

Q&A on Healthy Opportunities Pilots' Housing Services

12.1.22

#	Question	Response
Service Authorization Questions		
1	What information can PHPs require care managers to provide prior to authorizing "One-Time Payment for Security Deposit and First Month's Rent?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants for housing often need to pay their security deposit and first month's rent on an expedited timeline given the fast-moving rental market. However, PHPs need sufficient information about any service they are authorizing to manage enrollees' services and their overarching Pilot budget. • PHPs may require care managers to gather the following information from an enrollee prior to authorizing the service "One-Time Payment for Security Deposit and First Month's Rent": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of household members that will reside in the home ○ Number of bedrooms desired for the unit ○ Approximate anticipated rental rate (e.g., a rental rate range the enrollee is targeting) • At the point of authorization, PHPs may not require that any entity provide information on the address/specific unit(s) that the enrollee/family is submitting an application for due to the timing constraints of the housing markets.
2	What information can PHPs require care managers to provide prior to authorizing "Housing Move-In Support"?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHPs may require care managers to include in the referral for "Housing Move-In Support": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anticipated number of bedrooms in the home the member is moving into ○ Example of anticipated items needed • The PHP may not deny an invoice for "Housing Move-In Support" because the list of anticipated items needed differs from the list of items ultimately purchased as long as the items purchased are permissible under the Pilot Service Fee Schedule.
3	Can PHPs require care managers or HSOs to provide price estimates for a home remediation or modification job prior to authorizing "Home Accessibility and Safety Modifications" and "Home Remediation Services"?	<p>No. PHPs may not require care managers or HSOs to provide a price estimate before authorizing "Home Accessibility and Safety Modifications" and "Home Remediation Services." DHHS encourages PHPs to use the service cap to project service costs and closely monitor actual reimbursements (based on the invoices submitted and paid) to manage their budgets. HSOs and NLs are responsible for ensuring that service prices are reasonable and in line with industry and regional standards and may not invoice for a service price that exceeds the Pilot Service Fee Schedule cap. If PHPs identify specific remediations or modifications that are below the cap but appear unreasonably priced based on their experience or research, the PHP should raise this concern with the appropriate Network Lead for further investigation.</p>

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4	Should the PHP authorize services for multiple HOP participants within a household (for example, with Housing Navigation, Support & Sustaining Services, Housing Move-In Support, Home Remediation Services, Home Accessibility & Safety Mods, Healthy Home Goods)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHPs are permitted to authorize the same housing service for multiple eligible enrollees in the same household for the following Pilot housing services, as the requests are specific to an enrollee’s needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Home Remediation Services” ○ “Home Accessibility and Safety Modifications” ○ “Healthy Home Goods” ○ “Short-term Post Hospitalization Housing” • However, PHPs may not authorize more than one of the same services in a household with multiple Pilot enrollees if all Pilot enrollees can benefit from that one service. For example, if the construction of one entrance ramp under the “Home Accessibility and Safety Modifications” service addresses the needs of multiple Pilot enrollees in one household, that service should only be authorized, delivered, and paid for once. • PHPs generally should not authorize the same housing services for multiple enrollees in the same household for the following Pilot housing services, as that would be considered duplicative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Housing Move-In Support” ○ “Housing Navigation, Support and Sustaining services” ○ “Inspection for Housing Safety and Quality” ○ “One-Time Payment for Security Deposit and First Month’ Rent” ○ “Essential Utility Set-Up” • However, in exceptional circumstances, PHPs may authorize these housing services for multiple enrollees in the same household. Exceptional circumstances may include, but are not limited to, if a care manager makes two “Housing Navigation, Support and Sustaining Services” referrals for one household that is turning into two households (for example, due to a divorce, a change in a custody agreement, or an adult child moving out). PHPs should reach out to care managers to learn more if they receive two referrals within one household for these housing services.
5	When a Pilot enrollee is authorized for and receiving Medical Respite services, should the PHP end authorizations related to food, transportation and housing? If yes, is the PHP expected to send notification to HSOs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. If the Pilot enrollee can access one of the Pilot services through other means – for example, through a more comprehensive Pilot service or other Medicaid coverage (e.g., a PHP’s in lieu of service) – they should not receive any Pilot service that could be duplicative. If an enrollee is already receiving a Pilot service (e.g., Healthy Meals) when they enter the Pilot Medical Respite service (which provides meals) that makes the original service no longer necessary. The PHP should work with the care manager to ensure that there is no resulting gap in services as they discontinue the original service. • Once the Pilot Medical Respite service has been authorized, the enrollee’s care manager should notify any HSO that is providing a service to the enrollee that is no longer

