

**PARIS**  
**Public Assistance Reporting**  
**Information System**



# PARIS Newsletter

*PARIS is operated under the auspices of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).*

**Official PARIS website:**  
[www.acf.hhs.gov/paris](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/paris)

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The PARIS Board of Directors met this past July to put together the working draft agenda for the upcoming 2013 Training Conference. Building on last year's successful Training Conference, this year should prove to be of equal quality or better. Once the details are finalized a PARIS Transmittal should go out in January with registration information. I would like to thank Manuel Urbina and the state representatives on the PARIS-Veterans workgroup. The workgroup provided suggested changes to Veterans Affairs on the new VETSNET system. The layout and the position locations are all the same. Some of the descriptions have been updated in the layout document and in the dictionary as announced in PARIS Transmittal 2012-13 and now posted on the PARIS website. You also may have noticed that the PARIS website has a new look. Take a moment to go through your state's information for accuracy and provide any changes or updates. I also want to thank Bill Allman for presenting the new PARIS power point developed by Mark Zaleha at the NAMPI conference in Oklahoma City this September. The power point presentation was so successful that it has been sent to the Medicaid Institute in Columbia, SC to be included in their resource library and future trainings. The Medicaid Institute is interested in conducting webinar trainings on PARIS starting this summer. And lastly, if you have a PARIS related story you would like to share in a future PARIS Newsletter, please send them in. Thanks for all your support in PARIS.

**Tom Miller, PARIS Project Officer Administration for Children and Families U.S.  
 Department of Health and Human Services**

### Remarks from the "President"

On behalf of the PARIS Board, I would like to thank all of you who have been communicating with me and keeping me abreast of PARIS developments in your state. Pennsylvania is the latest state to share their press release regarding savings they achieved with maximization of the PARIS Interstate Match data. I'm certain there are many other success stories out there that you may be able to share with the PARIS community.

In this issue, we've included the policy paper that was recently developed by the Center for Health Care Strategies. The intent was to provide states both an option and opportunity for their veterans, currently on the Medicaid rolls. We will continue to keep you informed on the continued success of maximizing the PARIS VA and Federal file data to facilitate enhanced military benefits for state Medicaid recipients.

The PARIS Board is currently making final preparations for the next 2013 PARIS Training Conference. To give you an idea of the theme that we are pursuing, the conference title is *"A Winning Trifecta"*. I for one am willing to *"bet"* you will find this our best training conference to date. Needless to say, a lot of hard work has gone into insuring the sessions and presenters provide the most useful information for conference attendees to take back to their states.

Finally, some "thank you" notes I want to extend:

To the VETNET workgroup, led by Manuel Urbina (CA), for working with the VA to provide useful and accurate VETNET data fields that increase the usefulness and value of data provided by the VA;

To Mark Zaleha (OH) for putting together the new PARIS power-point. It was an honor to be able to use it at the recent NAMPI Conference;

To my fellow PARIS Board members for continually providing their time and expertise to further the usefulness and national credibility that PARIS has attained;

To Susan Lloyd (VA) for her superb and extra efforts in putting together our quarterly newsletter;

To **you**, the PARIS community, for working with us to provide a national data matching process that continues to improve upon its role in reducing improper payments and contributing to program integrity.

Please let us know of any PARIS news and developments in your state. We are always searching for "Best Practices" to share with the PARIS community.

As the conference registration site is being prepared, I expect it won't be long before you'll be hearing from me regarding your registration. Always a fun part of my duties.....aside from actually meeting and seeing each of you at the conference. Stay in touch and I hope to speak with you soon!

Bill



## Chapter 224 of the Acts of 2012: Implications for MassHealth

by Robert Seifert and Rachel Gershon  
September 2012

Chapter 224 of the Acts of 2012 is Massachusetts's ambitious effort to tame the rate of growth in health care spending.

