F.1(3)(b).
  - ii. A "first time" assessment by the MCO for personal care service (the enrollee was never in receipt of PCS under either FFS or MMC coverage, or had a significant gap in Medicaid authorization of PCS unrelated to an inpatient stay) meets the definition of preauthorized review under PHL §4903(2) and must be determined and noticed within the timeframes provided for in Appendix F.1(3)(a).
- c. Determination Notice. Notice of the determination is required whether adverse or not. If the MCO determines to deny or authorize less services than requested, a Notice of Action is to be issued as required by Appendix F.1(2)(a)(iv) and (v), and must contain all required information as per Appendix F.1(5)(a)(iii).
- d. Level and Hours of Service. The authorization determination notice, whether adverse or not, must include the number of hours per day, the number of hours per week, and the personal care services function (Level I/Level II):
  - i. that were previously authorized, if any;
  - ii. that were requested by the Enrollee or his/her designee, if so specified in the request;

- iii. that are authorized for the new authorization period; and
  - iv. the original authorization period and the new authorization period, as applicable.
- e. Terminations and Reductions. Authorizations reduced by the MCO during the authorization period require a fair hearing and aid-to-continue language and must meet advance notice requirements of Appendix F.1(4)(a). Fair hearing and aid-to-continue rights are included in the “Managed Care Action Taken Termination or Reduction in Benefits” notice, which must be attached to the Notice of Action. Eligibility for aid-to-continue is determined by the Office of Administrative Hearings.
  - i. If the authorization being amended was an LDSS authorization for PCS made pursuant to 18 NYCRR §505.14, an enrollee requesting a fair hearing has the right for aid-to-continue unchanged until the fair hearing decision is issued. (See 18 NYCRR § 358-3.6).
  - ii. If the authorization being amended was issued by an MCO (either current or previous MCO), an enrollee requesting a fair hearing has the right for aid-to-continue unchanged until the expiration of the current authorization period (see 42 CFR 438.420(c)(4) and 18 NYCRR §360-10.8). The Action takes effect on the start date of a new authorization period, if any, even if the fair hearing has not yet taken place.
  - iii. All notices must reflect the reasons for reduction, discontinuation or denial of a reauthorization for PCS. Appropriate reasons for reducing, discontinuing or denying a reauthorization of personal care services include but are not limited to:
    - 1. the client’s medical, mental, economic or social circumstances have changed and the MCO determines that the personal care services provided under the last authorization or reauthorization are no longer appropriate or can be provided in fewer hours than they were previously;
    - 2. a mistake occurred in the previous personal care services authorization;
    - 3. the member refused to cooperate with the required assessment of services;
    - 4. a technological development renders certain services unnecessary or less time consuming;
    - 5. the member can be more appropriately and cost-effectively served through other Medicaid programs and services;
    - 6. the member’s health and safety cannot be reasonably assured with the provision of personal care services;
    - 7. the member’s medical condition is not stable;
    - 8. the member is not self-directing and has no one to assume those responsibilities;

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A GIS message 99/MA/036 dated December 16, 1999, advises that on October 6, 1999, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the second circuit in Rodriguez et al v. City of New York et al (197 F.3d 611) reversed the lower court's April 19, 1999, decision in Rodriguez et al v. DeBuono et al (44 F. Supp.2d 601) that safety monitoring should be an included task in task based assessments. Therefore, safety monitoring is not an included task in task based assessments.

General Information Service Message GIS 03/MA/03, released on January 24, 2003 by the New York State Department of Health, reads as follows:

The purpose of this GIS is to clarify and elaborate on the assessment of Personal Care Services pursuant to the Courts ruling in Rodriguez v. Novello and in accordance with existing Department regulations and policies.

Social services districts, including those using locally developed task based assessment (TBA) instruments, must complete a comprehensive assessment of the patients health care needs in order to determine the patients appropriateness for services and the amount, frequency and duration of a service authorization. Department regulations (18 N.Y.C.R.R. 505.14) require both a social and nursing assessment in the Personal Care Services patient assessment process.

The assessment process should evaluate and document when and to what degree the patient requires assistance with personal care services tasks and whether needed assistance with tasks can be scheduled or may occur at unpredictable times during the day or night. The assessment process should also evaluate the availability of informal supports who may be willing and available to provide assistance with needed tasks and whether the patients day or nighttime needs can totally or partially be met through the use of efficiencies and specialized medical equipment including, but not limited to, commode, urinal, walker, wheelchair, etc.

When the district, in accordance with 505.14 (a)(4), has determined the patient is appropriate for the Personal Care Services Program, a care plan must be developed that meets the patients scheduled and unscheduled day and nighttime personal care needs. In determining the appropriate amount of hours to authorize, the district must review the physicians order and the nursing and social assessments to assure that the authorization and scheduling of hours in combination with any informal support contributions, efficiencies and specialized medical equipment, is sufficient to meet the patients personal care needs.

Social services districts should authorize assistance with recognized, medically necessary personal care services tasks. As previously advised, social services districts are NOT required to allot time for safety monitoring as a separate task as part of the total personal care services hours authorized (see GIS 99 MA/013, GIS 99 MA/036). However, districts are reminded that a clear and legitimate distinction exists between safety monitoring as a non-required independent stand alone function while no Level II personal care services task is being provided, and the appropriate monitoring of the patient while providing assistance with the performance of a Level II personal care services task, such as transferring, toileting, or walking, to assure the task is being safely completed.

