

STATE OF FLORIDA  
AGENCY FOR HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATION  
OFFICE OF FAIR HEARINGS



FILED

Jan 17, 2023, 8:36 am  
OFFICE OF FAIR HEARINGS

[REDACTED],

PETITIONER,

AHCA Case No.: 22-FH1409

vs.

AGENCY FOR HEALTH CARE  
ADMINISTRATION,

RESPONDENT.

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**FINAL ORDER**

Pursuant to notice, the undersigned convened a telephonic Fair Hearing on the instant case on December 12, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (“EST”) and January 12, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. EST.

**APPEARANCES**

For the Petitioner:

[REDACTED]

Petitioner’s Authorized Representative

For the Respondent:

Marielisa Amador (December 12, 2022, hearing)  
Medical Health Care Program Analyst  
Agency for Health Care Administration

Lee Ann Williams (January 12, 2023, hearing)  
Medical Health Care Program Analyst  
Agency for Health Care Administration

**STATEMENT OF ISSUE**

The issue is whether Respondent proved by a preponderance of the evidence that Respondent’s decision to terminate prescribed pediatric extended care (“PPEC”) services was correct.

## PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

All parties appeared telephonically. [REDACTED] (“[REDACTED]”), Director of Nursing at PUPA Pediatric Care appeared at the Fair Hearing as Petitioner’s Authorized Representative on both hearing dates. [REDACTED] (“[REDACTED]”), [REDACTED], testified on behalf of Petitioner on both hearing dates.

Marielisa Amador, Medical Health Care Program Analyst for the Agency for Health Care Administration (“Agency” or “AHCA”), appeared as a representative for Respondent at the December 12, 2022, hearing. Lee Ann Williams, Medical Health Care Program Analyst for AHCA, appeared as a representative for Respondent at the January 12, 2023, hearing. Dr. Rakesh Mittal (“Dr. Mittal”), Physician Consultant for Kepro, attended as a witness for Respondent on both hearing dates.

Interpreters Jen, ID No. 16426797, and Jean ID No. 16428479, with Global Interpreting Network, provided translations services for the December 12, 2022, hearing. Interpreter Claude, ID No. 68009539, with Global Interpreting Network, provided translation services for the January 12, 2023, hearing.

Prior to the hearing, Petitioner sent to the Office of Fair Hearings a forty (40)-page evidence packet. The evidence packet appears in the Office of Fair Hearings’ document management system as “22-FH1409 Faxed Evidence and DAR.pdf.” Absent an objection from Respondent, the undersigned admitted the forty (40)-page evidence packet into evidence as Petitioner’s Composite Exhibit 1.

Prior to the hearing, Respondent sent to the Office of Fair Hearings and Petitioner a one hundred and twenty-one (121)-page evidence packet and a forty-six (46)-page evidence packet.

The one hundred and twenty-one (121)-page evidence packet appears in the Office of Fair Hearings' document management system as "54885319 FH 09.28.2022." The forty-six (46)-page evidence packet appears as "Agency Evidence Legal Authorities 22-FH1409.pdf." Absent an objection from the Petitioner, the undersigned admitted the one hundred and twenty-one (121)-page evidence packet into evidence as Respondent's Composite Exhibit 1 and the forty-six (46)-page evidence packet into evidence as Respondent's Composite Exhibit 2.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. Petitioner receives Medicaid services on a fee-for-service basis from the Agency. Kepro is a Quality Improvement Organization ("QIO") contracted by the agency to review prior authorization requests for services. See Respondent's Composite Exhibit 2 at page 2.

2. Petitioner is [REDACTED] ( [REDACTED] )-years old. See Respondent's Composite Exhibit 1 at page 16.

Petitioner is diagnosed with the following: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. *Id.* at 16-17, 85-86. Petitioner has remained stable for the past [REDACTED] with [REDACTED]. *Id.* at 18, 54.

3. Petitioner is prescribed the following medications: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. *Id.* at 17, 87, and

Petitioner's Composite Exhibit 1 at page 3. Petitioner does not use a [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. See Respondent's Composite Exhibit 1 at page 55. Petitioner does not use [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. *Id.* at 55-56.

