



Health Plus News

YOUR COMMUNITY'S GUARDIAN ANGEL SINCE 1984

PROVIDER

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

Smoking cessation

Physicians can have an impact

New York City Health Commissioner, Dr. Thomas Frieden, has called smoking “the leading epidemic of our times.” Smoking is linked to numerous illnesses in adults and is a major trigger for asthma in children.

In an important report on asthma management among children of color, published by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute in 1995, several demonstration projects found that smoking was far more prevalent than expected among parents of children with asthma. Fifty percent of asthma patients were exposed to smoking in the home.

Who wants to quit?

Every physician knows how important *and how difficult* it is to get smokers to quit. The New York City Department of Health



Members may call us at 1-888-743-3508 for help.

and Mental Hygiene offers these basic statistics: Some 70 percent of smokers want to quit, and 30 percent try to quit each year. However, only 3 to 5 percent are successful.

These statistics only tell part of the story.

Since its inception, the New York State Quitline at 1-866-NYQUITS (1-866-697-8487) has received thousands of calls from people

who want to quit smoking. A follow-up survey of these callers showed that 12 percent successfully quit for at least six months.

Counseling can help

A number of studies have shown that brief physician counseling can be effective in getting patients to quit. Smoking cessation counseling for 5 to 10 minutes can increase quit rates

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

Health Plus

205 Montague, Third Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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LET US KNOW...
... IF YOU MOVE!

MOVING?

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

Behavioral health screening

How are we doing?

The New York State Department of Health, as well as national professional societies such as the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians, have emphasized the importance of routine behavioral health screening in primary care settings.

In July 2002, Health Plus mailed out brief screening tools to assist you in assessing patients for common mental health and substance abuse problems.

These tools, also available on our Web site, included the "Brief PHQ," designed to identify common mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety disorders, and other stress-related conditions, and the "CAGE-AID," designed to screen for problematic alcohol or drug use. In addition, an adolescent health screening tool from IPRO, which contains some items addressing mental health issues, is available on our Web site.

Get on schedule

Health Plus recommends that routine screening be conducted at the same periodicity as well visits, that is, once per year for children and once every three to five years for adults.

Although we have supplied sample screening tools, we encourage you to use any formal behavioral health screening tools/methods that you may prefer.

To monitor our progress in carrying out this important health initiative, random chart reviews conducted by Health Plus Quality Improvement staff now assess for evidence



of behavioral health screening on a routine basis, as well as appropriate follow-up of identified problems.

This process began with chart reviews from PCPs who became eligible for recredentialing with Health Plus during 2003.

Impressive results

We are very pleased to report some impressive initial results. Documentation showed that behavioral health screening was conducted in 71.5 percent of the first 200 cases sampled to date. Evidence of appropriate follow-up was found in approximately 75 percent of those cases in which mental health and/or substance abuse problems were identified.

Although we have achieved a great start, national statistics indicate that we must build on our efforts toward the goal of routinely screening all members for behavioral health problems and ensuring adequate treatment whenever problems are identified. Depression, for example, has been widely recognized as both common and treatable.

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (through the NYC Chronic Disease Collaboratives) reports that 6 to 9 percent of patients in primary care settings deal with depressive disorders (based on national statistics).

Studies have also consistently demonstrated that effective treatments, particularly antidepressant medications, are available for patients with depressive illnesses identified in primary care settings.

Treatment is essential

Despite the widespread prevalence of depression and the availability of effective treatments, up to 50 percent of depressed patients are undiagnosed, and only 25 percent are adequately treated. The costs to society are severe. This data clearly underscores the importance of screening and early detection.

If you would like assistance or wish to discuss a referral, please feel free to contact Health Plus Behavioral Health at 1-800-727-0910 during business hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, the 24-hour behavioral health advice line at 1-866-223-9500, or Member Services at 1-800-300-8181.