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:



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- 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;
- 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.

General Information Service message 97 MA 033 includes a reminder concerning "statements of understanding". The GIS Message advises that the contribution of family members or friends to the care of a Personal Care Services applicant or recipient is voluntary and cannot be coerced or required in any manner whatsoever. A district may choose to implement so-called "statements of understanding" to reflect a family member's or friend's voluntary agreement to provide hours of care to a recipient whom the district has determined is medically eligible for split shift or live-in services. (See 95 LCM-76, section III, issued July 18, 1995, for a description of statements of understanding.) In New York City, the form statement of understanding is entitled "Agreement of Friend or Relative."

12 OHIP/ADM-1 states, in part:

With regard to informal caregivers, such support cannot be required but should be evaluated and discussed with the patient and the potential caregivers.

Section 358-5.9 of the Regulations provides in part:

(a) At a fair hearing concerning the denial of an application for or the adequacy of public assistance, medical assistance, HEAP, SNAP benefits or services, the appellant must establish that the agency's denial of assistance or benefits was not correct or that the appellant is eligible for a greater amount of assistance or benefits.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Appellant has been in receipt of a Personal Care Services (PCS) authorization in the amount of 42 hours per week which the MLTC Plan partially increased to 49 hours per week. The MLTC Plan determined to deny the Appellant's request for an increase in PCS authorization for Live-in 24-hour personal care services, however, to now provide effective November 16, 2018, continued PCS of 49 hours per week (7 hours per day, 7 days per week).

The hearing record establishes that the Appellant, age 77, has been treated by [REDACTED], M.D. Cardiology, (See Appellant's exhibit "A" Letter dated December 6, 2018) which states "The above patient has been under my care and has been treated for multiple diagnosis. Among them are memory loss which impairs her day to day actions + abilities. She suffers from severe vertigo and has fallen numerous times without remembering how or why. Her elevated blood pressure readings and sugar levels have contributed to her inability to be left unattended. These factors require an aide to be available 24 hours a day in order to prevent further incidents."

[REDACTED], M.D., Neurology, (See Appellant's exhibit "B" Letter dated December 12, 2018) states: "...Ms [REDACTED] is under our care for vertigo, gait difficulty and memory loss. A right temporal meningioma, extensive white matter disease, and diabetic neuropathy with decreased sensation in her lower extremities, also contribute to chronic postural instability." And "1. Significant postural instability makes use of a walker critical for her safety. Unfortunately(sic), she does not always remember to use the walker. She needs reminders to use the walker whenever she ambulates. 2. She has fallen on several occasions since October, 2018; once due to syncope and collapse while using her walker, necessitating to the emergency room where a CT scan revealed normal pressure hydrocephalus. 3. She requires personal support when ambulating and hands-on or standby assistance with all mobility related activities of daily living, including toileting, bathing, dressing, housekeeping, and meal preparation. 4. The Quick Dementia Rating System shows Ms. [REDACTED]'s cognitive functioning to be in the low range of moderate dementia. She exhibits significant impairment in short term memory, problem solving, attention, depression/anxiety, and speech. She sometimes confuses day and night; has forgotten the proper way to complete once familiar tasks; and at times lacks awareness of hygiene needs. 5. She needs medication reminders. Her last medication dose is taken at bedtime. 6. She has unscheduled toileting needs throughout the day and night that she cannot perform independently. She is frequently incontinent and requires assistance with clean-up and changing."

October 31, 2018 is the date of the most recent UAS-NY Assessment of the Appellant's personal care needs of record (ordered by the MLTC Plan), which states as to "Bladder continence: Occasionally incontinent – Less than daily" and "Bowel continence: Continent – Complete control; DOES NOT USE any type of ostomy device" and "Comments: Member wears about 2-3 underpads daily."

The record of the hearing establishes that said record does not support its determination to deny an increase of the Appellant's PCS hours. While Appellant's son and representative had to establish Appellant's eligibility for an increased authorization, he has done so by pointing to items that are, already found in the UAS-NY assessment October 2018 and testimony at the

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hearing. However, the Appellant has not established nighttime needs requiring 24 hour Live-in PCS services. The Appellant has established the need for Personal Care Services aides in the amount of 12 hours a day, 7 days a week for 84 hours PCS per week.

For the above-stated reasons, the MLTC Plan's November 20, 2018 determination cannot be sustained.

### **DECISION AND ORDER**

The Managed Long-Term Care Plan's determination not to authorize 24 hours of daily, 7-day-weekly Personal Care Services for Appellant was correct.

The MLTC Plan's November 20, 2018 determination to deny an increase of any kind in Appellant's Personal Care Services was not correct and is reversed.

1. Centers Plan For Healthy Living MLTC Plan is directed to increase Appellant's Personal Care Services authorization to the amount of 12 hours daily, 7 days per week, for a total of 84 hours per week.

Should the Agency need additional information from the Appellant in order to comply with the above directives, it is directed to notify the Appellant promptly in writing as to what documentation is needed. If such information is requested, the Appellant 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  
01/29/2019

NEW YORK STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

By

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DA Traum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Commissioner's Designee