4. Petitioner requested continuation of PPEC services for the certification period of July 16, 2022 through January 11, 2023. In a Notice of Outcome ("NOO"), dated July 21, 2022,

Respondent terminated Petitioner's PPEC services. *Id.* at 23 - 25. The NOO explained the basis of the termination as follows:

[T]he requested services are not medically necessary under the following standard(s):

Individualized, specific, and consistent with symptoms or confirmed diagnosis of the illness under treatment, and not in excess of the patient's needs.  
Reflective of the level of service that can be safely furnished, and for which no equally effective and more conservative or less costly treatment is available statewide.

...

The NOO further stated:

Submitted information does not support the medical necessity for requested services.

Clinical Rationale for Decision: [REDACTED] yo with [REDACTED]. The patient is [REDACTED]. Nursing needs consist of [REDACTED].

Deny all PPEC units. The patient lacks sufficient skilled nursing needs to warrant PPEC care.

*Id.*

5. Petitioner requested reconsideration of the Respondent's decision. In a Notice of Reconsideration Determination ("NRD"), dated July 27, 2022, Respondent upheld its decision. *Id.* at 38 – 39. The NRD explained the basis of the decision as follows:

[T]he requested services are not medically necessary under the following standard(s):

Individualized, specific, and consistent with symptoms or confirmed diagnosis of the illness under treatment, and not in excess of the patient's needs.

...

PR Recon Determination: Reconsideration request and the submitted clinicals were reviewed. Request is for PPEC services for this [REDACTED] years old with [REDACTED]. Child is [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] These clinicals do not justify need for skilled nursing. Uphold the initial denial for requested PPEC services.

*Id.* at 39.

6. On July 26, 2022, Petitioner requested a Fair Hearing to challenge the termination of PPEC services. On September 13, 2022, the undersigned issued an Order Scheduling Fair Hearing by Telephone and Prehearing Instructions, setting the hearing for September 28, 2022, at 9:30 a.m. EST. After a stipulated continuance due to Hurricane Ian, the undersigned rescheduled the hearing for November 4, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. After another stipulated continuance, the hearing was rescheduled for December 12, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. EST. The parties again stipulated to a continuance because they were unable to finish the hearing in the allotted time. On December 13, 2022, the undersigned issued an Order Scheduling Fair Hearing by Telephone and Prehearing Instructions, rescheduling the hearing for January 12, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. EST. Petitioner received continuation of benefit pending the outcome of the fair hearing.

7. Dr. Mittal is a Physician Consultant for eQHealth. Dr. Mittal testified to the following:

a. The documentation does not mention [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] [REDACTED] progress notes, dated [REDACTED], do not mention it. *Id.* at 19-20.

b. There is no documentation indicating that Petitioner's [REDACTED] [REDACTED] at PPEC. *Id.* at 111-113, and Petitioner's Composite Exhibit 1 at 26-28, 32-33, 37-38.

c. Petitioner is [REDACTED] [REDACTED].



Florida Medicaid recipients under the age of 21 years requiring medically necessary PPEC services and who:

- Require continuous therapeutic interventions or skilled nursing supervision, as described in section 400.902, F.S., and in Rule 59A-13.007, F.A.C.
- Are determined stable by a physician and who are not a threat to self or others

...

### **1.3 Definitions**

The following definitions are applicable to this policy. For additional definitions that are applicable to all sections of Rule Division 59G, F.A.C., please refer to the Florida Medicaid definitions policy.

...

### **1.3.7 Medically Necessary/Medical Necessity**

As defined in Rule 59G-1.010, F.A.C.

...

### **4.0 Coverage Information**

#### **4.1 General Criteria**

Florida Medicaid covers services that meet all of the following:

- Are determined medically necessary
- Do not duplicate another service
- Meet the criteria as specified in this policy

...

### **5.0 Exclusion**

#### **5.1 General Non-Covered Criteria**

Services related to this policy are not covered when any of the following apply:

- The service does not meet the medical necessity criteria listed in section 1.0
- The recipient does not meet the eligibility requirements listed in section 2.0
- The service unnecessarily duplicates another provider's service

13. Fla. Admin. Code Rule 59A-13.007(4)(a) states the following:

(4) Each child admitted for service to a PPEC center must meet at least the following criteria:

(a) Infants and children considered for admission to the PPEC center will be those who are medically or technologically dependent. . . .

...

Further, section 400.902, Florida Statutes, describes "medically dependent or technologically dependent child" as follows:

[A] child who because of a medical condition requires continuous therapeutic interventions or skilled nursing supervision which must be prescribed by a licensed physician and administered by, or under the direct supervision of, a licensed registered nurse.

14. Fla. Admin. Code R. 59G-4.290 defines skilled nursing as follows:

(3) Skilled Services Criteria.

