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Division of Medicaid Services

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Date: October 10, 2018   DMS Operations Memo 18-39

To: Income Maintenance Supervisors
        Income Maintenance Lead Workers
        Income Maintenance Staff

Affected Programs:

☐ BadgerCare Plus   ☐ Caretaker Supplement
☒ FoodShare   ☐ FoodShare Employment
☐ Medicaid   and Training
☐ SeniorCare

From: Rebecca McAtee, Bureau Director
          Bureau of Enrollment Policy and Systems
          Division of Medicaid Services

New Functionality in CARES Worker Web Related to CARES Mainframe Screen DXLI

CROSS REFERENCE

- FoodShare Wisconsin Handbook, Section 1.1.4 Eligibility Overview, Section 1.2.6 Suggested Verification Sources, Section 4.6.7 Shelter and Utility Deduction, Section 4.6.7.3 Standard Utility Allowances, and Section 7.3.2 Calculating Overpayment Claim Amounts
- Medicaid Eligibility Handbook, Section 18.6.2 Community Spouse Income Allocation
- Process Help, Section 44.2 Accessing Data Exchanges, Section 18.1 Shelter and Utilities, and Section 18.1.2 Utilities Introduction

EFFECTIVE DATE

October 27, 2018

PURPOSE

This operations memo announces changes to Cares Worker Web (CWW) pages and CARES Mainframe screens, including the following:

- Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) information will now be automatically updated and the Query moved to CWW.
- The housing assistance question located on the Expense Gatepost page will move to the Shelter Expense Details page for applicable shelter expense types.
- The following Mainframe alerts will be deactivated:
  - o 006 Pull Case Folder for QC Review
  - o 268 Pull Case/Check list for QC

- The following Mainframe screens are no longer needed for data entry and will be accessible by workers in read-only view:
  o DXLI
  o BIRD
  o AFTQ

BACKGROUND

As part of an ongoing effort to improve user interaction with CARES, the DXLI/WHEAP/LIHEAP data exchange currently located in Mainframe will be moved to CWW. The single user experience in CWW will promote easier access to information and efficiencies. Pages in CWW will provide users access to the same functionality that they had using Mainframe screens.

POLICY

There are no policy changes associated with this memo.

CARES

On October 27, 2018, the following enhancements will occur:
- The WHEAP assistance question on the Expense Gatepost page will be automatically populated by CWW if the required information is available.
- Functionality associated with the Mainframe DXLI (LIHEAP query) screen will be available in CWW on the Data Exchange Query page.
- The "Housing Assistance Information" section will be moved from the Expense Gatepost page to the Shelter Costs page.

WHEAP ASSISTANCE QUESTION

The Expense Gatepost page includes a question about payments received from WHEAP. In October, CARES will begin using information from the WHEAP data exchange to automatically answer the WHEAP question with S-Yes (System) if a member in the household has received WHEAP assistance. The question will be automatically answered at application (not including FoodShare program add), renewal, and real-time eligibility (RTE) processing only if a member in the household with a verified Social Security number (SSN) has received WHEAP assistance during the current month or previous 12 months. The query will run for all individuals with a verified SSN (V [Verified], C [Completed], and W [Worker Verified]) listed on the case. The match will return a response when there is a case level FoodShare request and a WHEAP payment was issued to any individual regardless of their individual FoodShare request.

The WHEAP data exchange process runs weekly on Fridays, so a payment made to a household member since the most recent Friday may not be included in the data exchange, and CARES will populate a blank response. If the field is blank and the applicant or member claims to have received WHEAP, workers should check the WHEAP query to check whether a response has been received between the time the applicant or member applied and the interview or request verification from the food unit. If an applicant or member reports in ACCESS that no WHEAP payment was received in the current month or previous 12 months, but the data exchange finds a WHEAP payment for one of the household members, CWW will override the applicant or member's response by automatically entering S-Yes (System) in the "WHEAP" section of the Expense Gatepost page.

If a worker changes the S-Yes (System) response to a ?, a Verification Checklist will be generated. If the worker enters No, and utility expenses are not entered on the Utility Costs page, the food unit will not receive the Heating Standard Utility Allowance (HSUA). If the worker changes the S-Yes (System) response to a ? or No and returns to the Expense Gateway page prior to the eligibility determination or before the case is confirmed out of intake or renewal mode, the S-Yes (System) response will repopulate. Normally the S-Yes (System) response would not be found questionable. However, if a household member has received WHEAP, the WHEAP response will be populated even if the individual is not part of the food unit. The food unit is entitled to the HSUA if the heating expense is shared among the household member and the food unit.

