

Oregon's new MMIS system to "go live" mid-December

Oregon's new Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) will be implemented by mid-December, a three-month extension of the previous implementation goal of September 2008. An exact date will be announced as implementation gets closer.

"The many people involved in this implementation project continue to work hard with a single focus – to deliver a successful system that improves Medicaid administration in Oregon," said Clyde Saiki, DHS deputy director for Operations and executive co-sponsor of the project. "But as September grew closer, we could see it would take longer to finish some tasks that would ultimately make the implementation more successful for users. Deferring the release three months was the only reasonable choice."

The decision to move the date was supported by both DHS and EDS, the project implementation contractor. Providers, partners and managed care programs are being informed this week about the change.

The new schedule will allow time to resolve system issues that were discovered by DHS staff during initial user acceptance testing.

DHS also will use the additional time to expand training and outreach to users and providers, including:

- Allowing staff to practice using the new system on their PCs.

- Repeating select training courses so both users and providers can attend a missed class or repeat a course as a refresher.
- Offering more outreach to providers on changes to the Medical ID card and how it affects them.

Work will continue past December on some advanced MMIS components that will be phased in after implementation. For instance, the provider Web portal will be implemented in two phases. With implementation, providers will be able to verify recipient eligibility and enrollment. Additional Web functions will be added in March 2009 to give providers the ability to submit claims, check on claim status, and use the Web roster to bill Medicaid.

Some advanced functions for DHS users will be deferred until March 2009 to ensure the new system fulfills its primary purpose of making accurate provider payments. More information on this delayed functionality will be available soon on the MMIS Web site and will be covered in refresher training being offered from September to November.

Saiki expressed the department's appreciation for the work done by project participants.

"I've been impressed with the commitment of the DHS staff, the project team, and the EDS and FOX teams who've worked tirelessly to get us this far," he said. "You've taken your responsibilities seriously and invested in the project because you want to get it right. I'm confident your efforts will carry us to success."