



Health Plus news provider

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New HEDIS/QARR measures on appropriate antibiotic use in children

The ongoing public health risk of antimicrobial resistance has led the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) to add two new measures on antibiotic prescribing and use to its 2004 HEDIS indices on effectiveness of care:

1. Appropriate treatment for children with upper respiratory infection (URI).
2. Appropriate testing for children with pharyngitis.

These new measures have also been included in the New York State Department of Health's Quality Assurance Reporting Requirements (QARR).

Both measures exclude multiple diagnoses and count only visits in which a single diagnosis of URI or pharyngitis is made. These two first-time measures are being evaluated in children (up to age 18) initially and may later be adopted for adults.

The first quality measure will determine the percentage of children ages 3 months to 18 years who received a sole diagnosis of URI but were not prescribed an antibiotic on or within three days of the date of service. This measure will be reported as an inverted rate (1-numerator/denominator), with higher scores indicating more appropriate treatment of children with URI (generally avoiding antibiotics).

The second measure assesses the percentage of children 2 to 18 years of age who were diagnosed uniquely with pharyngitis and prescribed an antibiotic, but who were also tested for streptococcus A within a 7-day period—beginning three days prior to the date of service, up to and including the three days afterward.

Both measures assume a 30-day negative medication history, meaning that there were no ac-

Health Plus reimburses providers for rapid strep testing. See "Codes to know" on page 3.

tive prescriptions for antibiotics and no pharmacy claims for new or refill antibiotic prescriptions in the 30 days preceding the date of service.

Take-home messages

For providers, there are two take-home messages:

1. If you prescribe an antibiotic, your encounter and claims data should include a diagnosis that justifies antibiotic treatment.
2. If you make a diagnosis of pharyngitis and prescribe an antibiotic, the patient should receive a prompt streptococcus A test to confirm the appropriateness of antibiotic treatment.

Please see page 3 for diagnostic and procedure codes for URI and pharyngitis.

Health Plus

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or e-mail to:
providers@healthplus-ny.org

moving?

Ask questions to identify work-related diseases

Reminder: Physicians are required by law to report suspected cases of occupational lung disease to the New York State Department of Health. To file a report, call toll-free **1-866-807-2130**. For further information, log on to www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/lung/lung.htm.



The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) reports that occupational disease is under-recognized and urges providers to routinely ask their patients a few simple questions to determine if a condition may be work-related:

- What kind of work do you do?
- Are you now or have you previously been exposed to dust, fumes, chemicals, radiation, or loud noise?

- Are your symptoms better or worse when you are at work?
- Do you think your health problems are related to your work?

If one or more answers arouse suspicion, a full occupational health history should be taken. Self-administered occupational history forms can be an efficient way to obtain this information and are available online at www.atsdr.cdc.gov/HEC/CSEM/exphistory/exphist_form.html.

Other etiologic factors, such as cigarette smoking, do not necessarily rule out the occupational component of the disease or symptoms.

Occupational lung diseases, pesticide and heavy metal poisonings, and other serious work-related illnesses are reportable to the NYSDOH. NYSDOH's authority enables it to obtain this

information in accordance with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

The NYSDOH provides information to health care providers and their patients and, with a patient's permission, will work with employers to identify and correct hazardous workplace conditions. Patients' interests are always put first, and their confidentiality is maintained.

When submitting claims, proper coding for occupational diseases is important. The ICD-9 E series should be used. For example:

- E 500-508: Lung diseases caused by external agents.
- E 506.0: Bronchitis caused by fumes and vapors.
- E 800-899: Injury and poisoning resulting from external causes.

Health Plus accepts electronic claims

We are happy to announce the upcoming expansion of electronic claims submission at Health Plus.

Currently we are accepting facility (UB 92) claims in an electronic format and are in the testing stages of accepting medical (HCFA 1500) claims electronically as well.

If you are submitting electronic claims to other payers directly or through a billing agency and are interested in submitting your Health Plus claims

this way, please call our EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) Coordinator at the number listed below.

