



MAY - 3 2002

200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear State Medicaid Director:

In recent years, the number of comprehensive 1115 waivers, Home and Community-Based Service Waivers, and managed care waivers have increased in the Medicaid program. For example, the Medicaid program served approximately 700,000 individuals through Home and Community-Based waiver services at a cost of \$14.8 billion in 2001. As states expand eligibility for Medicaid and remove barriers to community living, it continues to be important that the public be involved in the development of such waivers.

There are many ways in which states can provide the opportunity for public input to the waiver process. Some examples are:

- Public forums
- Legislative hearings
- Placement of information on the state website with a link for public comments
- Distribution of draft waiver applications for comment
- Presentations to enrollees, families, private providers and public interest representatives
- Presentations to enrollees, families, private providers and public interest representatives of targeted services or populations (mental health, foster care, independent living, etc.)
- Forming a special commission with broad representation including recipients, families, private providers, and public interest representatives
- Formal notice and comment in accordance with the State's administrative procedures
- Notices in newspapers

We reached a broad audience in the development of the report to the President on the New Freedom Initiative. The Administration employed a number of methods for soliciting public input including a very successful National Listening Session. Such efforts strengthen the public policy decision-making, identify innovative strategies, and improve coordination of the many different participants in the health care and social services systems that Medicaid waivers often affect.

We encourage you to include public participation when pursuing all types of waivers in the effort to provide Medicaid services in the most effective ways possible. As you know, we continue to review 1115 waiver applications to ensure adherence to the public notice procedures outlined in the September 27, 1994 Federal Register notice (59 FR 49249).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis G. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "D".

Dennis G. Smith