Within the September issue, we read:

MassHealth members who are veterans or the survivors and dependents of veterans might qualify for federal veterans' health care benefits. Section 250 requires MassHealth, EOHHHS, and the state Department of Veterans' Affairs to study methods for improving access to federal veterans' benefits for those who qualify. The study would include identification of existing barriers to benefits and an examination of the feasibility, costs, and benefits of using the federal public assistance reporting information system (PARIS) to identify veterans, dependents, and survivors who are enrolled in MassHealth. Findings of the study are due to the legislature by April 1, 2013.

## Legislative Appropriations Request (2014 – 2015) by the Texas Veterans Commission 8-31-12

### **PARIS Data Review.**

In addition to \$50,000 and 1.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) in Interagency Contracts included in amounts appropriated above in Strategy A.1.1, Claims Representation and Counseling, an additional \$50,000 out of the General Revenue Fund and 1.0 FTEs per fiscal year is appropriated to Strategy A.1.1 to investigate and analyze information/data received from the federal Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS). The PARIS information will be used to assist and facilitate claims for Veterans receiving Medicaid or other state public benefits to apply for federal benefits/compensation for which Veterans are entitled from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Ten percent of the savings out of General Revenue during fiscal year 2014 that were the result of pursuing information from the Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) as calculated by the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) according to procedures or rules for making the calculations adopted by HHSC in conjunction with the Texas Veterans Commission, shall be credited by the Comptroller to the Texas Veterans Commission Strategy A.1.1, Claims Representation and Counseling, for purposes of expanding the program and such funds are hereby appropriated to the Texas Veterans Commission in fiscal year 2013.

HHSC and the Veterans Commission will also make a recommendation on whether this percentage should be increased if the program is expanded.

The dates for the PARIS 2013 quarterly submission have been established and are as follows:

Friday, February 8, 2013  
Friday, May 10, 2013  
Friday, August 9, 2013  
Friday, November 8, 2013

## **Veterans and the ACA: How Health Reform Boosts Eligibility for VA Health Care**

*By Christian Heiss and Shannon M. McMahon, MPA, Center for Health Care Strategies*

In 2014, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) will allow states to expand Medicaid eligibility to all non-elderly Americans with family income below 138 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). The Medicaid population across the country could increase by up to 17 million people, depending on how many states expand coverage.

The federal government will pay for 100 percent of the costs of care for the newly eligible Medicaid enrollees from 2014 through 2016, but the federal share of costs will gradually decline to 90 percent by 2020.

To maximize the number of uninsured who gain coverage in 2014 and limit state costs for the newly eligible after 2016, states may wish to explore opportunities to match residents with other sources of coverage for which they may be eligible. One segment of the uninsured population for whom high-quality health care coverage already exists is military veterans.

According to an Urban Institute study based on data from the 2010 American Community Survey (ACS), there are more than 12 million veterans under age 65 living in the United States, of which 1.3 million are uninsured. Half of these uninsured veterans (632,000) report family income below 138 percent FPL, making them potentially eligible for Medicaid in 2014. Yet by virtue of their new Medicaid eligibility, these veterans may also be eligible for free or low-cost health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

As states prepare their eligibility systems and procedures for the 2014 Medicaid expansion, they may wish to consider implementing data matching and other programs to help identify veterans and inform them of the benefits available to them through the VA. Washington State uses the Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) to identify veterans enrolled in Medicaid and help them transition to VA benefits. This approach has saved the state over \$30 million as of the end of FY 2011. Another effort to identify veterans may include a specific question on eligibility forms that asks whether an applicant has ever served in the U.S. military, rather than relying solely on reports of alternate income that list the VA as a source.

## **Meet Your PARIS Board Members**

***In each newsletter, we are interviewing a PARIS Board member to give you a better understanding of who we are and where we come from. This is the 2nd installment and is featuring Manuel Urbina, California Department of Health Care Services, Veterans Match Liaison.***

### *Background:*

My office is headquartered in Sacramento, CA where I head up a program integrity and security team at California's Medicaid agency. Here in California, we operate the nation's largest Medicaid program with an enrollment approaching ten million beneficiaries. I started working here in 1999 after graduating from the University of California, Davis. One of my objectives is to advance program integrity in Medicaid eligibility determination policy and PARIS is a big part of that.

