



## Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund



A NEW SENSE OF HOPE WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST.

The Medical Home Work Group for Children with Special Health Care Needs  
Debra Taylor, Director, CICRF MA Dept of Public Health 5/9/17



## Today's Goals



- What is the Fund
- Who is eligible
- What types of expenses can be considered
- How do you apply
- What is the review process
- Contact information



## Purpose of the Fund



- Established by state legislation for FY 2001
- The purpose is to provide financial assistance for MA families who have large expenses due to a child's illness, accident or disability which are not covered by insurance or any other source
- A "safety net" for families of children with special health needs



## Overview of Legislation



- The Fund is overseen by a Commission consisting of 11 members (4 state agency ex-officio members and 7 public members)
- The CICRF is staffed by the MA Department of Public Health (DPH)
- The Fund is financed by quarterly transfers from the Commonwealth Care Trust, if sufficient funds are available



## Eligibility Criteria: Residency Age and Financial



- Massachusetts resident
- Massachusetts families with children and youth under 22 years of age
- Medical and related expenses for one child exceed 10% of the first \$100,000 plus 15% thereafter of the family's annual income
- The Fund is a **reimbursement** program; the Fund considers expenses going back 24 months from the date the application is received



## Role of the CICRF Commission



- Develop Fund policy to guide review and approval of family requests for reimbursement
- Clarify the types of expenses to be approved by staff vs. by the Commission
- Meet monthly to review and vote upon individual family requests for reimbursement of expenses





## DPH Division for Children & Youth with Special Health Needs

*An array and continuum of linked services*



- 1-800 Community Support Line
- Care Coordination
- Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund
- Family Initiatives
- Family TIES of Massachusetts\*
- Hearing Aid Program
- MassCARE (Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Part D)
- MASSTART
- Medical Review Team
- Pediatric Palliative Care
- Public Benefits Training
- Universal Newborn Hearing Screening

\* A DPH-funded program of the Federation for Children with Special Needs



## Examples of Eligible Expenses



- **Family Support** – a per diem (specific amount per day) to assist with the cost of traveling to the hospital
- **Accessible Vehicles** –for families who transport children who use a wheelchair that does not fold or who are transported in a wheelchair
- **Home Modifications** –ramp, accessible bedroom/bathroom, elevator, whole house generator
- **Medical Equipment** – stair lift, portable generator
- **Medical Expenses** – copays, deductibles, complementary therapies, out-of-network



## How to Apply to the Fund

- Mail in the original application
- Applications are reviewed in the order in which they are received
- Family will receive letter & forms to sign when application is received by the Fund
- Current waiting time for Fund staff to open an application is 5-6 months
- Expenses considered 24 months back from the date the application is received



## Review Process by Fund Staff



- Preliminary determination of income
- Review expenses
- Identify gaps in services
- Determine additional information needed
- Contact family
- Draft checklist of additional documentation
- Present request to the CICRF Commission if required by Fund policy





## Approved: Next Steps

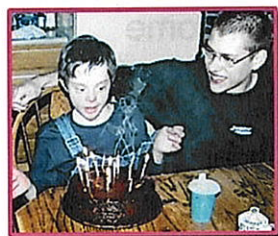


- Staff member prepares packet of receipts, forms and other supporting documentation of expenses
- Approved by CICRF Secretary/Treasurer
- Parents informed of approval
  - Not reported to IRS or DOR, not reportable as income, but may affect SSI benefits if it becomes a "resource"
- Entered into payment system and approved by Bureau of Family Health & Nutrition Director of Administration & Finance
- Approved by DPH Accounting
- The check is processed by the State Office of the Treasurer

**Then.....the check is mailed to the family!**



## Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund



Statewide toll free resource line,  
**1-800-882-1435**  
 Bilingual capacity  
 (Spanish and Portuguese)

[www.mass.gov/cicrf](http://www.mass.gov/cicrf)  
 Application, list of eligible expenses, and other forms



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## Questions??



