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It's that time of year again!

Visit our website
Who to call

The Informed Patient

Maryland Physicians Care strives to educate our members about their health and encourage them to be active participants in their medical care. To that end, we ask them to prepare for their visits with their primary care provider or specialist by writing down all of their health concerns and thinking about any questions they may have. We suggest that they come prepared to ask and understand the answers to at least three questions:

1. What is my main health problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?

As a provider, we ask you to think about what information you would want to know if you were in your patient's shoes. As you share this information, make sure you use words that he or she will understand. Check in with the patient frequently to ensure that he or she understands your explanation. Patients may be too embarrassed to tell you that they do not understand.

It is a good idea to ask them to repeat back to you the points that are vital to their health. Having an understanding of their health condition and your instructions will allow patients to take better care of their health and you to take better care of them. As active and involved members of their health care team, you and your patients are more likely to score a big win.

Helping Members Manage Diabetes



Besides being a leading cause of death in the United States, diabetes is the main factor in kidney failures, lower-limb amputations and adult-onset blindness. Maryland Physicians Care offers members with type 1 and type 2 diabetes access to disease management programs to help them learn more about their condition and manage it better.

Disease management for members with diabetes focuses on glycemic control and monitoring for possible complications of the disease. For providers, this means monitoring several factors. Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set standards measure the percentage of members ages 18-75 with diabetes who had the following tests:

- Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) test completed at least once a year. A result of more than 9 percent shows poor control, while a result of less than 8 percent shows control. For a select population, the result should be less than 7 percent.
- Retinal or dilated eye exam every year or an eye exam showing no evidence of retinopathy in the year prior.
- Nephropathy screening using a macroalbumin or microalbumin urine test at least annually (unless there is documented evidence of nephropathy).
- Blood pressure control. A healthy blood pressure is generally under 140/90 mm Hg.

Maryland Physicians Care is here to help you keep members with diabetes healthy. We can assist your office in finding members a vision provider. Please call us at 1-800-953-8854.

HEDIS Measures Performance

HEDIS, the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set, is a set of standardized performance measures updated and published annually by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). HEDIS is a tool used by most U.S. health plans to measure performance on important aspects of care and service. HEDIS is designed to provide purchasers and consumers with the information they need to reliably compare the performance of healthcare plans. Final HEDIS rates are typically reported to NCQA and state agencies once a year.

Through HEDIS, NCQA holds Maryland Physicians Care accountable for the timeliness and quality of healthcare services (acute, preventive, mental health, etc.) delivered to its diverse membership. Maryland Physicians Care also reviews HEDIS rates on an ongoing basis and continually looks for ways to improve our rates. It's an important part of our commitment to providing access to high-quality and appropriate care to our members.

Please consider the HEDIS topics covered in this issue of the provider newsletter: diabetes, hypertension and cardiac health. You can also review Maryland Physicians Care's clinical practice guidelines and additional HEDIS information at MarylandPhysiciansCare.com. Maryland Physicians Care case management staff members are available to assist with patients who have difficulty managing their conditions, adhering to prescribed medications or filling their prescriptions. If you have a member you think could benefit from our case management program, please contact Maryland Physicians Care Member Services at 1-800-953-8854 and ask for medical case management.



Cold and Flu

Helping members weather cold and flu season

Maryland Physicians Care reminds our members that maladies such as sore throats, upper respiratory infections and bronchitis can strike all year, but the flu typically flares between October and May. There are a few things Maryland Physicians Care would appreciate providers doing to help our members cope when they're feeling ill:

1. Recommend rest, fluids and over-the-counter treatments, such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories, that may relieve symptoms. Remind members that antibiotics will not help many of these illnesses, which are typically caused by viruses.
2. Inform members that the best way to prevent the flu is to get a flu shot. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends a flu shot for everyone ages 6 months and older.
3. Remind members of other methods for staying healthy and preventing the spread of illness, including frequently washing their hands with warm water and soap, staying away from people who are sick, staying home when they are sick and covering their noses and mouths when they sneeze or cough.



Visit our website

Find information on:

- Quality improvement program
- Case management program
- Disease management program
- Clinical practice guidelines
- Utilization management, including decision-making criteria, affirmative statement, and staff availability
- Pharmacy and prescription drug management
- Benefits and coverage
- Member rights and responsibilities
- Protected health information use and disclosure
- Member handbook
- Provider directory

If you do not have internet service, you can reach us by phone (numbers listed in “Who to call”) for more information.

Who to call

Provider Services

(claims status, network participation, member eligibility, etc.):

1-800-953-8854

Member Services

(benefits, ID cards, appeals, PCP changes, etc.):

1-800-953-8854

DentaQuest (adults only):

1-800-685-1150

Healthy Smiles Dental Services:

1-855-934-9812

Public Mental Health Services:

1-800-888-1965

Superior Vision:

1-800-428-8789

Utilization Management (UM):

1-800-953-8854—

follow prompts to UM

Case Management/ Disease Management:

1-800-953-8854

Health Education Requests:

1-800-953-8854



It's that time of year again!

The Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Provider and Systems (CAHPS®) Survey is an anonymous survey that asks your patients about their experience with their healthcare, including their experience with doctors. Physicians are critical drivers of performance on the Health Plan CAHPS survey.

In our new HEDIS Tip Library for MPC Providers, you can review the [CAHPS Survey Composite Measures \(PDF\)](#) and corresponding questions patients are asked related to their experience with providers.