



close friends

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH PLAN OF RHODE ISLAND (NEIGHBORHOOD)

New Vaccine Can Stop Cervical Cancers

HPV is the most common disease in the United States that's passed to others through sex. Many women get HPV and they don't get sick. But in some women, the HPV stays in the body and causes cervical cancer.

In June 2006, the government approved the first vaccine to prevent cervical cancer. The vaccine works by stopping infection from certain types of HPV—the ones that cause most cervical cancer.

The Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) is providing the new vaccine to doctors, who can give it to women who are younger than 19. It will be offered to girls ages 11 and 12, and also to girls ages 13 to 18 if there is enough vaccine available from the state. Neighborhood will provide coverage for the vaccine for women ages 19 to 26.

The vaccine is given as 3 shots over a 6-month period. It does not appear to cause any serious side effects. It is important to make sure that you receive all 3 injections of the vaccine. Remember that even if you get the vaccine for HPV, you can still get other diseases if you have unprotected sex. Also, the HPV vaccine does not replace the need for your annual Pap test. ●

INTERESTED IN THE HPV VACCINE?

Women & Infants Hospital is holding monthly clinics where non-pregnant women ages 19 to 26 can get the shot. Clinics will be held from 8 a.m. to noon on the following Saturdays: June 2, July 7, August 4, September 8, and October 6. Appointments are necessary. Call 1-401-277-3628.

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find us online at: www.nhpri.org



NEW STEPS TO REAPPLY FOR RITE CARE!

Read the reminder on page 4 for more information on the new citizenship and identity requirements.

Neighborhood Health Plan
of Rhode Island
299 Promenade Street
Providence, RI 02908

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Health Plan of RI

Control Pollens and Molds

When you have asthma, your airways may be bothered by tiny particles in the air, such as pollens and molds. The wind carries pollen that comes from weeds, grasses, and trees. Mold spores are found in the air, too. But mold also can grow indoors in damp, moist areas of your home.

HOW DO POLLENS AND MOLDS AFFECT ASTHMA?

People who are allergic to pollen or molds can have symptoms such as sneezing, a runny nose, or watery, itchy eyes. But if you also have asthma, they can trigger an asthma attack, which makes it hard to breathe.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

With a little planning, you can take control of your allergies. The best way to stop allergies or an asthma attack is to avoid the pollen and mold.

Here are some tips to do so:

- Check your daily weather reports to find out pollen and mold counts in your area. When counts are high, stay indoors as much as you can. Pollen counts are usually

highest on warm, dry, windy days and in the early morning. Mold counts are usually highest during humid or rainy weather.

- Avoid yard work, such as raking wet leaves or mowing the grass. Ask friends or family members to help out.
- Before you go to bed, wash your skin and hair.
- Turn on the air conditioner at home and in your car, if you have one. And close windows and doors when pollen and mold counts are high.
- Use an exhaust fan in damp areas in the house, such as the kitchen, bathroom, and basement. Also, regularly clean moist areas and surfaces in your kitchen and bathroom.
- Use a dehumidifier and/or a HEPA air filter in your house, if you can. If you try to avoid pollen and mold, but still have trouble keeping asthma under control, talk to your doctor. ●

Want to know more about managing your asthma? Then go to www.nhpri.org and click on “Special Programs.”

Tell Us If You See Fraud or Abuse

Fraud happens when a member or doctor does something that is not honest so that he or she—or another person—gets some type of benefit. Abuse is when proper practices are not followed, and the result is an extra cost to the Medicaid program. Here are some common examples of fraud and abuse:

- A member sharing, loaning, copying, changing, or selling a Neighborhood or Medical Assistance ID card.
- A member using another member’s Neighborhood or Medical Assistance ID card.
- A member receiving health care benefit coverage in both Rhode Island and another state.
- A member lying about income or resources in order to join the RlTe Care program.
- Doctors or hospitals that bill a member or Neighborhood for services that were not provided to the member.
- Doctors who submit false papers to Neighborhood so that a member may receive services that are only provided when medically necessary.

