

Medicaid and Disability Programs

Medicaid is a joint federal and state program. Each state establishes its own eligibility standard benefits package, provider requirements, payment rates, and program administration under broad federal guidelines. Medicaid is a program that pays the medical bills of people who have low income and cannot afford medical care. Medicaid provides three types of critical health protection: Health insurance for low-income families, children, the elderly, and people with a disability; Long-term care for older Americans and individuals with disabilities; and Supplemental coverage for low-income Medicare beneficiaries.

The District of Columbia Medicaid program is administered by the Medical Assistance Administration (MAA) of the Department of Health. For eligibility information, contact its Income Maintenance Administration at (202) 698-3900, or visit MAA's Web site at http://app.doh.dc.gov/about/index_maa.shtm. For information about the Maryland Medicaid program call 1 (800) 492-5231, or visit the Maryland Medical Assistance Web site at www.dhmh.state.md.us/mma. Virginia residents should contact the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (Northern Region) at (540) 347-6300 or visit its Web site at <http://www.dmas.virginia.gov/ltc-home.html>.

Applicants for Medicaid are asked to provide Social Security numbers, confirm that they are state residents, confirm U.S. citizenship or provide documentation of alien status, verify income and resources, and submit recent bills for medical services.

Most individuals with sickle cell disease do not show obvious signs of disability. Eligibility for public assistance in disability and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs is based on the extent of the disability as well as income eligibility. The applicant must qualify in both categories to be determined eligible. This makes it difficult for individuals with sickle cell disease to qualify for assistance. The health care provider's report of the patient's physical status is crucial in helping determine his or her eligibility. The report will document the clinical course of the patient's illness, including the number and dates of hospital admissions, emergency room visits, acute visits, organic and physical dysfunctions, and the blood count and need for blood transfusions to provide a comprehensive picture of the patient's condition. Information on disability and SSI can be obtained from the state's department of health.

DISCLAIMER:

This information is for educational purpose only and is not intended to substitute for informed medical advice from your health care provider. You should not use this information to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease without consulting a qualified health care provider with any questions or concerns you may have regarding your condition or conditions of others.