

Care System Connection

News for providers participating in the Patient Choice programs

3rd Quarter 2009

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Patient Choice Survey Summary:

How Survey Participation Benefits Providers, Members

Each year, Patient Choice asks Care Systems, hospitals, primary care clinics and certain individual specialty clinics to complete a survey about their quality processes, clinical guideline implementation, service capabilities, Web tools and more. Survey results are factored into the Patient Choice tiering process (with the exception of the primary care clinic survey) and are used to promote providers' services and capabilities in consumer materials. Following are highlights of the benefits of participating in the annual Patient Choice/Medica *Quality and Service Practices Survey*.

▶ **Patient Choice Rewards 10 PCCs with Lunch for Their Clinic Staff**

Nearly 140 primary care clinics filled out this year's *Quality and Service Practices Survey*. Responses from the survey will be used to create clinic profiles on Main Street Medica in the coming months (see "*Clinics' Services, Capabilities to be Featured to Consumers Online*," below). Patient Choice encouraged participation by holding a drawing for 10 \$200 gift certificates for lunch for clinic staff. Primary care clinics that completed a survey by the deadline were entered into the drawing. The winners were:

- Allina Medical Clinic (Annandale, Minn.)
- Burnsville Family Physicians (Burnsville, Minn.)
- Family HealthServices Minnesota, P.A. - Maryland Office (St. Paul, Minn.)
- HealthPartners - West Clinic (St. Louis Park, Minn.)
- HFA Internal Medicine Clinic (Minneapolis, Minn.)
- Kundel Pediatric Associates (Duluth, Minn.)
- Northwest Family Physicians (Plymouth, Minn.)
- Obstetrics & Gynecology Specialists, P.A. (Edina, Minn.)
- Quello Clinic, Ltd. (Savage, Minn.)
- University Affiliated Family Physicians - Phalen Village (St. Paul, Minn.)

▶ **Clinics' Services, Capabilities to be Featured to Consumers Online Clinics to Receive Cost, Quality Review Packets This Month**

Review packets containing information to be posted on Medica's cost and quality Web site, Main Street Medica (www.mainstreetmedica.com), will be sent to clinics over the next few weeks. Information being sent out for review includes:

- A provider profile created from responses collected on the 2010 Patient Choice/Medica *Quality and Service Practices Survey*. Profiles will feature practices' top conditions handled, the types of Web tools offered and other

items of interest to consumers. Profiles will be sent to each primary care clinic, general specialty clinic and ambulatory surgery center that completed the online survey earlier this year.

- Cost data for various clinic and outpatient procedures. Only clinics with an adequate sample size were included in the analysis.
- Patient satisfaction results from the HealthGrades [HowWasYourCare](#) online survey. Results will be sent to clinics that had at least 15 patient-completed satisfaction surveys.

Please note: Some clinics will receive the above information in multiple mailings, while other clinics will not receive a mailing at all. If you have any questions about the information being sent, please contact Patient Choice at (952) 992-1700 or e-mail pcnews@pchealthcare.com.

► **Care System Survey Participants Earn Quality Credits, Promote System to Consumers**

Earlier this year, 20 Care Systems in the Patient Choice network completed the 2010 *Quality and Service Practices Survey*. The survey evaluates Care Systems' health outcomes and care processes for asthma, coronary artery disease, depression, diabetes, high blood pressure and preventive care. Surveys were scored in two categories:

- **Clinical Performance Level** – which measures Care Systems on self-reported topics such as laboratory results and completeness of care as compared to best practices.
- **Care Processes** – which refers to the Care System's infrastructure that allows them to identify and manage their patients' needs.

Care Systems that completed the survey had the opportunity to earn "quality credits," which helped some systems improve their tier placement in the Patient Choice network. In addition, survey results will be shared with consumers in the 2010 Patient Choice Care System *Comparison Guide*, which will also be available for viewing on the Patient Choice Web site in the coming weeks (www.patientchoicehealthcare.com).

