

# Health Plus News

## PROVIDER

PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY'S HEALTH

[www.healthplus-ny.org](http://www.healthplus-ny.org)

Providers, call toll free 1-800-450-8753.

### Antibiotics

## Are you prescribing appropriately?

In tandem with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the New York State Department of Health, and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, HEALTH PLUS has increased its own efforts in educating physicians about the judicious use of antibiotics. In addition to an article included in the Spring 2002 issue of this newsletter, representatives from the Quality Improvement and Provider Relations departments have been making visits to physicians whose rate of prescribing third-generation cephalosporins is above 30 percent. This rate is extremely high in comparison to 7.75 percent for hospital- and health center-based physicians and 14.14 percent among office-based physicians in

our plan. These visits will continue throughout the year with follow-up visits being scheduled six months following an initial visit.

#### Explain to your patients

As expected, antibiotic prescribing rises throughout the winter months because of infections caused by colds, flu, and other winter-related conditions. It is especially important around this time of the year that physicians monitor their antibiotic prescribing behavior and explain to their patients why they are not prescribing one even if the patient insists.

For more information on this program, please contact Mohammad Kamal in the Quality Improvement Department at (718) 491-7557.

### Generic drug program

## New Medicaid law affects you

In a special edition of *Medicaid Update* (October 2002, vol. 17, No. 11), the New York State Department of Health (SDOH) announced that, as of Nov. 17, 2002, "most brand-name drugs with a generic equivalent will require a prior authorization to be covered by the Medicaid program." There are "no additional actions required" after prescribing a generic drug.

For more information and/or a copy of the *Medicaid Update*, please contact the SDOH Pharmacy Policy and Operation Staff at (518) 486-3209 or access the document online at [www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/mancaire/omm/main.htm](http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/mancaire/omm/main.htm).



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#### HEALTH PLUS

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## High-risk maternity case management

HEALTH PLUS is pleased to provide high-risk maternity case management, which identifies women with potentially high-risk pregnancies and assists them with their health care providers to improve outcomes.

### What we offer

- Screening of pregnant women to identify those at high risk
- A standard clinical process to monitor pregnancies and high-risk cases
- Specialized case managers with extensive obstetric and/or high-risk neonatal experience
- Home care alternatives for high-risk patients in lieu of hospitalization
- A comprehensive management plan structured to the needs of each individual patient

### Expected outcomes

- Reduction in rates of preterm delivery
- Increased knowledge among patients and loved ones regarding healthy behaviors during pregnancy
- Increased patient satisfaction

For more information on this program and/or to refer patients, please contact our Health Services Case Management Department at **(718) 630-0123**.

# Upcoming health observances

## AIDS

Since 1988, Dec. 1 has been designated **WORLD AIDS DAY**. Get more information on HIV prevention and treatment at the HEALTH PLUS Web site ([www.healthplus-ny.org/prov\\_education.htm](http://www.healthplus-ny.org/prov_education.htm)) as well as the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene ([www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/ah/ah.html](http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/ah/ah.html)).

## Sexual health

In a press release announcing *The Call to Action to Promote Sexual Health and Responsible Sexual Behavior* (June 28, 2001), the U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. David Satcher, stated: "We face a serious public health challenge regarding the sexual health of our nation.... Doing nothing is unacceptable." Ask your patients about their

sexual behaviors and help them assess their risks for HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea, and other STDs, as well as unplanned pregnancies. Talk to your patients about using condoms and other barrier methods. Take advantage on **NATIONAL CONDOM DAY** (Feb. 14) to implement these interventions.

## Heart health

February is declared **AMERICAN HEART MONTH**. Increase your efforts in conducting lipoprotein profiles and other screening and monitoring checks for your patients. For more information, access the Web sites of the American Heart Association at [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org) and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute site at [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov).



### Reminder: Use your provider number

Using your provider #PRPR in box 33 of the HCFA 1500 (at the pin # position) will expedite processing.