If an applicant or member claims to have received an energy assistance payment for a non-heat expense, workers should enter ? and request verification. This information is not available from the WHEAP data exchange. In rare instances, a non-heat WHEAP, also known as an energy assistance payment, is granted to some low-income housing individuals. The full HSUA is allowed when the applicant or member has received this type of energy assistance payment.

Note: Regardless of whether an applicant or member received a WHEAP payment in the current month or previous 12 months, workers should enter the expenses declared by the applicant or member on the Utility Costs page.

Figure 1 Expense Gatepost Page Showing Automatic Answer to WHEAP Question

CWW DATA EXCHANGE QUERY

As of October 27, 2018, the Data Exchange Query page will include functionality from the DXLI (LIHEAP query) screen.

Workers will be able to choose View WHEAP Information on the Data Exchange Query page. If the query does not find any WHEAP data for any of the household members, CWW will display a green informational message that states, "No WHEAP data found for this individual."

As a reminder, workers should manually run a data exchange query for each verified SSN in the household when:

- CWW does not return an automatic response.
- An applicant or member shares expenses with someone in the household but the person is not part of the case.
- The applicant or member states the system response is incorrect.

Figure 2 Data Exchange Query Page With View WHEAP Information Selected

Information returned from the data exchange query will be displayed on the WHEAP Query Results page, which includes "Case Information" and "WHEAP Information" sections. The "Case Information" section will always display current case information, and the "WHEAP Information" section will display the most recent payment record. Workers must confirm that a displayed payment record is from the current month or previous 12 months. Workers can also enter a date in the Matched on or before field to search historical records. If the query does not find any WHEAP data for the matched on or before date, CWW will display a green informational message that states, "No WHEAP data exists for the specified date." Beginning October 27, 2018, WHEAP history will increase over time to a maximum of six years saved, instead of the current two years.

Figure 3 WHEAP Query Results Page

HOUSING ASSISTANCE INFORMATION

The question "Does your household get housing or rent assistance?" will move from the Expense Gatepost page to the Shelter Costs page and will be enabled only if the shelter type is rent, mortgage, or mobile home loan payment. The question will no longer be mandatory but should be asked at application and renewal. This question ensures that the applicant or member reports his or her obligation when subsidized housing pays a portion of the expense. A response of yes indicates that the applicant or member's obligation amount is the amount that the applicant or member is responsible for paying after the housing subsidy is paid.
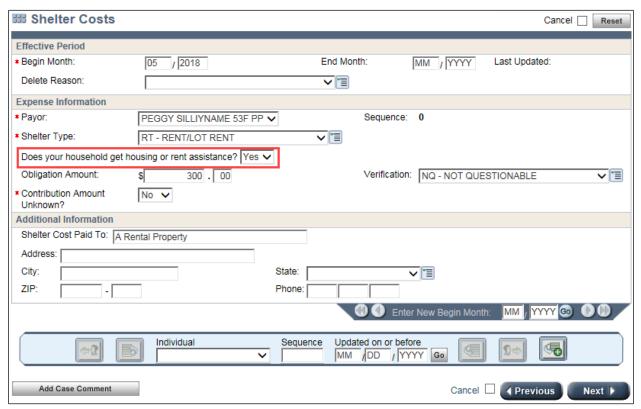
Figure 4 Shelter Costs Page Displaying Housing or Rent Assistance Question

Example: Mary receives rent assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the amount of $300 per month. Mary's actual rent expense is $600 per month. When the HUD assistance amount of $300 is subtracted from the actual expense of $600, Mary is left with an obligation of $300 per month. Budget $300 for the rent obligation on the Shelter Costs page.

CORRESPONDENCE

Because the question "Does your household get housing or rent assistance?" is no longer a mandatory question in CWW, and the information is not used in the eligibility determination, this language will be removed from the case summary and the Pre-Printed Renewal Form.

CONTACTS

BEPS CARES Information and Problem Resolution Center

DHS/DMS/BEPS/JT