Medica Announces Recipients of 2009 "Raising the Bar" Innovation Awards

Four local provider organizations were recently recognized for their innovative work in improving health care when they received Medica's "Raising the Bar: Rewarding Innovation in Healthcare Value" award. Winners and finalists of the second-annual award demonstrated their ability to implement programs that not only improved patient care and quality of life, but also prevented future complications and hospitalization, ultimately reducing costs to the healthcare system. Award winners received \$25,000 and a plaque to recognize their achievement. Award finalists also received a recognition plaque.

2009 Winners:

- **Apple Valley Medical Clinic** began a systemic focus on optimal diabetes care two years ago, bringing about more efficient and effective care for this at-risk patient population. Within one year of beginning the effort, the clinic improved its community standing for Minnesota Community Measurement's optimal diabetes care measure by 110 percent. During that same time period, the number of the clinic's diabetic patients "at goal" for optimal diabetes care increased 23 percent.
- **Family HealthServices Minnesota, P.A.**, implemented a system-wide Safety Improvement Initiative across 13 clinics for nearly 400 employees. This unique clinic-based model included error reporting, a blame-free culture, and investigation and analysis allowing staff members to learn from mistakes and share best practices. Key areas of focus for reducing medical errors were lab tests, immunizations, and medication labeling. In addition to reducing patient harm, this safety program helped reduce or prevent repeat lab tests, immunization errors, and unnecessary patient visits.

2009 Finalists:

- **Wayzata Children’s Clinic** launched a program aimed at reducing childhood obesity through improved diet and increased exercise. “Operation Get FIT” tackled a difficult problem that often hinges on lifestyle choices, and focused on the children needing the most help – those with a BMI over the 85th percentile. Six to nine months into the initiative, the clinic was able to achieve an average BMI reduction in program participants. While reducing BMI was a goal, simply slowing the trend of BMI increase was considered progress for this patient group.
- **Allina Medical Clinic** implemented a provider-coaching program across 19 clinic sites in which diabetes educators helped provider clinical staffs learn about optimal diabetes care and thereby improve patient outcomes. In one year, the program cut the staff education gap in half, resulting in optimal diabetes control that increased by at least 63 percent for staff providers who went through the program, as well as better care for 87 percent more patients. This meant fewer health complications (such as heart attack and stroke), and thus a reduction in future related procedures.

With its “Raising the Bar” innovation awards, Medica seeks to recognize the work of provider groups – from single-site practices to large, multi-site healthcare systems – that are undergoing unique changes to improve patient care and that have proven results.

► Network Information

Patient Choice Administrators Determine Coverage Related to H1N1 Flu Immunizations New Codes Created for H1N1 Billing

Administrators of the Patient Choice programs released information about coverage related to administering the H1N1 flu immunization. In all cases, **CPT code 90470 or HCPCS code G9141** are the codes that should be used to submit claims for H1N1 vaccine administration.

Please note that the H1N1 vaccine itself will be furnished at no cost to providers. As a result, only the vaccine administration will be eligible for payment. The administrators have different requirements for addressing this issue. Please follow the links below for complete billing and coverage details for each administrator:

- **Medica** is covering administration of the H1N1 flu vaccine consistent with a member’s coverage document. Therefore, Medica members who have coverage for the seasonal flu immunization are also covered for the H1N1 flu immunization. For full details, see the November 2009 edition of *Medica Connections* (“[Billing for the administration of H1N1 flu immunization](#)”).
- **UMR** is covering administration of the H1N1 flu vaccine for all self-funded plan members unless a plan sponsor decides otherwise. To verify whether a particular employer is covering the H1N1 flu vaccine, please call the provider number listed on the back of the member’s ID card. If the member doesn’t have their ID card, you may call 1-877-390-7632. UMR will follow the billing requirements set by Medica as outlined in the November 2009 edition of *Medica Connections* (“[Billing for the administration of H1N1 flu immunization](#)”).
- **Aetna** is covering administration of the H1N1 flu vaccine for all fully insured medical plan members and self-funded plan members unless a plan sponsor decides otherwise. For full details, visit Aetna’s Web site at http://www.aetna.com/provider/medical/resource_med/communications_med/swine_flu.html.

