

# Provider Newsletter



Your **Healthcare Plus**™  
Extra help for better health

## Behavioral Health

**Y**our Healthcare Plus™ helps Illinois Medicaid beneficiaries manage chronic illnesses, establish and maintain a medical home, and better utilize community resources to improve their health and lives. While the focus of a disease management (DM) program may be on one or more medical chronic conditions such as asthma or diabetes, there is a high co-occurrence rate of behavioral health conditions for the population. In fact, approximately 26% of the community-based ABD (aged, blind and disabled) population has a primary diagnosis that is behavioral health-related. That figure rises to nearly 50% for the institutionalized population. Behavioral health conditions are also more often comorbidities with other medical conditions, leading to increasingly complex patient needs.

One challenging component of the Your Healthcare Plus DM program has been the focus on these behavioral health conditions. A number of initiatives to address these issues have been progressing over the past several months. Working closely with HFS and the Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Your Healthcare Plus program staff have created a referral process linking eligible patients with local community health resources. This allows Your Healthcare Plus staff to link patients with community mental health centers to ensure that patients receive ongoing

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## Holiday Help

While it is normal for some to feel let down or sad after the holiday rush, it is important to remember this is a high-risk time for new onset or recurring clinical depression. It is an especially important time to conduct a depression screening as part of your routine chronic disease care. Your Healthcare Plus offers depression screening tools as well as a depression support program. You may wish to refer patients to this program and can do so by contacting the IHC provider line at 1-877-912-1999.

## HFS All Kids Program

### EPSDT/Healthy Kids Screening and Surveillance

**Illinois Health Connect** is devoted to ensuring eligible men, women, and children in the State of Illinois are receiving necessary healthcare services. Illinois Health Connect and the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) jointly focus on establishing a common partnership with providers to ensure all eligible children in the state of Illinois are receiving quality and timely healthcare.

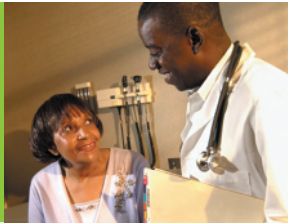
The Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) program is a comprehensive child health service that provides for initial and periodic examinations and medically necessary follow-up care. The EPSDT program falls under two federally required operational and supportive goals. These goals are to assure the availability and accessibility of required healthcare resources, and to assist program participants and their parents or guardians to use them, as requested.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, “one in three U.S. children under age six is eligible for Medicaid. The EPSDT program offers a very important way to ensure that young children receive appropriate health, mental health, and developmental services.”<sup>1</sup> Illinois’ EPSDT program, called Healthy Kids, utilizes the standards of pediatric care recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Through the Healthy Kids program, health and developmental screening and surveillance services (including history, physical health, mental health-social, emotional, behavioral issues, development and nutrition), as well as dental, vision, and hearing services are available to infants, toddlers, children, teens, and young adults less than 21 years of age who are covered under HFS’ medical programs.

Developmental screening is an essential part of every child’s preventive healthcare. According to the AAP, developmental surveillance should be performed at every well-child visit as part of well-child health examinations. The AAP also recommends objective developmental screening using a standardized instrument be performed minimally, at the 9-, 18- and 24/30-month well-child visit, or more frequently

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## IHC Tools to Help Support Your Practice



In order to continually improve healthcare services, it is essential to monitor, survey, and educate clients on the preventive measures necessary for staying healthy. Preventive care is the best form of medicine available. Early detection and identification of health problems directly reflects the quality of care being provided, and is part of the “best practice” model.

Illinois Health Connect has developed several provider tools to support the quality of preventive care of HFS members. One of these tools is the Illinois Health Connect monthly panel roster. Panel rosters inform Illinois Health Connect Primary Care Providers of enrollees that are assigned to them for their medical home and include specific information about the patient, such as when children are due for lead, well-child or vision screening(s) or when adult preventive services (e.g., mammograms) are needed. Panel rosters are mailed to the provider’s service location on a monthly basis. They are also available electronically via the web by utilizing the Department of Healthcare and Family Services’ MEDI system at <http://www.myhfs.illinois.gov/gettingstarted.html>.

Another tool that will soon be available to support providers is an electronic patient claims history report.

