

Memorandum

To: Gold Coast Health Plan Skilled Nursing Facility Providers

From: Vicki Wrighster, Senior Director, Provider Network Operations

Re: **Updated Guidelines for Medically Tailored Meals and Medically Supportive Food**

Date: October 2, 2025

Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) offers Medically Tailored Meals (MTM) and Medically Supportive Food (MSF) services to members who meet medical eligibility criteria as part of the CalAIM initiative. These services are designed to address chronic or serious nutrition-sensitive conditions, with the goal of improving health outcomes and reducing unnecessary costs.

As with most of our programs, GCHP periodically reviews our processes and results to identify opportunities for improvement. Based on a recent review of MTM and MSF, GCHP will implement changes to the length of authorized services, clinical criteria for authorizations, and denial criteria.

Effective Oct. 20, 2025, the updated guidelines for MTM and MSF are as follows:

1. Members can continue to be referred to the program if they meet the state-defined medical eligibility criteria.
2. Members will continue to be able to receive **90 days** of medically tailored meals or groceries without prior authorization.
3. Authorizations to extend the service will be issued for **90 days** unless an authorization is submitted with both 90 days of MTM and 90 days of MSF, including groceries.
4. **To authorize an extension beyond 90 days**, GCHP will apply the following clinical criteria:
 - Malnutrition with a Malnutrition Screening Tool (MST) score of ≥ 3
 - Diabetes (A1C $\geq 9\%$ on referral)
 - Cardiovascular disease
 - Liver disease (NASH, NAFLD, end-stage liver disease, cirrhosis, MASLD)
 - Congestive heart failure (class 3 or 4) and hospitalized x1 within the last 6 months
 - Renal failure (dialysis or stage 4 or 5) with hospitalization x1 within the last 6 months
 - Stroke (post-discharge), excluding TIA or RIND
 - Chronic lung disorders (COPD, CF, emphysema, interstitial lung, allergic asthma, or other severe lung disease post-hospitalization)

- Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) with MST score of ≥ 3
- Cancer post-hospitalization or active chemotherapy or during radiation therapy
- Gestational diabetes
- Post-op bariatric
- High-risk perinatal conditions while pregnant
- Elevated lead levels

MTM and MSF services will be **denied** after a member has received a **total of one year (365 days) of MTM and/or MSF**. In rare and exceptional cases, GCHP may consider a one-time 90-day extension beyond the 1-year (365-day) service limit. To qualify, the member must have experienced a significant acute event—such as a recent hospitalization—or received a new diagnosis of a nutrition-sensitive chronic condition listed in the clinical criteria.

The policy also applies to members who have been listed as program completed / graduated in the return transmission file.

Transition Period:

- While GCHP implements these updated clinical guidelines, members who have exceeded 365 days of service will continue receiving meals **until their current authorization expires**.
- If a member **switches providers**, GCHP will reauthorize services with the new provider **for the remainder of the existing authorization period**.

Please contact us at providerrelations@goldchp.org if you have any questions.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.