



Health Plus News PROVIDER

YOUR COMMUNITY'S GUARDIAN ANGEL SINCE 1984

www.healthplus-ny.org Providers, call toll free 1-800-450-8753.

Adolescent health care

Get answers to tough questions

Health Plus joins the American Academy of Family Physicians and IPRO in advocating for high-quality adolescent health care. As the AAFP states in its online *Policies on Health Issues* (2000), "Concerns about confidentiality may discourage adolescents from seeking necessary medical care and counseling, and may create barriers to open communication between patient and physician. Protection of confidentiality is needed to appropriately address issues such as depression, suicide, substance abuse, domestic violence, unintended pregnancy and sexual orientation." Topics such as HIV prevention and treatment, smoking and tobacco use, and other relevant emerging health risks are also necessary to discuss.

Plan your approach

It is vital to consider the following when rendering care to adolescent patients:

- Offer the adolescent an opportunity to be examined and counseled

without parents/guardians present to demonstrate respect for privacy;

- Ask direct but nonjudgmental questions about risk behaviors;

- Ask the adolescent about protective factors (e.g., survival skills) they possess to help them stay alive and healthy (e.g., *What have you been able to do to keep from using drugs?*);

- Make every effort to maintain confidentiality, but clarify areas where confidentiality may not be upheld (e.g., when there is danger to someone, evidence of abuse, or certain communicable diseases that must be reported to the New



York City and New York State Departments of Health).

Tips for success

Asking these questions and keeping a record of patients' answers is not an easy task for many busy physicians. Fortunately, IPRO developed *The Health Survey for Adolescents* (2000) to assist health care professionals in asking these difficult but necessary questions, which include:

- Are you having any problems in school?
- Have you ever felt you had a problem with your weight?
- Did you ever drink alcohol?
- Have you had sex?
- Have you ever done something violent because you were angry?
- Have you ever thought about killing yourself or made a plan to kill yourself?

Please look in your mail for a copy of the survey. If you have not received your copy by Sept. 30, please contact Provider Services at 1-800-450-8753.

PCPs—Remember to submit your encounter claims.

Health Plus

205 Montague, Third Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201

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MOVING?

Fax your address changes to:
1-718-504-9602
or e-mail to:
providers@healthplus-ny.org

\$20 MetroCard

Member rewards

Health Plus is now offering new members a \$20 MetroCard for seeing their PCP within 90 days of enrollment. Members will receive this incentive after they submit a form signed by their chosen or designated provider. Please be aware that your new Health Plus patients will be asking for your signature in order to qualify for the reward.

If you have any questions about this new program, please call Provider Services at **1-800-450-8753**.

Developmental tests for children

Health Plus offers reimbursements

As part of our commitment to improve developmental assessments for our child members, Health Plus is reimbursing providers for conducting developmental tests (CPT codes 96110-96111). If you wish to refer members for developmental testing, you may call Kenni Arciniegas-Jeffries, CSW, in our Health Services department at **1-718-491-7545**.

Depression management

Referrals are easy

In the spring 2003 issue of *Health Plus News Provider*, we informed you about the availability of our new depression disease management program. To assist PCPs in referring patients who need behavioral health services including depression disease management, we have included referral instructions below.

■ To make referrals for disease management for patients with possible depression, call Behavioral Health at **1-800-727-0910**. Current hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Call us

- 1) Select option 1 for providers.
- 2) The call will be answered by a behavioral health representative. Inform the representative that you are a PCP.
- 3) Ask to speak with a clinician regarding a referral to the depression disease management program.

Doing the right thing

Health Plus Code of Conduct

The federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requires all Medicaid managed care organizations, such as Health Plus, to have a corporate compliance plan and a corporate Code of Conduct.

The Health Plus Code of Conduct has been adopted by our Board of Directors and distributed to all Health Plus staff. The standards in this Code apply to all Health Plus employees, managers, officers, providers and vendors.

It is our expectation that you, our providers, will abide by all applicable standards in our Code while engaged in any business dealing with Health Plus.

To review our Code, please log on to our Web site at www.healthplus-ny.org/providers. To receive a copy of the Code, call Provider Services at **1-800-450-8753**.

Primary Care Providers (PCP) with whom we are directly contracted will be receiving a copy of the Code of Conduct by mail.



If you are a direct-contract PCP, please complete the acknowledgement form, indicating that you have received a copy of our Code, read and understood it. Sign and date the form and return it to us in the enclosed self-addressed envelope provided *or* fax it back to **1-718-504-9602**.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter. If you have any questions or require clarification on anything regarding the Code of Conduct, please contact the Corporate Compliance Department at **1-718-491-7443**.

Refer smokers to our FREE & CLEAR Smoking Cessation Program at 1-800-300-8181.

HIPAA update

Electronic claims submissions

Health Plus will be contacting you in the next few months with information on electronic claims submission.

If you wish to submit electronically, your practice should be ready to use the new HIPAA-

standard formats for all electronic transactions by Oct. 16, 2003.

Have a discussion with your practice management systems (PMS) or billing systems vendor to establish your practice's readiness to send HIPAA-compliant claims to Health Plus and other

payers.

For assistance with these matters, you may access free HIPAA-related information through Medscape at www.medscape.com or the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) at www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/.