2010 Patient Choice Insights Tiers Set

Patient Choice has completed its annual tiering process for the Patient Choice InsightsSM network. Letters will be sent this month to participating providers notifying them of their 2010 tier assignment. Providers can also look up their 2010 tier placement online via the Provider Directory on the Patient Choice Web site at www.patientchoicehealthcare.com/providers.html or the Medica Web site at <http://www.medica.com/C11/FindADoctor/default.aspx>.

A small percentage of providers in the network will change tiers for 2010. The new provider tier assignments – which become effective Jan. 1, 2010 – are based on the performance of provider organizations on various cost, quality and efficiency measures.

Patient Choice Insights features an open-access network arranged into three tiers. Depending on the type of services delivered, the tiers can affect member benefits. Generally, the lower (or better) the tier, the lower the member's copayment and/or percentage of coinsurance.

Providers who have any questions about the 2010 tier assignments may call Patient Choice at (952) 992-1700.

Care System Changes Announced for 2010

Following are several clinics that will be changing their Care System affiliation **effective 2010**:

- Camden Physicians Ltd. will join the **North Memorial Care System**. (Camden is currently affiliated with the Access Quality Care System.)
- Fairview Clinics of Andover, Blaine, Brooklyn Park, Columbia Heights and Fridley (formerly known as Columbia Park Medical Group (CPMG) clinics) will move under the **Fairview Physician Associates Care System**. (Beginning in 2010, CPMG will no longer operate as a separate care system.)
- HealthEast St. Anthony Clinic (formerly known as St. Anthony Park Clinic) will join the **HealthEast Care System**. (The clinic is currently affiliated with the Minnesota Healthcare Network Care System.)
- PACE Pediatrics (Pediatric and Adolescent Care of Minnesota, P.A.) will join **Children's Physician Network**. (PACE Pediatrics is currently affiliated with the Minnesota Healthcare Network Care System.)
- Quello Clinic Ltd. will join Aspen Medical Group and become the **Aspen-Quello Care System**. (Quello is currently affiliated with the Access Quality Care System.)
- Silver Lake Clinic will join the **North Memorial Care System**. (Both clinics are currently affiliated with the Minnesota Healthcare Network Care System.)

Closing a Clinic Site? Remember to Copy Patient Choice on Patient Notification

It is standard procedure for clinics or practices to notify their patients when a clinic site is closing. Most practices do this by sending a letter to affected patients. But did you know that when you close a clinic, you should also send a copy of this notification to Patient Choice?

Information contained in your notification will help Patient Choice manage the transition for our members. For example, when a *primary care* clinic is closed, Patient Choice also sends a letter to members who receive care at that clinic. Our letter provides information about alternative nearby primary care clinics that are either in the member's same Care System or same tier/cost group. Having a copy of the clinic's communication helps Patient Choice deliver a consistent and accurate message to the member.

When your practice closes a clinic site, **please fax or e-mail Patient Choice a copy of the termination notification** along with a completed Add Term Change Form (available at www.patientchoicehealthcare.com)

under Physicians, Hospitals, Other Providers > [Add/Term/Change Requests](#)). If you have any questions about this procedure, please contact Patient Choice at (952) 992-1700.

Reminder: Include National Provider Identifier Numbers on All Claims

The National Provider Identifier (NPI) is a unique 10-digit number issued by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services used to identify health care providers. This number was designed to replace all other numbers providers previously used to identify themselves. As a reminder, providers should be including their NPI on **all** electronic transactions and claim submissions.

Patient Choice maintains a registry of NPIs for the providers in our network. If you haven't yet submitted your Type 1 and Type 2 NPIs to Patient Choice, please do so now. (Type 1 NPIs are issued to individual practitioners; Type 2 NPIs are issued to organizations, facilities or practices.) Providers should work with their organization's Information Technology area to ensure that the information is sent using a secure process.