- a) To be classified as requiring skilled nursing or skilled rehabilitative services in the community or in a nursing facility, the recipient must require the type of medical, nursing or rehabilitative services specified in this subsection.
- b) Skilled Nursing. To be classified as skilled nursing service, the service must meet all of the following conditions:
  - 1. Ordered by and remain under the supervision of a physician;
  - 2. Sufficiently medically complex to require supervision, assessment, planning, or intervention by a registered nurse.
  - 3. Required to be performed by, or under the direct supervision of, a registered nurse or other health care professionals for safe and effect performance;
  - 4. Required on a daily basis;
  - 5. Reasonable and necessary to the treatment of a specified documented illness or injury; and,
  - 6. Consistent with the nature and severity of the individual's condition or the disease state or stage.
- c) Examples of services that qualify as skilled nursing services:
  - 1. Intravenous medication or fluids.
  - 2. Intramuscular or subcutaneous injection and hypodermoclysis when:
    - a. Administered by licensed nursing personnel at least 5 times weekly, excluding daily insulin administration; and,
    - b. Observation is necessary to assess the recipient's response to treatment or to identify adverse reactions.
  - 3. Management and monitoring medication regime on a daily basis:
    - a. For drugs whose dosage requirements may rapidly change;
    - b. For drugs prone to cause adverse reactions, severe side effects or unfavorable reactions; and,
    - c. For residents with unstable reactions.
  - 4. Levin tube and gastrostomy feedings; excluding feedings performed by residents, family members, or friends.
  - 5. Administration of medical gases, aerosolized medication or oxygen which is started, monitored and regulated by professional staff.

6. Naso-pharyngeal and tracheotomy aspiration, excluding tracheotomy care in self-care residents.
7. Insertion, replacement, and sterile irrigation of catheters when:
  - a. Medically necessary or required for reasons other than to maintain satisfactory catheter functioning and dryness;
  - b. The medical need is documented by the physician;
  - c. Continuous irrigation, frequent insertion, special care or observation is required because of bleeding, infection, obstruction, or heavy sediment formations; and,
  - d. Care of a recently inserted supra-pubic catheter, inserted within 2-4 weeks, is required.
8. Colostomy and ileostomy care:
  - a. When medically necessary and required during early postoperative period;
  - b. During the period of initial self-care training, or
  - c. when complications are present and documented in the medical record.
9. Treatment of decubitus ulcers when:
  - a. Deep or wide without necrotic center;
  - b. Deep or wide with layers of necrotic tissue, or
  - c. Infected and draining.
10. Treatment of widespread infected or draining skin disorders.
11. Application of dressings involving prescription medication and aseptic techniques when documented as required on a daily basis. Excludes simple dressings involving non-infected cases, simple skin breaks, and healed postoperative incisions.
12. Heat treatments prescribed by a physician as daily treatment for a specific condition.
13. Rehabilitation nursing procedures required on a daily basis as necessary to restore functioning, including teaching and adaptive aspects of nursing.

15. States must provide Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (“EPSDT”) services to Medicaid-eligible children under age 21 when requested under the Medicaid state plan. See 42 U.S.C. § 1396a(a)(43); 42 U.S.C. § 1396d(a)(4). According to 42 U.S.C. § 1396d(r)(5), EPSDT services mean, in relevant part, the following items and services:

Such other necessary health care, diagnostic services, treatment, and other

measures described in subsection (a) of this section to correct or ameliorate defects and physical and mental illness and conditions discovered by the screen services, whether or not such services are covered under the state plan.

16. Petitioner is [REDACTED], and therefore eligible for EPSDT services. However, a state may place medical necessity limitations on EPSDT services. See 42 C.F.R. §§ 440.230(a), (b), (d).

17. Section 409.905(2), Florida Statutes, limits EPSDT services with a medical necessity standard:

The [Agency] shall pay for early and periodic screening and diagnosis of a recipient under age 21 to ascertain physical and mental problems and conditions and all services determined by the agency to be medically necessary for the treatment, correction, or amelioration of these problems and conditions, including personal care, private duty nursing, durable medical equipment, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, respiratory therapy, and immunizations.

