



VNS Health

HEALTH PLANS

Provider News

In this issue:

News and Notices

- [Help Us Retain Our Health Outcomes Survey Scores](#)

Quality Measures

- [Tips on Statin Therapy Adherence and How You Can Help](#)
- [The Importance of Decreasing STI Incident Rates](#)
- [SelectHealth: Prioritizing Blood Pressure and Mental Health to Improve Performance](#)

News and Notices

Help Us Retain Our Health Outcomes Survey Scores

The Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) is once again being conducted, and we need your continued help encouraging your patients to complete the survey.

During the last HOS, VNS Health Medicare received five stars. We couldn't have accomplished this with you—thank you for all your work then.

As a reminder, the HOS is the first patient-reported outcomes measure survey used in Medicare plans. It allows us to monitor the performance

of our health plan so we can better support the health of your patients. This year, the survey is being fielded out to members in late July until November 1st.

The survey asks about the patient's mental and physical health in the previous two years. Their answers affect our quality ratings and may have an impact on bonus payments. If your patient mentions a survey they received, please explain that it's important for them to fill it out. Their answers will help us improve the services we provide to all our members.

The survey asks questions regarding the three stars measures. During a visit with your patient, be sure to touch on these health topics and include related interventions when establishing their care plan:

1. **Monitoring physical activity.** Advise patients on actions to take to improve activities of daily living (ADLs)
2. **Improving bladder control.** Ask patients about incontinence and discuss treatments to help manage bladder leakage
3. **Reducing fall risks.** Discuss possibilities and options to avoid falls and related injuries

Quality Measures

Tips on Statin Therapy Adherence and How You Can Help

Recent studies show that 90% of patients on Statin Therapy for Patients with Cardiovascular Disease (SPC) experience muscle pain where the statin is not the primary cause of the pain.

Click [here](#) to read about helping patients adhere to their therapy.

The Importance of Decreasing STI Incident Rates

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recently reported that 26 million new sexually transmitted infections (STIs) occur each year. This raises patient health concerns, which makes prevention, diagnostics, and treatment recommendations critical to controlling STIs among patients.

How you can help:

- Educate your patients on the importance of **STI screenings**.
- Schedule STI screenings for your patients at least once annually, regardless of sexual activity.
- If your patient tests positive for STIs, ensure follow-up **outreach with education and treatment**.
- For patients with HIV, remind them of health benefits of viral load suppression. Patients who take HIV medicine daily can make their viral load undetectable, stay healthy, and not transmit HIV to their partners.
- Schedule viral load testing visits for HIV patients at least twice per year.

SelectHealth: Prioritizing Blood Pressure and Mental Health to Improve Performance

Each year, the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) assesses the performance of Medicaid SNP plans, including SelectHealth to evaluate the Quality of Care provided to enrollees. This year, the NYSDOH has identified two focus areas for improvement: the Controlling High Blood Pressure (CBP) measure and Follow-Up After Emergency Department Visit for Mental Illness Within Seven Days (FUM).

High Blood Pressure Control

Here are tips on recording and managing patient hypertension:

- Blood pressure (BP) readings taken and documented by the patient are eligible for use in recording.
- If your patient does not have a digital BP device, contact NYRx to submit a DME/medical supply request. Call 1-800-342-3005 for medical supplies and [procedure codes](#).

- BP documented as “average” (139/70) is eligible.
- Educate the patient that a healthy lifestyle of diet, physical activity, and medication is crucial for having control of hypertension.
- Take the patient’s BP at the beginning and end of their appointment to reduce inaccurate readings.
- If the patient’s BP is 140/90 or more, please review all medications and schedule a follow-up appointment.

Fact: Hypertension is the leading risk factor for mortality in the world and HIV-infected adults have a higher prevalence of this risk factor.

Importance of Follow-Up After Mental Illness Emergency Visit

If your patient or their Care Team has notified you of an Emergency Department (ED) visit, schedule an appointment with your patient within seven days post-ED. This appointment does not have to be coded as a mental illness follow up, any diagnoses will suffice.

Any of these visit settings meet criteria for a follow-up appointment as long as the principal diagnosis is a mental health disorder:

- Community Mental Health Center
- Telehealth
- Observation
- Virtual Check-In

VNS Health partners with Carelon Behavioral Health (previously known as Beacon Health Options), to provide behavioral health services for our members. You can refer the patient to Carelon by emailing VNSCarelonReferral@carelon.com

Fact: According to the CDC, 6.2 million people with mental disorders, behavioral, and neurodevelopmental diagnoses have visited the ED. Research suggests that follow-up care for people with mental illness is correlated to fewer ED visits, improved physical and mental function, and increased compliance with continued instructions. The sooner the follow up with the patient post ED, the better for the patient.

Questions?

Contact Provider Services

Call toll free: 1-866-783-0222

TTY for the hearing impaired: 711

Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm



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