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STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

TO: Sen. Ned Claxton, Senate Chair
Rep. Michelle Meyer, House Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Sen. Heather B. Sanborn, Senate Chair
Rep. Denise A. Tepler, House Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

DATE: March 26, 2021

RE: Recommendation Suggested by the Stakeholder Group Convened by the
Emergency Medical Services' Board Related to MaineCare Reimbursement
for Ambulance Services Providers

We are writing to ask that you consider recommended legislation intended to improve MaineCare reimbursement for rural, low volume ambulance service providers. This recommendation was presented to the HCIFS Committee as part of the report submitted pursuant to Public Law 2019, chapter 668 on February 1, 2021. One of the provisions of Public Law 2019, chapter 668 directed the Emergency Medical Services' Board to convene a stakeholder group to review reimbursement rates for ambulance services. The stakeholder group was required to:

1. Consider current reimbursement rates paid by carriers and other payors for ambulance services for ambulance providers participating in carrier networks and for ambulance providers that are out of network;
2. Consider the reimbursement rates required under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 24-A, section 4303-C for emergency services rendered by out of network providers and the availability of the dispute resolution process under Title 24-A, section 4303-E to those providers;
3. Determine the ambulance providers that participate in carrier networks and identify any barriers to participation in those networks; and
4. Develop recommendations for improving the participation of ambulance services in carrier networks, including proposals to provide assistance with contract negotiation or to amend the reimbursement rates required under law.

The stakeholder group report is posted on the HCIFS Committee page at this [link](#).

While the HCIFS Committee has reported out a bill ([LD 1258](#)) that addresses the recommendations related to health insurance reimbursement for ambulance service providers, we felt it was appropriate that the HHS Committee, as the committee with jurisdiction over the MaineCare program, should consider the specific recommendation related to MaineCare reimbursement suggested by the stakeholder group.

The stakeholder group recommended that MaineCare increase the reimbursement rates for rural, low volume ambulance providers in a manner similar to how Medicare currently recognizes services provided in rural and super-rural areas with add-on payments. The stakeholder group suggested that MaineCare should adopt this methodology to recognize the higher costs of low volume providers and reduce MaineCare cost shifting to commercial health insurance carriers. The members felt it would also be worthwhile for MaineCare to explore cost-based reimbursement for services in areas that are particularly underserved.

We wanted your committee to be aware of this recommendation and to consider whether there is any pending legislation in your committee that could be used as a vehicle for the consideration of this issue.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Please contact us or our legislative analyst, Colleen McCarthy Reid, if you have any questions or need additional information. We look forward to discussing this further.

cc: Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
Joseph Kellner, Chair, Stakeholder Group