Contact the Neighborhood Compliance Hotline at **1-800-826-6762** to report fraud and abuse and discuss your concerns, or contact Customer Service at **1-800-459-6019**. Your call is free and will be kept confidential.

Could Food Stamps Help Feed Your Family?

Did you know that you might be able to get food stamps for your family? The URI Feinstein Center for a Hunger Free America is working with the Department of Human Services (DHS). They want to find families who could be getting food stamps, but are not part of the program. Call and find out if you are eligible today!

- Providence area: **1-401-222-7276**
- Newport: **1-401-849-6000** or **1-800-675-9397**
- Northern Rhode Island area: **1-401-235-6300** or **1-800-510-6988**
- Pawtucket and East Bay area: **1-401-729-5400** or **1-800-984-8989**
- Warwick and South County area: **1-401-736-6511** or **1-800-282-7021**

Important Things You Should Know About Getting an Approval

YOU DO NOT NEED AN AUTHORIZATION TO SEE A SPECIALIST

- If you feel you need to see a specialist, talk to your PCP. He or she will refer you to an appropriate specialist in the Neighborhood network. It is important that you talk to your PCP about choosing a specialist. If you see a specialist who is not in Neighborhood's provider network, you could be responsible to pay a co-pay or pay for the services provided by that specialist.

YOU CAN SEE SPECIALISTS WHO ARE NOT IN NEIGHBORHOOD'S NETWORK IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES

- Neighborhood does allow out-of-network referrals when similar care or treatment is not available from a Neighborhood doctor or provider. You need to obtain authorization from Neighborhood for these services.
- Neighborhood does allow you to see a specialist who is not in the Neighborhood network when you have an existing treatment plan in place and it needs to be continued with an out-of-network provider. You need to obtain authorization for these services.
- Emergency services do not require prior authorization.

SOME SERVICES REQUIRE A REVIEW BY A NEIGHBORHOOD MEDICAL MANAGEMENT NURSE AND/OR PHYSICIAN REVIEWER

- Sometimes, Neighborhood needs to make sure that requested services are medically necessary. Medically necessary services are services that are required for the prevention, diagnosis, cure, or treatment of a health condition.
- To review these services, a Neighborhood nurse and/or physician will gather appropriate information from your doctors and other health care providers as fast as possible to make a decision. A decision to authorize the services may take from 1 to 15 days, if it is a routine request that is submitted to Neighborhood before you actually receive the services.

IF YOU REQUEST A SERVICE, YOU CAN CALL NEIGHBORHOOD FOR HELP

- If you would like information on your service request, please call the Medical Management Department at **1-800-963-1001**.
- Staff is available to answer your questions Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you call after hours, please leave a message and we will return your call on the next business day. ●

Warm Hands, Warm Hearts

The fourth annual "Warm Hands, Warm Hearts" donation drive, sponsored by Neighborhood, Citadel Broadcasting (Lite Rock 105), Coventry Credit Union, Seabra Supermarkets, and Petro Oil Heating, generated more than 2,200 hats and mittens and 250 coats for kids in need. Marketing Representative Ericka Moore (l to r) and Manager of Membership Outreach Grace Gonzalez helped out at the event.



Neighborhood's Provider Network

Call Customer Service at **1-800-459-6019** for up-to-date information on Neighborhood's network of doctors and practitioners.

We Can Help You in Your Language

If you need help understanding this information in your language, please call us at **1-800-459-6019** and ask for Customer Service.

Si necesita ayuda para comprender esta información en su idioma, por favor llámenos al **1-800-459-6019** y pida hablar con el Departamento de Servicio al Cliente.

Se precisar de ajuda para entender as informações em seu idioma, ligue para **1-800-459-6019** e peça para falar com o departamento de Serviço ao Consumidor.

Для того чтобы получить информацию на своем языке, обратитесь в отдел по работе с клиентами (Customer Services) по телефону **1-800-459-6019**.