Members can self-refer to any participating behavioral health provider. Our Health Education and Outreach Department also provides free classes in stress management and depression. To find out dates and locations of our health education classes, members may call Health Education and Outreach at 1-888-743-3508.

PCPs—Remember to submit your encounter claims.

Stop the spread of chlamydia

Identify, intervene, prevent

Chlamydia is one of the most widespread bacterial STDs in the United States. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that more than 4 million people are infected each year.

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) monitors the percentage of sexually active women 16 to 25 years of age who had at least one annual test for chlamydia. Health Plus reports our member results to NYSDOH each year through the Quality Assurance Reporting Requirements (QARR).

In order to further facilitate this process, physicians need to conduct a sexual health interview with female patients

16 to 25 years of age. A sexual health interview may include questions such as these, depending on the patient:

- Are you currently sexually active? Have you ever been?
- How many partners have you had in the past month? Six months? Lifetime?
- How do you protect yourself from HIV and other STDs?
- Have you ever been tested for HIV? Would you like to be?

Don't forget that those who are identified as sexually active need to be tested for chlamydia annually.

Those who are sexually active need to be tested for chlamydia annually.

To receive more information on how to conduct a sexual history with patients, please access the American Academy of Family Physicians Web site at www.aafp.org.

The goal of Health Plus is prevention, early identification, and intervention in the treatment of chlamydia.

We want to provide health education to all members to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted diseases.

Smoking: Physicians can have an impact

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by 50 percent. Two-thirds of patients remembered their physician giving them advice to quit.

Over the years, several health plans have found ways to increase their quit rates. Kaiser Permanente Northwest established an experimental program, part of which was a 30-second advice message from a primary care physician, accompanied by health education from a nurse for smokers and recent quitters. The results: Members who received health education achieved double the quit rate.

Providence Health System in Oregon began a program to focus on hospitalized members. In four years, tobacco use in the plan went from 22 to 17 percent. Other successful programs have focused on pregnant women and teens.

Additional resources

If one of your Health Plus members needs help with smoking cessation, they may call us at 1-888-743-3508.

For more information on strategies *you* can use to help patients quit smoking, please log on to the City Health Information page of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Web site at www.nyc.gov/health.



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

CLAIMS CORNER

Health Plus is fully committed to provide the highest level of service in our claims processing. This includes timely processing and accuracy of adjudication.

In order for us to achieve this, we need the cooperation of all members of the provider community. There are several ways you can assist us in achieving our goals:

- Always use your Health Plus Provider ID Number (PRPR) in box 33 of the HCFA 1500.
- Always use the appropriate tax ID for the practice you are billing under.
- If you change addresses, tax IDs, remit address, or expand your group to include new providers, please be sure to notify Provider Relations, and submit a new or updated W-9 when necessary.
- Always use the patient's Health Plus ID number, ask to see their card, and do not submit claims under the

Medicaid number.

- Always use current and correct CPT4 and ICD9 codes for procedure and diagnosis coding.
- Be sure to complete all required fields on all claim forms. Often the member ID is incorrect. Without the address and date of birth, we cannot identify the member.
- Please ensure that handwritten claims are legible.
- Please submit all claims to the proper address (as shown above). Use of other Health Plus office addresses will delay processing.
- If you feel a claim was not adjudicated properly, please send us a letter at the above address, appealing the original adjudication along with a copy

Reminder

New claims address:

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

- of the Remittance Advice and any additional data required. Do not send a second claim. It will be processed as a duplicate.
- Be sure your rebilling cycles exceed 35 days to avoid crossing in the mail with our Remittance Advice.
 - Be sure all adjudicated claims are posted (including denials) before running a rebilling.

The above steps will promote a more streamlined process and allow us to provide you with better service.

www.healthplus-ny.org

Resources for you

web

Don't forget that our Web site at www.healthplus-ny.org contains valuable information and resources to enhance your medical practice! It is a free service to you, and we encourage you to log on.

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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.**