The report will provide relevant client-specific claims history including diagnosis, hospital admissions data and pharmacy data for providers to review. Once available, providers will be able to access the patient claims history report through MEDI.

Illinois Health Connect is also implementing a Provider Profile tool this year. Provider Profiles will be sent out semi-annually and will provide an overview of patient care goals, such as the percentage of school-age children who have received vision screening, or the percentage of toddlers who have a recommended blood lead level.

In addition, Illinois Health Connect offers several education and resource tools to support provider’s practices. These tools include a Clinical Resources and CME directory, monthly provider webinars on clinical and operational topics, on-site trainings and a Specialty Resource Database to assist providers in finding Specialists for their patients.

For more information about these education and resource tools, please visit the Illinois Health Connect web site at [www.illinoishealthconnect.com](http://www.illinoishealthconnect.com) or contact the Illinois Health Connect Provider Helpdesk at 1-877-912-1999. If you would like to only use the electronic panel rosters and discontinue the mailed versions, or would like more information about the MEDI system, education and resource tools, or Illinois Health Connect, please contact the Illinois Health Connect Provider Helpline at 1-877-912-1999. ■

## HFS All Kids Program

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when indicated. HFS reimburses using a HFS-recognized developmental screening tool. In addition, it is recommended that social-emotional developmental screening should be performed at 4, 6-9, 18, and 30-month well-child visits, or more frequently, as needed.

Another vital part of EPSDT and early childhood preventive measures are immunizations. Children covered under a HFS medical program are eligible to receive childhood vaccines made available by the Illinois Department of Public Health or the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program (in Chicago). HFS will reimburse providers for the administration of vaccines recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunizations Practices. All providers statewide can request more information and enrollment packets about participating in the VFC program by calling 1-800-526-4372 or 217-785-1455.

Chicago providers can contact the VFC office in Chicago at 312-746-6050.

Healthcare education and guidance to both the parent or guardian and child is essential to help them understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, child development screening and surveillance, as well as accident and disease prevention. Anticipatory guidance is a required component of every well-child screening and is not a separate billable service. Providers should remind parents or guardians of the importance of keeping well-child visits and immunizations up-to-date in order to keep their kids healthy. Illinois Health Connect will mail yearly reminders and call households to remind parents about well-child examinations.

For more information on the All Kids Program, please review the *Handbook for Providers of Healthy Kids Services* at <http://www.hfs.illinois.gov/assets/041404hk200.pdf>. For more information about Illinois Health Connect, please contact the Provider Helpline at 1-877-912-1999, or go online to [www.illinoishealthconnect.com](http://www.illinoishealthconnect.com). ■

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.hrsa.gov/epsdt/overview.htm>

## Supporting Your Patients



**Your Healthcare Plus™** staff record their success stories, which illustrate the struggles patients may face, and the positive impact of this valuable program.

The story below about a patient suffering with depression is just one example of the impact of this program.

In September 2007, Laura Van Verst, a Disease Management RN, shared her experience of working with a participant in the depression program. When Laura initially spoke with the client, she observed his voice was very soft and responses were just one or two words. The first few calls were conducted with the client's daughter because he just didn't feel well enough to speak. In a more recent follow-up call, he said that he had taken notes from the last call. He had completed his depression action plan and read all of the educational material provided by Your Healthcare Plus program staff. He said that in the past he wouldn't have known how to speak with his doctor about issues, but that he now feels comfortable, even empowered, to reach out to his provider.

As the client prepared for his next doctor appointment, he created a list of issues to discuss and questions to ask, especially about medication for his depression and anxiety. In addition, the client and nurse spoke about the benefits of counseling and the client is now working with his

doctor to find a counselor. Because of this client's participation in Your Healthcare Plus, he understands his condition and knows how to work with his doctor to better address his concerns.