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		<p>necessary (e.g., Healthy Meals) to discontinue delivery of that service, after which the HSO will close the case for service delivery. Additionally, the PHP can include a note in the service authorization to discontinue duplicative services if the member is currently receiving any.</p>
Other Housing-Related Questions		
6	<p>What options do HSOs have for affording high upfront housing services costs (e.g., a home remediation/modification) while waiting for PHP reimbursement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHPs, NLs and HSOs are encouraged to identify solutions to up-front funding concerns that work within their communities. • HSOs are permitted to use capacity building funds allocated for approved expenses as initial “seed funds” to cover upfront expenses while awaiting PHP reimbursement. • The Department expects PHP reimbursement to be used to replenish the seed funds. NLs with HSOs that use capacity building funds for this purpose must submit documentation that describes the replenishment process to DHHS for review. Network Leads should also engage with those HSOs to ensure that the HSO’s business model is sustainable and work to build efficiencies as needed in order to build capital reserves.
7	<p>Will DHHS review Network Lead-developed templates that address documentation and verification requirements for “Home Remediation Services”, “Home Accessibility and Safety Modifications” and “One-Time Payment for Security deposit and First Month’s Rent”?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. The Department encourages Network Leads to submit any templates they have or will develop to meet documentation and verification requirements as outlined in the Pilot Service Fee Schedule and Service Index (for example, landlord consent for approved services). • At this time, the Department will not develop Pilot-specific templates for these documentation and verification requirements.
8	<p>Are there any types of home remediation services that are ineligible for “Home Remediation” services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. Home remediation services permitted in the Healthy Opportunities Pilot must comply with the service description in the Pilot Service Fee Schedule: “Evidence-based home remediation services are coordinated and furnished to eliminate known home-based health and safety risks to ensure living environment is not adversely affecting occupants' health and safety. Home remediation services may include for example pest eradication, carpet or mold removal, installation of washable curtains or synthetic blinds to prevent allergens, or lead abatement.” • Services may also include, but are not limited to, repairs to air conditioning/heating units, generators, and roofs as well as tree removal if the services eliminate known home-based health and safety risks to the member. Removing lead-based paint and repainting would also qualify. • PHPs may work with care managers, HSOs and an enrollee’s medical providers to assess whether a requested remediation service complies with the definition. Remediation services that are only cosmetic in nature (e.g., new cosmetic paint or decorations) are not permitted.

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9	How long do safety/habitability inspections (including Housing Quality Standards inspections) remain valid for a particular unit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing inspections, including the HUD-defined Housing Quality Standards inspections and other safety/habitability inspections, typically remain valid for one year for a particular unit per household. • According to most housing inspection standards, a new housing inspection must take place every year or every time a new household newly occupies a unit, whichever comes first. • Generally, HSOs are encouraged to implement HUD-defined Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections even when not required in the Pilot Service Fee Schedule (note: HQS inspections are required as prerequisites to “One-Time Payment for Security Deposit and First Month’s Rent” and “Short-Term Post-Hospitalization”). HQS inspections are required for many housing voucher or tenancy assistance programs. Having more units in North Carolina that have passed HQS inspections benefits Pilot enrollees, other community members, and landlords.