

From: [Michael Ruppal](#)
To: [solicitation.questions](#)
Cc: [Donna Sabatino](#); [Michael Ruppal](#)
Subject: RFI 014-21/22 Re-procurement of the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care Program comments
Date: Friday, June 3, 2022 10:58:19 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[Florida Medicaid Managed Care comments RFI 014-21 22 .pdf](#)

Cody Massa, Procurement Officer.

Please find attached comments for **RFI 014-21/22 Re-procurement of the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care Program** provided by The AIDS Institute.

Thank you,
Michael



Michael Ruppal
Executive Director
Pronouns: he/him/his

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June 3, 2022

Cody Massa Procurement Officer solicitation.questions@ahca.myflorida.com

RE: RFI 014-21/22 Re-procurement of the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care Program comments

Dear Cody Massa, Procurement Officer:

The AIDS Institute would formally like to enter the following formal comments regarding the procurement of RFI-01421/22. The AIDS Institute (TAI) is a national, non-partisan organization founded in Florida in 1985 as Florida AIDS Action by volunteer advocates. In 1992, TAI incorporated as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Its mission is to "Promote action for social change through public policy, research, advocacy, and education."

TAI is a trusted state and national leader with program & administrative offices in Tampa, FL, at the University of South Florida, College of Medicine, and policy offices in Tallahassee, FL, and Washington, DC. TAI is known for its public health research & analysis, education, and training; HIV/AIDS & hepatitis community planning and research; Florida statewide policy, advocacy, communications, and customized convening programs; federal policy research, analysis & advocacy. TAI works to improve access to health care for people living with HIV, viral hepatitis, and other chronic conditions nationally and in Florida.

Medicaid plays a crucial role in efforts to end the HIV epidemic. Medicaid is the largest insurance provider for people living with HIV, covering 47,660 people living with HIV (42% of the population of adults living with HIV). Improvements in antiretroviral treatments (ARVs) mean that people living with HIV who are successfully in treatment can achieve undetectable viral loads, living longer, healthier lives. Moreover, when a person living with HIV achieves an undetectable viral load, they are unable to transmit HIV, helping to stop the spread of the virus in its tracks.

As AHCA seeks to reprocure Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs), we urge it to prioritize access to HIV screening, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention. These measures will help Florida and the nation finally achieve an end to the HIV epidemic. Specifically, we urge AHCA to:

- Ensure that MCOs facilitate early screening and seamlessly link people to HIV prevention or treatment services, depending on the results of their screening. MCOs should cover HIV testing in all patient settings (including emergency departments) and should be routinely offered to sexually-active patients. Routine testing enables early detection of HIV infection, which has been found to save money (more than \$330,000 per diagnosis) and lives. And since 87% of new HIV infections are transmitted from people who either do not know they have HIV or who have lost access to care, routine screening is also an important HIV prevention tool.

- HIV screening is the gateway to both HIV treatment and HIV prevention. Anyone who is found not to have HIV should be counseled and offered to start PrEP, a highly effective HIV prevention regimen that has been given a “Grade A” rating by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. Anyone diagnosed with HIV should be immediately and seamlessly connected to HIV treatment, per Florida’s existing “Test and Treat” policy. Starting ARV treatment immediately has been linked to better HIV outcomes and a greater likelihood of achieving an undetectable viral load.
- Ensure that MCOs continue to monitor and report viral load suppression as a quality indicator, enabling Florida to monitor whether people living with HIV are receiving appropriate treatment and to measure whether the state is achieving its public health milestone goals.
- Ensure that there is an HIV Specialty Plan in the Medicaid managed care network. People living with HIV who receive care from an HIV specialist have better health outcomes, are less likely to develop viral resistance to medication, and are more likely to stay continuously connected to care.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests as you move forward in selecting Managed Care Organizations in Florida. The AIDS Institute looks forward to working with you to ensure that Medicaid beneficiaries have access to the best quality care and treatment available. If you have any questions regarding these requests or anything else regarding HIV, feel free to contact Donna Sabatino, Director State Policy & Advocacy, dsabatino@tmail.org or 954-734-5901.

Sincerely,



Michael Ruppel
Executive Director

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