## Web resources: Check out what's new

Log on to the "Providers" section of our Web site at [www.healthplus-ny.org](http://www.healthplus-ny.org) to access the following resources to assist you in your practice:

- Information on diabetes, including the **American Diabetes Association's Standards of Medical Care for Persons With Diabetes Mellitus**
- Information on coronary

heart disease, cardiovascular disease and coronary artery disease, including the **Third Report of the Expert Panel on Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Cholesterol in Adults (Adult Treatment Panel III)**

- Information on asthma including the **2002 Update on Selected Topics of the National Asthma Education and Prevention**

### Program Expert Panel Report 2: Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma

- Information on antibiotics and antibiotic resistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

If you have suggestions for other resources you would like to see included on our Web site, please e-mail us at [providers@healthplus-ny.org](mailto:providers@healthplus-ny.org).

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

## Health promotion

# Prevent diabetes and reduce smoking

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and the New York State Department of Health are prioritizing efforts to help New Yorkers prevent diabetes and reduce smoking.

### **Diabetes: What you can do**

Doctors are reminded to screen patients for impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) using the fasting plasma glucose (FPG) or an oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT). In addition, providers should encourage patients to partake in active lifestyles and to reduce fat and calorie intake.

For more information, contact the New York State Diabetes Control Program at (518) 474-1222. As an added benefit, HEALTH PLUS members in our Diabetes Disease Management (DM) Program can be referred to Weight Watchers to receive assistance with weight control issues. If you have a

member who needs to be referred to the Diabetes DM Program, please call (718) 630-0123.

### **Smoking: What you can do**

Smoking is the leading cause of preventable deaths in New York City. In response to this statistic, the City has implemented a highly visible anti-smoking social marketing campaign to inform people about the dangers of tobacco use and how they can stop. HEALTH PLUS supports these efforts and also emphasizes the importance of smoking cessation in pregnant women and the caregivers of children with asthma.

Among pregnant women, it is beneficial to advise the patient to stop smoking even late in her pregnancy. The greatest health benefits occur when expectant mothers stop early in their pregnancies; yet, they should be encouraged to quit anytime. If necessary, pharmacotherapy should be considered when

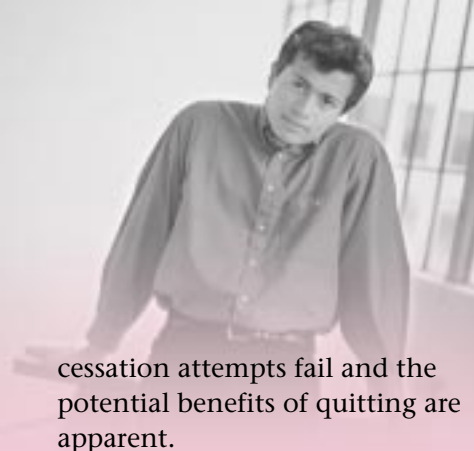
cessation attempts fail and the potential benefits of quitting are apparent.

Even a brief cessation counseling session, lasting three to five minutes with an emphasis of setting a quit date and arranging a follow-up, can be beneficial.

### **What we are doing**

HEALTH PLUS offers smoking cessation services to smokers who live in the same household as a child member with asthma **even if the smoker is not a member of HEALTH PLUS.** Caregivers of asthmatic children are putting children in their household at risk if they smoke.

Referrals can be made to our Free & Clear Program through our Member Services hotline at 1-800-300-8181. For more information on smoking cessation, please contact the New York City DOHMH Tobacco Control Program at (212) 676-2141.



## WELCOME, CLEO DIXON

Cleo Dixon has been appointed Director of Network Development and Provider Relations for HEALTH PLUS, where she will manage an ever-expanding network.

