

Based upon my review of the record, I hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision affirming Respondent's reduction of Petitioner's Personal Care Assistant ("PCA") service hours from 12 to 5 hours per week. A.W. receives PCA benefits through the Personal Preference Program, which is administered by the Division of Disability Services and which allows seniors and people with disabilities to direct and manage their PCA services. With a monthly cash allowance to cover the hours of PCA services, A.W. pays her boyfriend, with whom she resides, to provide needed care.


PCA services are non-emergency, health related tasks to help individuals with activities of daily living and with household duties essential to the individual's health and comfort, such as bathing, dressing, meal preparation and light housekeeping. 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.

I find it significant that Petitioner presented no evidence suggesting that any needed service or task cannot be performed within 5 hours per week. Moreover, Petitioner provided no evidence or explanation as to why this amount of PCA services is insufficient with respect to her care needs. If the necessary personal care and household tasks can be accomplished within 5 hours per week, any additional hours would only be used for supervision or companionship which is not an authorized use of the service. See N.J.A.C. 10:60-3.8(c). This would be contrary to the purpose of the PCA program, which is intended to provide medically necessary assistance with specific health related tasks.

THEREFORE, it is on this *21st* day of August 2017,

ORDERED:

That the Initial Decision affirming United Healthcare's reduction of PCA hours from 12 to 5 hours per week is hereby ADOPTED as the Final Decision.



Meghan Davey, Director
Division of Medical Assistance
and Health Services