Success or failure in the care of an individual patient is clearly multi-faceted. Here the patient seems to have benefited from having a Your Healthcare Plus nurse as a coach, as evidenced by his improved abilities to self-manage and to advocate for himself with his doctor. This patient is also fortunate to have an attentive and caring medical home. The provider's office was successful with this patient because they noted the assessment findings of the Your Healthcare Plus nurse, quickly scheduled a visit with the patient in order to complete their own assessment, and generated a new care plan, incorporating the goals for therapy as well as the new information obtained. The patient's adherence to that care plan was greatly enhanced by his being a partner in its creation. In addition, he continued to take his medications because there was an up-front discussion of side-effects and the importance of continuing the therapy. Side-effects were also discussed in several follow-up visits. The patient made numerous visits to his medical home in the subsequent weeks in accordance with HEDIS guidelines.

The combination of an empowered, engaged patient working through a good medical home has led to improved quality-of-life and better outcomes for this patient. This very real success story is a vivid illustration of the continued value of the Disease Management program. ■

## Behavioral Health

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behavioral health support, in addition to the existing support of their medical primary care provider (PCP). The two-way referral process provides a mechanism for local community mental health centers to refer eligible patients into the Your Healthcare Plus program for ongoing care coordination.

In contrast to the population with primary chronic mental health conditions managed as part of a specialized program, much of the depression population is treated primarily by PCPs. Depression is a frequently occurring co-morbidity in all chronic disease states. Baseline metrics show a significant opportunity for improvement in the management of this common and often challenging condition.

Analysis of clients eligible for Your Healthcare Plus finds over 5,000 adults diagnosed with a new episode of major depression. Based on available claims data, less than 10% of these clients have had the three or more recommended follow-up visits within 12 week period after diagnosis.

Data also shows that less than 60% of clients have continuous medication use the 12 weeks post diagnosis. That figure drops to roughly 40% after six months post diagnosis.

Studies have repeatedly shown that the presence of depression, along with a chronic disease, leads to poor outcomes for both the chronic disease and the depression. Since the presence of depression can adversely impact a patient's ability to cope with and manage other chronic conditions, the management of depression is often a necessary first step toward overall member health management.

The Your Healthcare Plus program staff routinely screen all patients for depression as part of their initial assessment. In addition, Your Healthcare Plus staff includes experienced Behavioral Health Specialists and Social Workers who are available to work with the more complex patients. The primary goal of Your Healthcare Plus staff is to be a resource for the providers and help meet the needs of people with both medical and behavioral health conditions. ■

## Program Milestones

### Illinois Health Connect— Enrollment Update

- As of January 7, 2008, the statewide number of clients enrolled in a medical home is 1,650,995.
- The statewide number of medical homes enrolled in the Illinois Health Connect program is 5,234.
- The statewide panel size capacity is 5,339,008.

### Your Healthcare Plus— Enrollment Update

- As of November 30, 2007, the Your Healthcare Plus program has 19,949 active participants. These participants represent those individuals at the highest risk and most in need of additional support.

## Upcoming Events

### Illinois Health Connect

- January 23, 2008 – 8:30 a.m. Webinar Program: MEDI  
February 27, 2008 – 8:30 a.m. Webinar Program: Healthy Kids Updates  
March 26, 2008 – 8:30 a.m. Webinar Program: Billing Overview

### Your Healthcare Plus

- January 24, 2008 – noon Behavioral Health Subcommittee  
Teleconference  
January 28, 2008 – 4:00 Respiratory Health Subcommittee  
Teleconference  
March 7 – March 8 IL Chapter, American Academy of  
Pediatrics Annual Education Conference  
March 27 – March 29 Chicago Medical Society's  
Midwest Clinical Conference

Available Now CME Webinar Program:  
Quality Improvement in Your Practice

Available Now CME Webinar Program:  
Treatment of Depression in Primary Care

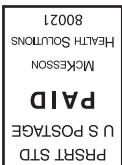
Available Now CME Webinar Program: Asthma Management  
CME Webinar Programs can be accessed at [www.yhplus.com](http://www.yhplus.com)

Visit the Your Healthcare Plus and the Illinois Health Connect websites for more information on upcoming events.

This newsletter is available on the Your Healthcare Plus and Illinois Health Connect websites:  
[www.yourhealthcareplusdr.com](http://www.yourhealthcareplusdr.com) [www.illinoishealthconnect.com](http://www.illinoishealthconnect.com)



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1400 S. Wolf Road  
Building 200  
Wheeling, IL 60090



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