Ms. Dixon joins HEALTH PLUS from MHN, Inc., where she was Director of Professional Relations. Before that, she was a consultant at MDNY Healthcare and Regional Manager for Oxford Health Plans. Ms. Dixon spent more than five years at Blue Cross Blue Shield in management positions

responsible for financial planning, analysis and budget.

"I decided to come to HEALTH PLUS to satisfy an innate desire to help people and to give back to the community," said Ms. Dixon. "This organization is definitely delivering a product to people in need and providing access to care for the underprivileged. I sensed right away that at HEALTH PLUS people come first, and I wanted to be a part of the wonderful atmosphere."

In her new position, Ms. Dixon will be responsible for developing



and maintaining the provider network. This includes recruiting new providers and keeping providers up-to-date by communicating current information to them.

Dixon has an M.B.A. from the Leonard N. Stern School of Business at New York University, and a bachelor of arts degree from Drew University.

**Ensure children receive immunizations by age 2!**

## Dental benefits

Effective Jan. 1, 2003, HEALTH PLUS is expecting to cover dental services for its Health Care Plus (Medicaid) members. Dental benefits (excluding orthodontia) will now be offered to members in all HEALTH PLUS programs. For more information, members can call HEALTH PLUS Member Services or the Member Services number on their dental benefit card.

According to the New York State Department of Health, orthodontia is provided as fee-for-service for children enrolled in Health Care Plus who meet the eligibility criteria established under the Physically Handicapped Children's Program (e.g., cleft palate, severe malocclusion). Health Care Plus members younger than 21 who appear eligible for orthodontic services should be referred to the Orthodontic Rehabilitation Program (ORP) for screening and treatment.

For information and referral forms, the referring dentist or physician should call ORP at (212) 978-5560.

# Claims Corner

*If you have a question for Claims Corner, please submit it to Barbara Thompson, Director of Claims, HEALTH PLUS, 5800 Third Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11220.*

**Q:** *Dear HEALTH PLUS: I recently joined an already established practice. I notice I receive prompt payment from my original practice but payments are delayed when billed for my new practice. Why does this happen?*

**A:** Dear Doctor: When you join a new practice or open a new office, it is important that you contact our Provider Relations Department before submitting any claims. Failure to do this will cause delays in our claims processing because our records for you will be incomplete.

You should contact our Provider Relations hotline at **1-800-450-8753** as soon as you have a change in practice to avoid any delays.

**Q:** *Dear HEALTH PLUS: I recently received a remittance notice (EOB), which did not reflect payment on all the services submitted on the original claim. Some of the services were disallowed. I realized that I had made an error on the original claim, which caused this disallowance. Should I submit a new claim for those denied services?*

**A:** Dear Doctor: You should not submit a new claim. Please write a letter identifying the service that was denied and provide us with the corrected information including any required documentation and attach that letter to a copy of the remittance notice.

This will allow us to open the original claim and re-evaluate it along with the additional revised information you provided. We will then re-adjudicate the claim. If it is eligible for additional payment, the adjustment will appear on your new remittance notice.

## Health Plus News PROVIDER

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HEALTH PLUS NEWS PROVIDER is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of HEALTH PLUS, 205 Montague Street, Third Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201, telephone (718) 745-0030.

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 partnership 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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## Coverage for PET scans

HEALTH PLUS requires prior authorization for all outpatient PET scans *except* in an emergency. HEALTH PLUS reimbursement is at 100 percent of the New York State Medicaid rate. It will be paid to the facility and is all inclusive of professional and technical services. Please call Provider Services at **1-800-450-8753** if you have any questions.

## Where to find information

Provider Services ..... 1-800-450-8753

Provider Interactive Voice Response Line  
(24-hour Member Eligibility, Claims Status,  
Specialist Referrals) ..... 1-800-639-6968

Domestic Violence Coordinator ..... (718) 491-7545

Health Services ..... (718) 630-0123

Health Education ..... (718) 491-7584

Web site: [www.healthplus-ny.org](http://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.**