There are significant benefits to be realized from EDI:

- Administrative cost reduction.
- Accurate and timely processing.
- Streamlined business-to-business transactions.
- Assurance of security and confidentiality of individual data.



If you have any questions, please e-mail Edward G. Yuabov, EDI Coordinator, at eyuabov@healthplus-ny.org or call him at 1-718-491-8355.





Refer smokers to our **FREE & CLEAR** Smoking Cessation Program at 1-888-743-3508.

provider news



Health Plus reimburses for developmental testing

As part of our commitment to improve developmental assessments for our child members, Health Plus continues to reimburse providers for conducting developmental tests (CPT codes 96110 and 96111).

Health Plus is piloting a new depression screening module for PCPs

More information about depression screening can be obtained from our website at www.healthplus-ny.org/providers, or from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene at www.nyc.gov/html/doh/pdf/chi/chi23-1.pdf.



Codes to know

The new quality measures for antibiotic use in children make proper coding of your claims and encounter data important. (See chart below.)

Health Plus reimburses providers on a fee-for-service basis for rapid strep testing in private offices or hospital clinics, but it is necessary to bill

us directly.

For more information on appropriate antibiotic use, consult the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/drugresistance.

If you would like an information packet on antimicrobial resistance from Health Plus, please contact your Provider Relations Associate.

ICD9-CM codes for URI

Acute nasopharyngitis (common cold)	460
URI unspecified site	465

ICD9-CM codes for pharyngitis

Acute or unspecified pharyngitis	462
Acute tonsillitis	463
Streptococcal tonsillitis	034.0

CPT codes to identify Group A streptococcus tests

By enzyme immunoassay:	87430, 86317, 86403, 86588, 87449
By nucleic acid:	87650-87652
By direct optical observation:	87880
By throat culture:	87060, 87081-87083, 87070-87071

Source: NCOA, HEDIS 2004, volume 2 (Technical Specifications), pages 79, 84 and 86

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

Ten steps to faster claims payment

In order for Health Plus to process your claims in an efficient, timely manner, we ask for your assistance with the following:

- 1 Please mail claims to the correct address (see box), or send them electronically. Claims submitted by fax cannot be accepted.
- 2 When mailing multiple claims, please use a large (8½-by-11-inch) envelope. This facilitates processing and tracking, making it easier to pay all submitted claims within the same payment cycle.
- 3 Please separate computer-generated claims so that there is one claim per page, and remove carbon copies.
- 4 Always use your Health Plus Provider ID (PRPR) number in box 33 of the HCFA 1500, and enter the correct tax ID number for the practice you are billing under.
- 5 Please contact Provider Rela-

CLAIMS ADDRESS

Please submit all claims to the address below to avoid delays in processing:
Health Plus
P.O. Box 200-284
Bay Ridge Station
Brooklyn, NY 11220-0284

tions and submit an updated W-9 form if you change your tax ID, address, or billing information, or add new providers to your practice.

6 Always submit claims with the patient's Health Plus ID number (visible on member card) rather than the Medicaid number.

7 Use current and correct CPT4 and ICD9 codes for procedure and diagnostic coding.

8 Please make sure each member's address and date of birth appear on all claims. This makes it possible to identify members if their ID numbers are entered incorrectly.

9 Please make sure all handwritten claims are legible.

10 If you disagree with a claims decision, please send a letter of appeal to the claims address (see box) with a copy of the Remittance Advice and any supporting data. Claims that are simply re-sent are processed as duplicates, resulting in a denial.

Resources for you www.healthplus-ny.org



Check our website, www.healthplus-ny.org/providers, for our updated referral forms for specialist visits and for case or disease management.

Remember to **include your Health Plus Provider ID number when submitting claims**. See "Claims Corner" above for more about claims submission.



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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 1-800-450-8753.

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
- Disease or Case Management Referrals (Fax) 1-718-360-1314
- Domestic Violence Coordinator 1-718-491-7531
- Health Education and Outreach 1-888-743-3508
- Health Services 1-718-630-0123
- Quality Improvement 1-718-491-7559

Website: 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.