18. The Florida Medicaid Definitions Policy (“Definitions Policy”), incorporated by reference in Fla. Admin. Code R. 59G-1.010, defines “Medically Necessary” or “Medical Necessity” as follows:

The medical or allied care, goods, or services furnished or ordered must meet the following conditions:

- Be necessary to protect life, to prevent significant illness or significant disability, or to alleviate pain
- Be individualized, specific, and consistent with symptoms or confirmed diagnosis of the illness or injury under treatment, and not in excess of the patient’s needs
- Be consistent with generally accepted professional medical standards as determined by the Medicaid program, and not experimental or investigational
- Be reflective of the level of service that can be safely furnished, and for which no equally effective and more conservative or less costly treatment is available statewide
- Be furnished in a manner not primarily intended for the convenience of the recipient, the recipient’s caretaker, or the provider

The fact that a provider has prescribed, recommended, or approved medical or allied care, goods, or services does not, in itself, make such care, goods or services medically necessary or a medical necessity or a covered service.

19. In the NOO, dated July 21, 2022, Respondent terminated Petitioner’s PPEC services. *See supra* ¶ 4. The NOO explained that the basis of the termination was that the request was not “individualized, specific, and consistent with symptoms or confirmed diagnosis of the illness under treatment”, was “in excess of the patient’s needs”. *Id.* Respondent explained that Petitioner did not require skilled nursing services. *Id.* In the NRD, dated July 27, 2022, Respondent upheld the termination of PPEC services. *See supra* ¶ 5.


20. PPEC services are intended for patients with who “require continuous therapeutic interventions or skilled nursing supervision”. *See supra* ¶ 12. As provided by the EPSDT requirements, the recipient must meet the medical necessity criteria as outlined in Fla. Admin. Code R. 59G-1.010. As provided in the Definitions Policy, a component of medical necessity is that services must be “[i]ndividualized, specific, and consistent with symptoms or confirmed diagnosis of the illness under treatment, and not in excess of the patient’s needs.” *See supra* ¶ 18. As shown by the record, Petitioner is not receiving daily medications that would require skilled nursing services. *See supra* ¶ 3, 7. Petitioner is receiving [REDACTED] at the PPEC center, but those can be obtained at other outpatient facilities. *See supra* ¶ 7. In all, Dr. Mittal provided credible and persuasive testimony that Petitioner does not require skilled nursing services. *Id.* As such, there is no indication that Petitioner continues to require skilled nursing services. Although [REDACTED] testified that Petitioner has [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], but these assertions were not supported in the record. *See supra* ¶ 7.

21. Upon consideration of the testimony provided, Petitioner's Composite Exhibit 1, Respondent's Composite Exhibit 1, Respondent's Composite Exhibit 2, and the applicable polices, the undersigned concludes that Respondent proved by a preponderance of the evidence that continuing PPEC services was not medically necessary for Petitioner. Looking at all the evidence relevant to the particular needs of Petitioner, Respondent has demonstrated that PPEC services are not necessary to correct or ameliorate a defect or a physical and mental illness or condition. Accordingly, Respondent proved by a preponderance of the evidence that Respondent's termination of PPEC services was correct.

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AND ADJUDGED THAT:**

Respondent's termination of Petitioner's PPEC services is **AFFIRMED**. Petitioner's appeal based on Respondent's termination is **DENIED**.

**DONE and ORDERED** this 17th day of January 2023, in Tallahassee, Leon County, Florida.

  
Joseph Mabry  
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**for LAURA GALLAGHER, Hearing Officer**  
**Agency for Health Care Administration**  
**Office of Fair Hearings**  
**2727 Mahan Drive, Mail Stop # 11**  
**Tallahassee, FL 32308-5407**  
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**NOTICE OF A RIGHT TO JUDICIAL REVIEW**

A PARTY WHO IS ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THIS FINAL ORDER IS ENTITLED TO JUDICIAL REVIEW, WHICH SHALL BE INSTITUTED BY FILING THE ORIGINAL NOTICE OF APPEAL WITH THE AGENCY CLERK OF AHCA, AND A COPY, ALONG WITH THE FILING FEE PRESCRIBED BY LAW, WITH THE

DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL IN THE APPELLATE DISTRICT WHERE THE AGENCY MAINTAINS ITS HEADQUARTERS OR WHERE A PARTY RESIDES. REVIEW PROCEEDINGS SHALL BE CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FLORIDA APPELLATE RULES. THE NOTICE OF APPEAL MUST BE FILED WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THE RENDITION OF THE ORDER TO BE REVIEWED.

**Copies Furnished To:**



**AHCA Medicaid Hearing Unit**  
**MedicaidHearingUnit@ahca.myflorida.com**