*Here are a few more questions to help you know Manuel more:*



*What are your responsibilities with the PARIS Board of Directors?*

Since joining the PARIS Board of Directors in May 2010, my focus has been on veteran benefit enhancement. It is very rewarding to help California's veterans qualify for the benefits they earned through their service to the nation and reduce their need for public assistance. My passion is to help veterans avoid Medicaid estate recovery by enrolling them in federal veteran health coverage. This allows veterans to keep their hard-earned assets and potentially get more health benefits. Enrollment in federal veteran health coverage also frees up state Medicaid funding that can be used for other Medicaid services in our communities.

*Why are you leading a multi-state workgroup?*

The PARIS-Veterans match has undergone major changes in the last couple of years. The source of the match data was transitioning from a legacy system to a newer, more modern database. With the publication of Transmittal #2010-017, we were able to assemble a workgroup to gather state input and recommend improvements to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA). Based on the workgroup's input, the USDVA agreed to modify their system documentation. The workgroup provided the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) with new versions of the layout/dictionary that were published on the ACF website October 9, 2012. Even though the USDVA accepted most of our requests, there are still a few items that still need to be upgraded. The workgroup will continue to advocate for these requests in the future. If there are any states that would like to participate in the workgroup, please do not hesitate to sign up.

*Has California had success with the other PARIS matches?*

Yes, the PARIS-Interstate and PARIS-Federal matches have been outstanding tools for California to identify unreported circumstances and prevent improper payments. We use the matches to successfully locate ineligible nonresident beneficiaries and discover unreported income/health coverage. This has led to a significant reduction in Medicaid program expenditures. We expect that PARIS-Interstate and PARIS-Federal operations together will result in \$17,739,000 total savings during Fiscal Year 2012-13. I encourage all states to use each of the three PARIS matches that are currently available.

*What is your favorite thing about serving with the PARIS Board?*

By far it is the relationships that I have developed with the other states. It is very powerful to share experiences with another organization that is similarly situated and faces the same challenges as your own. The opportunities that I have had to meet with other states have been incredibly enriching and have shaped how California approaches the PARIS matches. I highly recommend that states take advantage of the best practices developed by their fellow state representatives.

## PA Department of Public Welfare Saves Taxpayers \$3.5 Million by Cross-Checking ...

*By Christian Heiss and Shannon M. McMahon, MPA, Center for Health Care Strategies*

Department of Public Welfare Saves Taxpayers \$3.5 Million by Cross-Checking Federal and State Benefits

HARRISBURG, Pa., Oct. 24, 2012 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Department of Public Welfare has identified more than 900 Pennsylvanians who were receiving welfare benefits when they should not have been.

"Taxpayer dollars are tighter than ever and to ensure our core programs are available to those who truly need them, we must use every tool at our disposal to identify and remove ineligible individuals," Secretary of Public Welfare Gary D. Alexander said. "Because of our recent efforts, we have avoided paying out \$3.5 million in unneeded welfare benefits."

The department was able to identify ineligible individuals by using the federal Public Assistance Reporting Information System, also known as PARIS. PARIS is a federal-state partnership that includes a nationwide exchange of information and data about various welfare and pension programs from every state in the country.

By checking records with the U.S. Departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense and Personnel Management, and by using state-to-state information sharing, PARIS helped identify 933 incidences where individuals were not eligible for state welfare benefits or should have been receiving fewer benefits.

"The department must continue to implement measures that promote eligibility and payment accuracy to ensure integrity within our welfare programs," Alexander said.

"These efforts benefit those who rely on our services, as well as hardworking taxpayers, and we want both groups to know that we continue to do all we can to remove waste, fraud and abuse within our welfare programs."