

Reminder-GuildNet Discontinuing Managed Long Term Care Business in Long Island and Westchester Counties

January 29, 2018

GuildNet, a Medicaid provider of long-term care, has announced that it will no longer accept new enrollees from Suffolk, Nassau and Westchester Counties.

This may well be an indication of things to come. According to GuildNet, under Managed Medicaid, the reimbursement rate is too low to sustain care to patients and too low to pay health care workers. If you are currently in the process of applying for Medicaid benefits and enrolling in a managed Medicaid long-term care plan, you will need to choose another managed care provider.

Two New FIDA Plans Launched in Westchester, while 5 FIDA (Fully Integrated Duals Advantage) Plans Slated to Close in 2018

When FIDA first expanded outside of New York City and Nassau counties to Westchester and Suffolk, only one plan, Agewell FIDA, was offered in those counties. **Two new FIDA plans are available in Westchester County** (effective 7/1/17) ; **Healthfirst and Riverspring**. Agewell remains the only plan available in Suffolk. **In 2018 the following 5 FIDA plans will close:** Aetna, GuildNet (in Nassau County only), Fidelis, ICS, and North Shore -LJJ.

GuildNet Withdrawal from Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester

The State Health Dept. clarified that members are not required to find a new plan by June 1st, and may remain in GuildNet after that date, and that GuildNet is required to continue providing them with MLTC services. The letter sent to members by GuildNet does confirm that this MLTC plan has requested to stop providing services in these 3 counties. However, the letter states GuildNet must continue providing services "until a smooth transfer can be completed to your new plan." Still not specified is what happens if the individual cannot find a plan willing to provide the same hours as GuildNet authorized. Advocates maintain that members have the right to continue the same amount of services.

Reminder-GuildNet Discontinuing Managed Long Term Care Business in Long Island and Westchester Counties

Cont'd

The letter further states, "You will continue to receive services from GuildNet until your transfer to your new plan is complete." Advocates are informed that **members WILL CONTINUE to receive GuildNet MLTC services even after June 1, 2017 if they do not select a new plan.** Members will **not** be "auto-assigned" to a new MLTC plan if they do not enroll in one on their own. Despite the letter's wording, advocates are informed that **if other MLTC plans do not authorize the same amount or type of services that the member now receives from GuildNet, they do not have to change plans.** In addition, many MLTC plans are backed up and cannot schedule assessment visits until June or later. Members may stay in GuildNet after June 1, 2017. This is true regardless of what members may be told by staff of GuildNet, New York Medicaid Choice, or other organizations.

Some members have been notified that GuildNet will no longer contract with the home care agency that employs their home care worker. Advocates were told by the State Dept. of Health that GuildNet must do "single case" agreements with home care agencies. This means GuildNet will still pay the home care agency to continue to provide services to individual members after June 1st, even if that home care agency's contract with GuildNet ends on June 1st. The GuildNet Gold Plus **FIDA** Plan continues to be offered in Nassau County and GuildNet **Medicaid Advantage Plus** (MAP) Plans continue in Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Transition Policy Requested

Advocates are asking the State to require the new plans (to which former GuildNet members are transferring) to continue the same services and same number of hours that GuildNet authorized. So far, the State has not agreed to issue this "transition policy."

Reminder-GuildNet Discontinuing Managed Long Term Care Business in Long Island and Westchester Counties

Cont'd

Transition policies require MLTC plans to continue the same services for 90 days that the consumer received before enrolling in MLTC, when the consumers are mandated to transition from fee-for-service personal care or CDPAP to MLTC. See, e.g. MLTC Policy 13.13, MLTC Policy 13.01 (revised)(period was later extended from 60 to 90 days in MLTC Policy 13.10) (All MLTC policy directives available at https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/mrt90/mltc_policies.htm). The same protection should apply in this situation, where a plan is effectively closing down. Advocates contend that the new plan should only be allowed to reduce services below the amount GuildNet had authorized if there is a change in the member's needs or circumstances, after giving proper advance notice of hearing rights.