



**Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
Health Plan Advisory No. 17-09**

DATE: June 23, 2017

TO: Nebraska Heritage Health Plans

FROM: Thomas 'Rocky' Thompson, Interim Director
Division of Medicaid & Long-Term Care *TNT*

BY: Heather Leschinsky, Deputy Director
Delivery Systems

RE: Authorization Requirements for Extended Brain and Spinal Cord
Rehabilitation in Specialized Nursing Facilities

This Health Plan Advisory is being issued to provide guidance to Heritage Health Plans on the requirements for authorization of extended skilled rehabilitation in Specialized Nursing Facilities for clients with brain or spinal cord injuries.

Effective immediately, Heritage Health Plans should authorize the following authorization timeframes:

- Based on the pre-admission assessment, the initial authorization will be given for 30 days to allow for assessment and development of a special needs plan of care;
- After the initial authorization timeframe, concurrent authorizations will be for 60 day time periods, or as defined by the special needs plan of care if the plan identifies less than 60 days for attainment of full rehabilitation potential;
- All current authorizations will be revised so that an initial authorization is extended to 30 days or a concurrent review is extended to 60 days or as defined by the special needs plan of care if less than 60 days.

Facility staff continue to be responsible to make a comprehensive assessment of the resident's needs within 14 days of admission, using the most current minimum data set (MDS). Each Heritage Health plan must use the comprehensive plan of care and subsequent interdisciplinary team meetings in determining the client's progress towards the client's established program outcomes and goals.

Additionally, if the client is hospitalized during a 15 day bed hold, the health plan must honor the authorization in place during the bed hold time period, and must not require the facility to obtain a new prior authorization upon return to the facility.

This guidance will be reconsidered during the promulgation process for 471 Chapter 12 regulations.

Questions about this advisory, can be sent to DHHS.MLTCPhysical@nebraska.gov.
Health plans should also copy their contract manager.