There are two methods for sending NPIs to Patient Choice:

- In an Excel document via secure e-mail (send to: ATC@pchealthcare.com)
- On an encrypted CD via mail:
Patient Choice
NPI Processing
Mail Route CP217
P.O. Box 1287
Minneapolis, MN 55440-1287

If you have any questions about submitting NPI information, contact Patient Choice at (952) 992-1700.

► Industry Information

2009 Bridges to Excellence Award Recipients Announced

70 Clinics Recognized for Excellent Diabetes, Vascular, Depression Care

Minnesota Bridges to Excellence (BTE) and the Buyers Health Care Action Group (BHCAG) recently recognized 70 clinics from 17 medical groups in Minnesota, Western Wisconsin and North Dakota for meeting diabetes, vascular disease and depression treatment goals.

The goals, established by the Minnesota BTE guiding coalition, include clinical measures designed to help patients manage their illness and reduce complications. Clinicians who met the treatment goals received a financial award for each patient covered by a BHCAG employer. (BHCAG, a Minnesota-based coalition of public and private employers who purchase health care, sponsors the Minnesota BTE program.) Awards given to the 70 clinics totaled more than \$100,000.

A list of the 2009 honorees is available on the BHCAG Web site (www.bhcag.com) and will also appear in Patient Choice's 2010 Care System *Comparison Guide*, provider directories and other enrollee materials. In addition, BTE recognition can help Care Systems earn quality credits used in Patient Choice tiering.

Leapfrog Recognizes Hospitals for Taking Steps to Improve Patient Safety

Several hospitals in the Patient Choice networks were recently recognized by The Leapfrog Group for their progress in implementing various patient safety practices. Leapfrog, a coalition of public and private organizations, has been collecting and publishing information about hospital safety and quality since 2001. The following practices were included in the 2009 Leapfrog Hospital Survey:

- **Appropriate intensive care unit (ICU) physician staffing** – ICUs are staffed by intensivists.
- **Prevention of medication errors** – Physicians enter patient prescriptions and other orders into computers linked to error-prevention software.
- **Steps to avoid harm** (previously called “Safe Practices Score”) – Hospital has put in place 17 practices that can have a major effect on the safety of patients in health care settings, such as timely clinical information for other caregivers and patients, and identification and mitigation of safety risks and hazards.
- **High-risk treatment safety** – Hospital has proven outcomes or extensive experience with certain high-risk procedures/conditions.¹

Did you know...

By implementing three of the four Leapfrog practices* in every non-rural U.S. hospital, more than 57,000 lives could be saved, as many as 3 million serious medication errors could be prevented and nearly \$12 billion could be saved each year.

*Appropriate ICU Staffing, Prevent Medication Errors, Steps to Avoid Harm

Source: Lewin 2008, http://www.leapfroggroup.org/for_hospitals/leapfrog_hospital_survey_copy

For each safety practice, Leapfrog notes whether the hospital has made some progress or substantial progress toward meeting the standard, or whether the standard has been fully met. Survey results are available on The Leapfrog Group’s Web site (www.leapfroggroup.org). In addition, Patient Choice includes Leapfrog survey results in its annual tiering process, and provides Leapfrog information and survey results to enrollees.

¹High-risk procedures tracked include: heart bypass surgery, heart angioplasty, heart attack, pneumonia, high-risk deliveries, normal deliveries*, weight-loss surgery, aortic valve replacement*, abdominal aortic aneurism repair, pancreatic resection, esophageal resection. (* = new for 2009)

Patient Choice Provider Resources			
Product	Administrator	Web site	Phone number
Patient Choice Insights by Medica	Medica	www.medica.com	1-800-458-5512
Patient Choice Insights (administered by Aetna)	Aetna	www.aetna.com	1-888-632-3862
Patient Choice Insights and Patient Choice Care System	UMR	https://fhs.umar.com	1-877-390-7632 (providers press option 1)
Patient Choice Web site: www.patientchoicehealthcare.com			