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Disapproval of managed care plans' Exchange proposals will not affect Medicaid program, state says

OLYMPIA – Today's disapproval of proposals for the Health Benefit Exchange by three of five managed care health plans delivering care to Medicaid and Basic Health clients will not affect the Medicaid program or delivery of its services, the Health Care Authority said.

Coordinated Care, Community Health Plan of Washington and Molina Healthcare of Washington had proposed commercial insurance policies for the Washington Healthplanfinder Exchange, but the Office of the Insurance Commissioner announced Thursday that the three proposals did not meet the Exchange requirements.

The proposed policies would have operated in addition to their Medicaid contracts with the state. Medicaid – also known as “Washington Apple Health” -- is funded by state and federal dollars.



Dorothy Teeter, director of the Health Care Authority, said the news was disappointing, however.

“The bi-level approach would have helped prevent churn, which is what happens when a Medicaid client family’s income changes and the family – or just the parents -- must leave Medicaid and switch to one of the subsidized plans in the Exchange.”

Having subsidized plans in place would have been convenient for some clients caught up in churn, because it would have given them a chance to stay with a familiar provider network and plan. That would help ensure continuity of care and even retention of a family provider.

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Teeter said it was her understanding that OIC plans to work with the three health plans to review the subsidized proposals and help correct them for resubmission next year. The Health Care Authority remains committed to ensuring continuity of care between Apple Health and the Exchange and will be partnering with its health plan and provider partners to ensure smooth transitions for consumers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR BACKGROUND:

The Medicaid Expansion 2014 website: <http://www.hca.wa.gov/hcr/me>

The Health Benefits Exchange website: www.WAHBExchange.org

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