

reduction of his PCA hours and the matter was transmitted to the OAL for a hearing.

PCA services are non-emergency, health related tasks to help individuals with activities of daily living (ADLs) and with household duties essential to the individual's health and comfort, such as bathing, grooming, walking, positioning, transferring, and eating. The decision regarding the appropriate number of hours is based on the tasks necessary to meet the specific needs of the individual and the hours necessary to complete those tasks. The regulations provide that PCA services are only warranted when the beneficiaries are "in need of moderate, or greater, hands-on assistance in at least one activity of daily living (ADL), or, minimal assistance or greater in three different ADLs, one of which must require hands-on assistance." N.J.A.C. 10:60-3.1(c). Additionally, instrumental activities of daily living (IADL) "such as meal preparation, laundry, housekeeping/cleaning, shopping, or other non-hands-on personal care tasks shall not be permitted as a stand-alone PCA service." N.J.A.C. 10:60-3.1(c)(1). The assessments use the State-approved PCA Nursing Assessment Tool (PCA Tool) to calculate the hours.

At the hearing, registered nurse Alex Samperi (Nurse Samperi), testified that he conducted an assessment of Petitioner to determine the hours of care needed. ID at 2. On April 7, 2025, Nurse Samperi went to Petitioner's house and spoke with J.B., Petitioner's mother. Ibid. He also observed Petitioner when he returned from school. Ibid. Nurse Samperi used the state-mandated assessment tool to do his assessment. Ibid. Petitioner is approximately nineteen years old and suffers from severe autism, cognitive delay and impaired language. (R-4). Nurse Samperi assessed Petitioner based on the assistance needed to perform ADLs and IADLs. ID at 2. Nurse Samperi assigned the full amount of minutes in the Cognitive section as Petitioner is considered severely impaired. (R-7). Petitioner needs limited assistance with transferring, feeding, personal

hygiene, toileting and dressing. Ibid. Petitioner needs extensive help with bathing. Ibid. Additional time was given for housekeeping services and meal preparation for the meals that Petitioner has at home. Ibid.

Dr. Terralin Knight, a board-certified physician in family medicine who is the Medical Director at United, also testified at the fair hearing. ID at 3. Dr. Knight testified that in January 2025, Petitioner requested PCA services and was administratively approved. Ibid. The maximum amount of forty hours were provided to Petitioner until the nurse could perform the state-mandated assessment. Ibid. The nurse did not visit the family to conduct the assessment until April 2025. Ibid. Dr. Knight reviewed the assessment conducted by Nurse Samperi and concurred that Petitioner only needs nineteen hours of PCA services. ID at 4.

J.B., Petitioner's mother, testified that she works six days a week and that there are two other children in the household. ID at 4. She stated that she must help Petitioner do everything and that he needs constant supervision when he is home. Ibid. J.B. also stated that she needs to have an aide for forty hours per week because she works on Saturdays and needs to do errands and other household related activities. Ibid.

In the Initial Decision, the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) found that Petitioner is autistic, has cognitive difficulties, attends school every day and receives assistance while he is at school. ID at 6. United provided the maximum number of PCA service hours required under the regulations until the state-mandated assessment could be completed. Ibid. After reviewing each ADL category, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner is eligible for nineteen hours of PCA hours per week, not the forty hours that Petitioner requested. ID at 7. I agree.

For the reasons set forth herein, I hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision in this matter and find that Petitioner was properly assessed and is eligible for nineteen hours of PCA

services per week.

THEREFORE, it is on this 19th day of FEBRUARY 2026,

ORDERED:

That the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED, as set forth herein and that Petitioner is eligible for nineteen hours of PCA services per week.

Gregory Woods

Gregory Woods, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services