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To: Commercial Health Insurers, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, and Health Maintenance Organizations Accredited Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 176O; Health Care Providers; and Other Interested Parties
Cc: External Review Agencies under Contract with the Health Policy Commission Pursuant to G.L. c. 176O, § 14
From: Steven Belec, Director, Office of Patient Protection
Re: Requests for Expedited External Review
Date: March 24, 2017

Requests for Expedited External Review

This memorandum clarifies Office of Patient Protection (OPP) protocol concerning requests for expedited external review.

If an insured's request includes a final adverse determination that concerns an admission, availability of care, continued stay, or health care service for which the claimant received emergency services, but has not been discharged from a facility, OPP deems that such a request meets the standard for expedited review at 958 CMR 3.401(2). In this circumstance, a certification from a health care professional is not necessary to request an expedited external review. A certification from a health care professional, found on page 10 of the External Review Form, is necessary for all other requests for expedited review.

The OPP External Review Request Form has been updated to reflect this clarification. It is available on OPP's website. Carriers must include the updated form, as soon as practicable, with every written final adverse determination, pursuant to 958 CMR 3.307(3)(a).

If you have questions about the updated External Review Form or this memorandum, please contact Steven Belec, Director of the Office of Patient Protection, at steven.belec@state.ma.us or 617-979-1413.