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To: The Families of Children on the Children's Mental Health (CMH) Waiver Wait list  
From: The Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME)  
Re: Status on the Wait List

Your child has recently applied for the Medicaid Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Children's Mental Health (CMH) waiver. Currently there are no payment slots available for this waiver program and your child has been placed on the wait list. You will be notified when a payment slot becomes available for your child. The average wait time on the CMH wait list continues to increase and the current wait time is approximately three years.

There are many factors that determine if a child will become eligible for the CMH waiver and receive a waiver slot. Children may be eligible for CMH waiver services by meeting all of the following criteria:

- ◆ Be an Iowa resident
- ◆ Be aged from birth to 18 years of age
- ◆ Be determined eligible for Medicaid (Title XIX)
- ◆ Must have a diagnosis of serious emotional disturbance (SED) as verified by a psychiatrist, psychologist, or mental health professional within the past 12 months. A serious emotional disturbance means a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder that
  - is of sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria for the disorder specified by the current version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) published by the American Psychiatric Association; and
  - has resulted in a functional impairment that substantially interferes with or limits a consumer's role or functioning in family, school, or community activities. "Serious emotional disturbance" shall not include neurodevelopmental disorders, substance-related disorders, or conditions or problems classified in the current version of the DSM as "other conditions that may be a focus of clinical attention," unless these conditions co-occur with another diagnosable serious emotional disturbance.

Please be aware that being on the wait list does not guarantee your child will meet all the eligibility criteria for the CMH waiver. For example, if your child's only diagnosis is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

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or autism or if the most recent diagnosis is over 12 months old, they would not meet the eligibility criteria for the CMH waiver.

The eligibility and enrollment process for the CMH waiver will not begin until a payment slot is available for your child. Upon availability of a payment slot, a DHS Income Maintenance (IM) worker will notify you to begin to process the application through the following steps:

- ◆ Obtain financial information from you to determine your child's Medicaid eligibility.
- ◆ Refer you to an Integrated Health Home (IHH) or Managed Care Organization (MCO).
- ◆ The IHH or MCO will contact you and schedule a meeting to complete a level of care assessment. This assessment is required for eligibility for the CMH Waiver. At the initial meeting, you will need to have current documentation (within the past twelve months) from a psychiatrist, psychologist, or certified mental health professional that your child has a mental health diagnosis of serious emotional disturbance.
- ◆ The IHH or MCO will send the completed assessment and the verification of SED diagnosis to the IME Medical Services Unit to determine if your child meets the level of care. Please note that if your child does not meet the hospital level of care criteria, CMH waiver eligibility will be denied.

During the time your child is waiting for CMH services, there may be other mental health services available to your child. If your child is Medicaid eligible, services may be available through either Medicaid or through an MCO. Your child's mental health professional will have information about these services and other services that may be available in your area for your child.

If you have any questions, please contact Le Howland, CMH waiver Program Manager, 515-256-4642 or [lhowlan@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:lhowlan@dhs.state.ia.us).