



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Health Care Financing Administration

Center for Medicaid and State Operations
Family and Children's Health Programs Group
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244-1850

MAR 3 2000

Russ Toal
Commissioner
State of Georgia
Community Health
2 Peachtree St., N.W.
Atlanta, GA 30303-3519

Dear Mr. Toal:

Thank you for your proposal, dated December 14, 1999, for an amendment to Georgia's State Children's Health Insurance Program under Title XXI of the Social Security Act. We are impressed with the efforts that Georgia has made to provide health care coverage to uninsured children. As you are aware, your proposal has been undergoing review by the Department of Health and Human Services. Since your amendment deals specifically with cost sharing provisions, it is necessary to address cost sharing for Native American children. In order to proceed with our review, additional information will be required. Our concern relates to the following area:

Section 4.4.4 regarding provision of child health assistance to targeted low-income children who are Indians: The Department of Health and Human Services has issued a policy prohibiting cost sharing for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children. Section 2102(b)(3)(D) of the Act requires the State plan to include a description of the procedures used to ensure the provision of child health assistance to targeted low-income children of AI/AN families. The special access provisions for AI/AN children in Title XXI recognize the unique relationship between Federal government and the Tribal governments in the delivery of health care services to AI/AN. Because cost sharing poses a unique financial barrier to care for AI/AN, States that impose cost sharing on AI/AN children are not in compliance with the access provision of 2102(b)(3)(D). Therefore, we will no longer approve amendments to State plans that would impose cost sharing on AI/AN children. Please revise your amendment to comply with this policy.

Under section **2106(c)** of the Social Security Act, HCFA must either approve, disapprove, or request additional information on a proposed Title XXI State Plan within ninety days. This letter constitutes our notification that specified additional information is needed in order to fully assess your plan. The 90-day review period has been stopped by this request and will resume as soon as a substantive response to this request is received. The members of the review team will be happy to answer any questions you may have in regard to this letter and to assist your staff in formulating a response.

Please send your response, either on disk or electronically, as well as in hard copy to Dan McCarthy, project officer for Georgia's SCHIP amendment. Mr. McCarthy's Internet address is: DMcCarthy@HCFA.GOV. His mailing address is:

Division of Integrated Health Systems
Health Care Financing Administration
Mail Stop **S2-03-08**
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850

We appreciate the efforts of your staff and share your goal of providing health care to low income, uninsured children through Title XXI. If you have questions or concerns regarding the matters raised in this letter, your staff may contact Mr. McCarthy at (410) **786-2079**. He will provide or arrange for any technical assistance that you may require in preparing your response. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Cindy Mann
Director

cc: Atlanta Regional Office