

Proposal to Allow State Medicaid Programs to Provide NEMT for Partial Dual Eligibles to Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment

Partial Dual Eligibles: Who Are They?

Partial duals make up about one-third of total Medicare-Medicaid dual eligibles. Although duals are very low-income (just above the SSI-Medicaid federal eligibility line of 75% FPL), they do not qualify for any Medicaid services. They only qualify for help with Medicare premiums, deductibles, and co-pays. Many dual eligibles are likely to need behavioral health services, including medication assisted treatment for substance use disorder.

In 2012 (data released in 2020), there were 2,901,092 partial duals. Of those in Medicare fee-for-service:

- 17.40% of the partial duals had a depression diagnosis;
 - 16.80% of partial duals had a diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorders
- 13.70% of partial duals had an anxiety diagnosis;
- 5.9% of partial duals had a bipolar disorder;
- 2.08% of partial duals had an overarching opioid use disorder;
 - 1.25% had an opioid use related hospitalization or ED visit
 - 0.52% received Medication Assistance Therapy.
 - Note under the [SUPPORT Act of 2018](#), state Medicaid programs are now required to provide coverage of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) services and drugs as a new mandatory benefit.

Below are charts showing the destinations for Medicaid beneficiaries in 2019 and 2020 by volume. Note that the largest share of rides (35%) are for behavioral/mental health and SUD.

The Need: NEMT to Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment

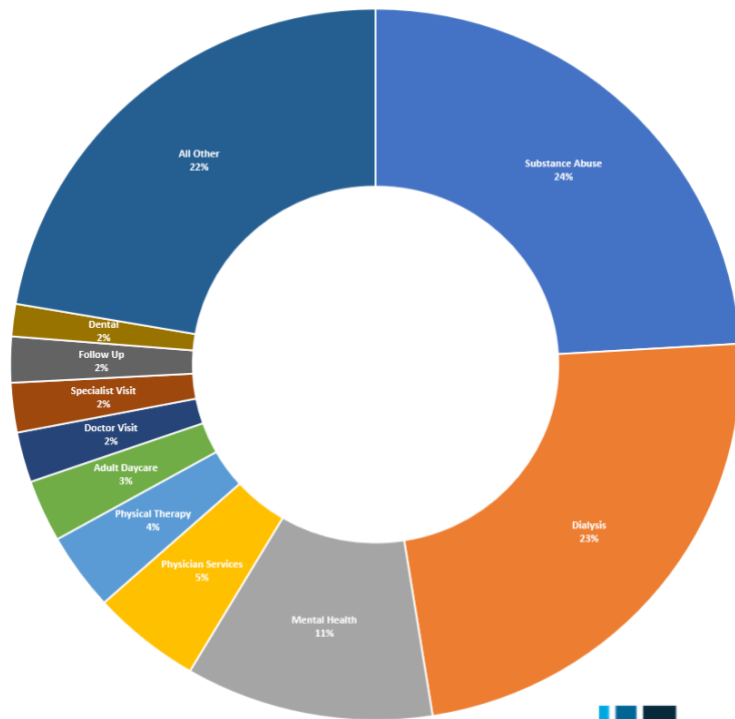
Partial duals, as is the case with very low-income individuals on Medicare, need help with the social determinants of health (SDOH), but do not qualify for those that are covered by Medicaid such as nonemergency medical transportation (NEMT). NEMT is most often used by the Medicaid population, including full duals who qualify for all Medicaid services, for behavioral health services including treatment for substance use disorder. Medication Assisted Treatment requires patient to travel to their health provider every day for the medication that replaces opioids or other pain medication to which they are addicted.

While partial duals can opt for Medicare Advantage, only 35% of traditional MA plans offer an NEMT benefit (85% of MA special needs plans designed to serve those with chronic conditions plans offer transportation). Many of these plans limit the benefit to a few trips per month which is not adequate for intensive behavioral health services (patients being treated for severe mental illness require several appointments a week) or for SUD MAT. The Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC) found that without transportation services, focus groups reported having no other way to get to their medical appointments and many reported that they often missed or could not schedule appointments before they began using NEMT. Missed treatments for those with SMI and SUD can lead to delayed care and increased avoidable hospitalizations or interactions with the criminal justice system.

The Response: Authorize a New State Medicaid Option:

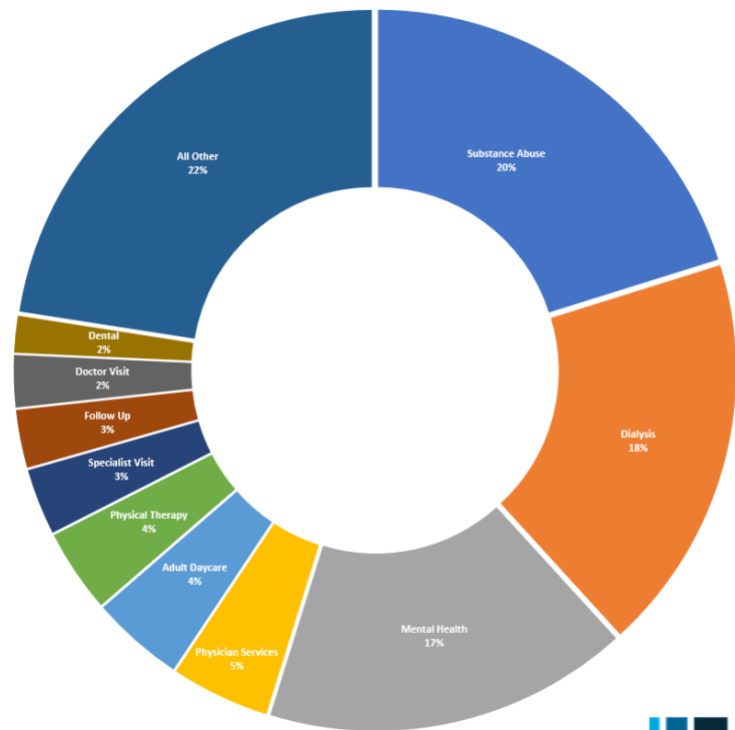
Authorize a state Medicaid option to provide NEMT to partial dual eligibles receiving behavioral health or substance use disorder services. State funds would be matched at 10 percentage points higher than the usual matching rate for medical services (same as the current enhanced match for home and community-based services for a similar Medicaid population.)

2020 Volume



Data provided by Modivcare

2019 Volume



Data provided by Modivcare