



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION OF MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AND HEALTH SERVICES

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ALAN J. GIBBS
Commissioner

SAUL M. KILSTEIN
Director

MEDICAID COMMUNICATION NO: 92-2

DATE: January 3, 1992

TO: County Welfare Agency Directors

SUBJECT: Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries

The Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) program is continuing to receive national publicity. Once again, the reports concern individuals who are being denied benefits despite the fact that they are eligible. Specifically, the media is reporting that the terminology "Qualified Medicare Beneficiary" or "QMB" is largely unknown to the agencies responsible for administering the program.

The QMB program was created by the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act of 1988. (Please refer to Medicaid Communication No: 89-18). Eligibility for QMB coverage is limited to persons whose income is below 100 percent of the federal poverty guidelines, whose resources are below standards applicable in medically needy, **and who are enrolled in Medicare Part A.** QMBs are entitled to Medicaid coverage for the cost of their Medicare coinsurance and deductible charges (subject to normal Medicaid reimbursement policy) as well as Medicare Part B premiums. Additionally, for persons who meet QMB criteria and, because of the lack of insured status, must pay their own Medicare Part A premiums, Medicaid will cover the premiums.

In New Jersey, individuals who meet the QMB eligibility criteria also qualify for New Jersey Care which offers full Medicaid coverage. As a result, an individual who meets the criteria for QMB would not be limited to the QMB benefit package i.e. coinsurance and deductibles plus Medicare premiums but would receive full Medicaid coverage including premium payment offered through New Jersey Care.

Individuals contacting the CWA expressing interest in QMB coverage shall be processed as any aged, blind, or disabled applicant for New Jersey Care. Those persons referred to your agency who are already in receipt of Medicaid through SSI should be advised that all QMB benefits are included in their existing Medicaid coverage, including payments of Medicare premiums. Please note that individuals not currently enrolled in Medicare Part A can be referred to the Social Security District Office for enrollment. However, this decision concerning Medicare Part A will not affect their Medicaid benefits. Of course, those who choose to enroll in Part A will have their premium paid by the State.

To eliminate any further problems with QMB inquiries, I am requesting that staff at the county welfare agency who answer the telephone or who participate in pre-screening applicants be reminded that individuals inquiring about Qualified Medicare Beneficiary coverage should be referred to the New Jersey Care unit for information and that, in New Jersey, persons eligible for QMB coverage are entitled to full Medicaid coverage through the New Jersey Care program, as well as payment of the Medicare Part A (self payor) and B premiums.

I thank you for your cooperation. Please refer any questions to the field staff assigned to your county.

Sincerely,


for Saul M. Kilstein
Director

SMK:EJd

c Marion E. Reitz, Director
Division of Economic Assistance

Nicholas R. Scalera, Director
Division of Youth and Family Services