

Office Visit

News for health care providers



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Passage plan updates for 2019

We're reducing the number of specialists requiring referrals for Medicare Advantage Passage Plan 1 (HMO) for 2019. As of Jan. 1, 2019, only **podiatry, chiropractic and pain management specialist treatment** will require referrals for members with Medicare Advantage Passage Plan 1 (HMO).

Members' new ID cards will reflect the referral requirements. This information is also in the Annual Notices of Change (ANOCs) mailed to members in September. Passage Plan 1 (HMO) will continue to have a \$0 premium and other benefits – a

dental plan and hearing aid and vision wear reimbursements – that our members value.

Referral requirements to most specialists (with some exceptions) will remain for:

- Commercial Passage plans sold to individuals under 65 and offered by employers, and
- The ConnectiCare Medicare Advantage Passage Dual (HMO SNP) plan

More information on the latter plan, which serves dual-eligible members, will follow later this year. It will include training on our model of care and referral instructions.

Referral guidelines on our website, connecticare.com/providers, will be updated for 2019 in the coming months. Watch for more information and updates in future editions of *Office Visit*.

Flu is here: time to get your patients in for shots

Are you doing all you can to see that your patients are getting flu shots?

Connecticut is already seeing ["sporadic" flu activity this season](#), according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Nationwide, about 30 adults have already died from the flu, and the first child death has been reported in Florida by [The New York Times](#).

For most ConnectiCare members, there is no copayment, coinsurance or deductible for a visit that is only to get a flu shot. Here are [the codes we cover for the influenza vaccine](#).

Remember, the CDC recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine every year by the end of October.

Improving your Medicare Advantage patients' mental health

The World Health Organization observed [World Mental Health Day](#) earlier this month to raise awareness and mobilize efforts in support of mental health issues. You can do your part with your own patients, especially those aged 65 and older.

A number of studies have found that "mental illness in older adults is under-recognized and underdiagnosed," partly because older adults are less likely to talk to their doctors about their mental health concerns, according to the [U.S. News & World Report](#).

Talk to your patients

We encourage you to talk to patients about their mental health every time you see them. It may help you uncover issues your patients may be reluctant to talk about or dismiss as part of the aging process.

Here are some questions to help you start the conversation about mental health:

- Do you ever feel depressed or anxious?
- Do you ever feel like you just don't have the energy to accomplish daily activities?
- Does your health or any emotional problems interfere with social activities?

We're doing what we can to help get the conversation started. We have been encouraging our Medicare members to "[Ask away](#)" – ask you any question or concerns they may have. Nothing is too small or too embarrassing to discuss. And [we're offering providers communication materials](#) (without our ConnectiCare logo) to help start the conversation.

If you're interested in getting any of the materials listed above, please contact [Samantha McLin](#), ConnectiCare's clinical quality manager, at [860-785-7898](#).

Alzheimer's support group held monthly at ConnectiCare center in Manchester

The Alzheimer's Association Connecticut Chapter holds a monthly support group from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. every [third Wednesday of the month](#) at our ConnectiCare center on 1487 Pleasant Valley Road, Manchester. It's free and open to the public.

The group, led by a trained facilitator, provides a safe place for caregivers, family and friends of persons with dementia to:

- Develop a support system
- Share information and solutions
- Talk about their situations, feelings and concerns

If you have a patient who has dementia or is caring for someone with dementia, please encourage them to seek help from a local support group. Share [this flyer](#) with them.

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