

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE HOUSE • BOSTON 02133

MICHAEL S. DUKAKIS
GOVERNOR

December 1, 1975

TO THE HONORABLE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The attached legislation, entitled "An Act Further Clarifying the Reduction of Optional Medicaid Services," is intended to clarify the responsibility of the Department of Public Welfare regarding the restriction or elimination of optional Medical Assistance services.

A statutory amendment which accompanied the budget for the current fiscal year (St. 1975, c. 684, § 25F) appears to require the Welfare Department to eliminate all payments for optional services (with four exceptions) effective as of November 8, 1975. This would mean the immediate elimination of all pharmacy and dentistry services for adults, for example.

My Administration understood it to be the Legislature's intention at the time that the budget was enacted that the Department would restrict or eliminate optional Medicaid services in phases, consistent with the funding level of the Medical Assistance account. This intention was reflected in the wording of Item 4402-5000 of the budget, but not in the provisions of the Medicaid statute that were also amended by the budget act.

The attached legislation eliminates this apparent inconsistency and makes our understanding clear to all. I urge your prompt and favorable consideration.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael S. Dukakis".

Michael S. Dukakis

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Five.

AN ACT FURTHER CLARIFYING THE REDUCTION OF OPTIONAL MEDICAID SERVICES.

1 *Whereas*, The deferred operation of this act would tend to
2 defeat its purpose, which is to promptly clarify the obligation of
3 the department of public welfare with respect to optional
4 Medicaid services, therefore, it is hereby declared to be an
5 emergency law, necessary for the preservation of the public
6 convenience.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in
General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as
follows:*

1 Section 6 of chapter 118E of the General Laws is hereby
2 amended by striking out the first paragraph, as amended by
3 section 25F of chapter 684 of the acts of 1975, and inserting in
4 place thereof the following paragraph:—
5 The department shall provide financial assistance for such
6 medical care or services as said Title XIX and regulations
7 adopted thereunder by the secretary of health, education and
8 welfare require. The department may provide financial assistance
9 for such additional medical care or services as said Title XIX and
10 said regulations permit; provided, that the department shall
11 provide financial assistance for at least intermediate care facility
12 services, podiatrists' services, eye glasses for persons sixty-five
13 years of age or older, and care for patients in mental or
14 tuberculosis hospitals who are sixty-five years of age or older.