



NMHC Provider Connection

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- Opioid Risk Management program updates, in-network air ambulance providers, changes to prior authorization requirements for habilitative/rehabilitative services, and more in this issue!
- Please forward this newsletter to all healthcare providers and administrative staff in your office.

Shared decision-making: A message from F. Kiko Torres, MD, Senior Medical Director

In this era of value-based care where value equals quality divided by cost, there are many tools to increase value. We can increase value through a focus on quality improvement or we can focus on reducing costs while still providing the same quality care. One tool that has the potential to increase quality and reduce cost simultaneously is *shared decision-making (SDM)*.

SDM incorporates the patient's values and preferences into medical decisions and puts the patient at the center of care, but it requires an investment of practitioner time, which is in short supply. For that reason, SDM ties in nicely with already established patient-centered medical home (PCMH) models and population health strategies where health educators, coaches, and other staff can support the SDM discussion.

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Why patients should always choose in-network air ambulance

When an air transport is required because of traumatic injury, life threatening illness or facility to facility transfer, your patient may be caught unawares by out-of-network (OON) providers. In particular, OON air ambulance services can cause a huge financial burden. Most out-of-network air ambulance providers require the member or their family to sign an irrevocable agreement to reimburse them any amount they choose to charge. A typical out-of-network air ambulance bill can total between \$40,000 to \$70,000 just for service from Roswell to Albuquerque!

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Changes to prior authorization requirements for habilitative and rehabilitative services

Please note the following prior authorization (PA) requirement changes, which became effective on January 1, 2018.

- We now require PA for some services rendered by acupuncturists and chiropractors. This includes **all modality and therapeutic codes billed as habilitative, rehabilitative, and PT services starting on the first day of treatment.**

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OptumRx® Opioid Risk Management Program updates

At the end of 2017, NMHC announced a change, effective January 1, 2018, to the Opioid Risk Management program, which resulted in a more robust program that also aligned with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recommendations. NMHC partners with OptumRx on this program; OptumRx recently provided preliminary outcomes. Its analysis indicated that:

- Approximately 95 percent of "first-fill" opioid prescriptions were filled for ≤ a seven-day supply and were dosed at less than 50 mg morphine-equivalent dose (MED) per day.
- Over 95 percent of members on chronic opioid therapy were dosed at <90 mg MED per day.
- Across all opioid prescriptions, an average reduction of 18.6 percent in MED was noted.

This is great news! For comparison, only about 45 percent of first-fill prescriptions, nationally, complied with CDC guidelines on first-fill quantity limitations and MED. You can learn more at the [OptumRx website](#).

On July 1, 2018, OptumRx will add another enhancement to the Opioid Risk Management program: OptumRx Home Delivery will limit dispensing of opioid prescriptions to a 30-day supply at one time. Although use of OptumRx Home Delivery for fulfillment of opioid prescriptions has historically been limited, this enhancement provides another lever that will be used to manage this high-risk drug class.

Language interpretation services

Cultural diversity and inclusion in healthcare describes the ability for providers to provide care to patients with different values, beliefs, and behaviors. This includes adjusting healthcare delivery to meet the social, cultural, and linguistic needs of the persons providers are treating. Doing this is challenging with all patients, but for diverse patient populations it can be even more difficult due to language barriers, health literacy gaps, and cultural differences in communication styles. Providers and health systems that strive to implement a cultural awareness of the people they serve often have improved health outcomes, increased respect, and mutual understanding from patients.

Medical language interpreters are essential to overcoming linguistic/communication barriers. NMHC partners with Certified Languages International (CLI) to provide telephonic language interpreting services, and we encourage you to use this service when you need a medical language interpreter. You can access the provider-specific line by calling **1-800-225-5254**. You will then be prompted to enter an account code; the code is **96623**.

Please note: This service is available only when working with NMHC members.

Genetic testing always requires prior authorization

Genetic testing, also known as DNA testing, can be a useful predictive and pre-symptomatic tool that aids you in the treatment plan for your patient.

Please remember that NMHC requires you to receive a prior authorization for all genetic testing and counseling. Testing can be very expensive for the patient if the services are not prior-authorized or if you send the testing to a non-contracted, out-of-network laboratory.

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A robust network of specialists

Did you know that we have approximately **9,300 specialty providers** in our New Mexico and Texas service areas? You can locate a specialty practitioner at mynmhc.org/find_a_doctor.aspx. Use the *Specialty* drop-down menu and select the type of specialist you are seeking.

Please always refer your NMHC patients to the in-network specialists in the NMHC provider directory. This is especially important because your NMHC patients will pay much less out of pocket

when referred to in-network specialists. Out-of-network specialists are not contracted with us and will bill your patient full charges. Help us keep healthcare affordable for your patients by always choosing in-network specialists.

We welcome new practitioners of all specialties into our network. If you are not contracted with us and would like to be, please go to mynmhc.org/Working_With_Us.aspx, complete a Letter of Interest, and email it to us.

We appreciate all you do for our members.

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