



STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Corning Tower

The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza

Albany, New York 12237

Antonia C. Novello, M.D., M.P.H., Dr.P.H.
Commissioner

Dennis P. Whalen
Executive Deputy Commissioner

In July 1997, New York State received approval from the federal government of its Section 1115 waiver request, known as the Partnership Plan. Approval of this waiver allowed the State to implement a mandatory Medicaid managed care program in counties with sufficient managed care capacity and the infrastructure to manage the education and enrollment processes essential to a mandatory program. The State's goal in implementing this program was to improve the health status of low income New Yorkers by:

- *improving access to health care for the Medicaid population*
- *providing beneficiaries with a medical home*
- *improving the quality of health services delivered*
- *expanding coverage to additional low income New Yorkers with resources generated by managed care efficiencies*

We received approval from the federal government to extend the Partnership Plan through March 31, 2006. As part of that request, we corresponded with you to solicit your comments. This extension expires on March 31, 2006 and it is the State's intent to continue the significant progress made towards achieving its goals by extending the waiver once again. To date, New York has implemented the mandatory Medicaid managed care program in 23 counties and all of New York City. As you know, under the Partnership Plan, Native Americans with Medicaid coverage may enroll in managed care plans but are not required to do so. Under any extension of the 1115 waiver, this exemption from mandatory enrollment for Native Americans will be continued. In addition, for Native Americans who choose to enroll in managed care plans, existing policies relating to tribal providers will be continued.

Prior to submitting a formal request to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for a three-year extension of the waiver, we would welcome your input. We anticipate this extension will have minimal impact on Tribal Nations since it will provide for continuation of existing policies. However, any comments and/or questions you might have concerning the Partnership Plan and its proposed extension should be forwarded to this office by May 30, 2005. We look forward to your continued collaboration on Partnership Plan implementation.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Shure
Director, Office of Managed Care

cc: Tribal Health Directors