Question of the Week

January 27, 2014

Q: I have heard that there were recent changes made to presumptive eligibility for Medicaid. What are the changes and will they impact on my long term care facility?

A: Presumptive eligibility allows qualified entities to make on-the-spot, temporary Medicaid eligibility decisions for certain persons to immediately access medical services. For years, states have had the option to use presumptive eligibility to connect pregnant women and children to Medicaid. Starting in January 2014, the Affordable Care Act gives hospitals a unique new opportunity to use presumptive eligibility to connect all patients to Medicaid, as long as they appear to meet the state’s income guidelines for Medicaid eligibility.

An HFS Informational Notice issued on September 11, 2013 stated:

Hospital Presumptive Eligibility (HPE)
Federally mandated HPE is scheduled for implementation in Illinois in late February. Illinois will be establishing an HPE program, consistent with federal requirements. HFS is in the process of developing guidance for HPEs in Illinois and will work in collaboration with the hospital associations in the state.

Hospitals choosing to participate in HPE will be required to, among other things:

- Register with the state, take training and enter into a written agreement.
- Maintain documentation supporting its PE determinations.
- Submit HPE enrollments electronically through hospital HPE accounts in ABE. This functionality will not be available until February.
- Submit HPE enrollments as part of a full application for benefits that the hospital must help its patients complete in ABE or complete on their behalf.
- Check for existing Medicaid eligibility through MEDI or REV before submitting any MPE enrollment.
- Identify an HPE manager and be held accountable for all HPE enrollments.
- More information will be provided to hospitals as HFS continues to develop the HPE program.

(Click here) for the AHCA summary of the general changes to presumptive eligibility and what they believe it means for long term care facilities.