



Nonemergency Medical Transportation

May 2019

Background

Nonemergency medical transportation (NEMT) is a service for Medicaid beneficiaries who lack transportation to medical appointments. Idaho uses a brokerage model to coordinate transportation for participants. The brokerage verifies eligibility and schedules trips for Medicaid participants, and it works with a network of transportation providers throughout Idaho to connect participants with drivers.

Nonemergency medical transportation has been a benefit of Medicaid since its inception. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 amended federal rules governing NEMT services to allow states to use a brokerage to manage and coordinate NEMT providers. At the time, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that by transitioning to a broker model, the federal government could potentially realize \$235 million in savings from 2006 to 2015. Many states subsequently adopted brokerage models.

Idaho adopted a brokerage model in 2010 after previously using a fee-for-service model. Transition to a brokerage model was estimated to save the state's Medicaid program at least \$500,000 annually, \$100,000 of which would be from the state general fund. In fiscal year 2018, Idaho Medicaid spent approximately \$23 million on NEMT services.

Scope

Over the past few years, the Legislature has been made aware of several challenges presented by Medicaid beneficiaries and transportation providers. These challenges have raised questions about the effectiveness of how NEMT services are

delivered and whether a brokerage model is best for Idaho. The goal of this project is to give policymakers more information on the various NEMT models available to states and what promising practices exist.

Our evaluation will examine seven specific areas:

- Administration, procurement, operational, and cost differences among the various models that states use to deliver NEMT services

- Cost or other savings Idaho Medicaid has realized since using a brokerage model

- Federal and state laws and rules for NEMT models

- Use of third-party transportation providers

- Processes for reviewing complaints from transportation providers and Medicaid beneficiaries

- How NEMT models operate within the context of a managed care system

- National trends, promising practices, and standards for delivering NEMT services

Projected completion date: 2020 legislative session