School-related checkups

Resources for you

It's time for children to start school again! As a service to you, our Web site provides links to educational resources on depression in children, *NYC Department of Education* forms for students who need health services (including medications) or accommodations in school, and the Asthma Action Plan Form from the *NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)*.

Recent reports from the NYC DOHMH claim that more than 40 percent of children in grades K to 5 are overweight or obese. School-related checkups are an opportune time to encourage children and their families to participate in physical fitness activities and to manage their weight.

For more information on this particular topic, refer to "Obesity: Assessment and Management in



Primary Care" in *American Family Physician*, v. 63(11), or log on to the American Academy of Family Physicians Web site at www.aafp.org.

Reporting pesticide poisoning

In New York State, physicians and health facilities are required to report suspected or confirmed cases of pesticide poisoning. Clinical laboratories are also required to report depressed blood cholinesterase levels or abnormally high levels of pesticides in human tissue samples.

Poisonings may result from structural applications, yard applications, manufacturing or formulation settings, farm settings, or any other location where pesticides are used or stored. Because of their toxicity and easy availability, accidental or intentional ingestion of pesticides is an ever-present threat.

Reporting suspected pesticide poisonings is simple. **Physicians or their staff should call the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Pesticide Poisoning Registry at 1-800-322-6850 within 48 hours of seeing the patient.** A definitive diagnosis is not needed prior to calling, and there is no paperwork for physicians to complete.

The Pesticide Poisoning Registry strives to increase awareness in the medical community of the possibility of pesticide-related health effects and to develop interventions to reduce the risk of pesticide poisoning.

Additional information on the Pesticide Poisoning Registry,

industrial hygiene assistance, and cholinesterase testing may be obtained by calling the Registry phone number.

Some counties in New York State may apply pesticides to control the spread of **West Nile Virus (WNV)**. The NYSDOH will be conducting surveillance of reported health effects resulting from the application of WNV-related pesticides. Any physician who suspects or confirms that his or her patient is experiencing health effects due to exposure to WNV-related pesticides should report that case to the Pesticide Poisoning Registry at **1-800-322-6850**.

PCPs—Remind patients to recertify for another year of health insurance coverage.

CLAIMS CORNER

Dear Claims Corner:

As a laboratory services provider, I don't always see patients. Often we just get the biological sample along with a requisition. Many of our providers just list "Child Health Plus" and not the actual insurance carrier of this patient. This is resulting in many of our claims being rejected because the patient is "not a Health Plus Member." What can we do?

Dear Laboratory Provider:

We recognize that it is increasingly difficult to identify which health plan a Child Health Plus, Family Health Plus or Medicaid member belongs to. Due to the "Health Plus" nomenclature in two of the programs, we receive many misrouted claims. It may be necessary for you to modify your requisition to require the

Reminder

New claims address:

**Health Plus
P.O. Box 200-284
Bay Ridge Station
Brooklyn, NY 11220-0284**

name of the insurance carrier and mandate that this be completed. Use the note below to assist you in obtaining the information you need to submit a claim.

Submitting multiple claims?

We often receive multiple individual claims folded into a business envelope. We receive as many as 10 to 20 of these individual envelopes in a given day or week. It might be more convenient to submit multiple claims in a single 8½-by-11 envelope. This would ensure the claims would receive sequential numbers and be easier to track on your remit notices. In addition, it would be more likely that they would be processed in the same

payment cycle.

Large volumes of claims are often separated during the mail opening and numbering function and may not all get into the system on the same day. Use of larger mailings would simplify our incoming mail operation as well as provide some benefit to you the provider. As a reminder, please be sure to submit your claims to us at P.O. Box 200-284, Bay Ridge Station, Brooklyn, NY, 11220-0284 to ensure the prompt receipt of your claims.

Claims reminder

Please be sure to identify the managed care plan on all laboratory requisitions so that the labs can bill the insurance companies directly. If there is any doubt, you can attach a copy of the member's ID card.

Remember: To verify eligibility for Health Plus members, providers can access INFO PLUS by phone at 1-800-639-6968 or online at www.healthplus-ny.org. You need your nine-digit Provider ID number and your four-digit PIN to access this service.

Health Plus News PROVIDER

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HEALTH PLUS NEWS PROVIDER is published as a community service to members of the HEALTH PLUS provider network. HEALTH PLUS Executive Offices are located at 205 Montague St., Third Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Our phone number is 1-718-630-0123.

HEALTH PLUS is a not-for-profit health care plan committed to quality health care and dedicated to the health and well-being of our culturally diverse communities through partnerships with members, providers and community-based organizations.

Information in HEALTH PLUS NEWS PROVIDER comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content in this newsletter, please contact HEALTH PLUS Provider Services at the number provided. Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

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Where to find information

Provider Services	1-800-450-8753
	(Fax) 1-718-504-9602
INFO PLUS Provider Interactive Voice Response Line (24-hour Member Eligibility, Claims Status, Specialist Referrals)	
	1-800-639-6968
Address changes	(Fax) 1-718-504-9602
Domestic Violence Coordinator	1-718-491-7545
Health Education	1-718-491-7584
Health Services	1-718-630-0123
Health Services Referrals	(Fax) 1-718-360-1314
Quality Improvement	1-718-491-7559
Web site:	www.healthplus-ny.org
For expert health information, Health Plus members may call Tele-Nurse Plus 24 hours a day, seven days a week:	
1-800-437-7587.	