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បើអ្នកត្រូវការជួយឲ្យយល់នូវព័ត៌មាននេះជាភាសារបស់អ្នក សូមទូរស័ព្ទមកយើងតាមលេខ **1-800-459-6019** ហើយសួររកអ្នកធ្វើការផ្នែកសេវាបໍរິអតិថិជន ។



Your Rights and Responsibilities for Behavioral Health Care

important phone numbers to know!

Call Neighborhood's Customer Service Department at 1-800-459-6019 to:

- see if you are eligible to get rides to your doctor appointments
- get interpreters for your doctor appointment
- report any changes, such as a new address, new phone number, or new baby
- confidentially report any complaints about access, quality of care, or coverage decisions without it making a difference in your coverage.

Beacon Health Strategies partners with Neighborhood. Beacon provides services to members for mental health and for drug and alcohol abuse. Beacon wants you to know about your rights and responsibilities when you receive these services. You have the right to be treated fairly. You have a right to give an opinion about your care if you feel you are not being treated fairly.

You also have the responsibility to work with your doctor or counselor to get better. At the start of treatment, your doctor or counselor will tell you about your rights and responsibilities. Then, you will be asked to sign a paper. The paper says that he or she explained these rights and responsibilities to you.

If you go to see a doctor or counselor, you can ask about your rights



and responsibilities. Make sure they are explained to you. You also can ask for a copy of your rights and responsibilities to take home. ●

If you have any questions, talk with your doctor. Or call Beacon Health Strategies at 1-800-215-0058.

Your Family's Health Insurance Is Very Important...

DON'T LOSE IT!



All U.S. citizens, including children, need to show new documents this year to reapply:



Members age 16 and older need:

- 1 passport or Certificate of Naturalization
- OR**
- 1 birth certificate
- 2 driver's license (or state photo ID or school photo ID card)

Members younger than age 16 need:

- 1 passport or Certificate of Naturalization
- OR**
- 1 birth certificate
- 2 school photo ID (or a parent's signature on application or attestation form verifying identity for children younger than 16)



Call us today for more information: 1-800-459-6019.

cut out and save as a reminder!

Summer Fun Inside and Out

The summer can be a lot of fun for kids. But if you don't plan it right, it can be a time of boredom and trouble. Keep your kids busy and healthy this summer with these **FREE** activity ideas for kids of all ages throughout Rhode Island.

■ Audubon Environmental Education Center

(Bristol, 1-401-245-7500)

FREE Family Fun Days are held the first Saturday of every month. Tour the aquarium and see a rare blue lobster. Or hike along the quarter-mile of boardwalk to Narragansett Bay. Get there early and make a nature craft.

■ Bookworm Wednesdays at Showcase Cinemas

Kids get in FREE to a children's movie when they bring a book report. Call your local Showcase Cinema for show times.

■ City Arts!

(Providence, 1-401-941-0795)

FREE summer camp for children ages 8 to 14.

■ Home Depot Kids Workshop

FREE "How-To" Clinics for children ages 5 to 12 are held on the first Saturday of each month between 9 a.m. and noon. Children make projects from kits. Children must be with an adult.

■ Homestead Gardens

(North Smithfield, 1-401-765-4847)

Visit a 55-acre family-friendly farm for FREE. You can feed and pet sheep and llamas, fish, go on a hayride, and learn about growing and harvesting.

■ Providence Children's Museum

(1-401-273-5437)

Get in FREE with your Neighborhood ID card for hands-on learning and fun for the whole family.

■ Roger Williams Park Zoo

(1-401-785-3510, ext. 358)

Providence residents get into the zoo FREE on the first Saturday of every month with proof of address.

■ Wright's Dairy Farm

(North Smithfield, 1-401-767-3014)

Visit a working dairy farm and watch cows get milked daily from 3 to 6 p.m.

■ Your Town's Recreation Department

Some towns offer low-cost summer programs for local children held at elementary schools. Activities may include field trips, games, arts and crafts, and sports. Call your town's recreation department for details.

■ Volunteer Opportunities

Older children can stay active and help their community by volunteering with these groups:

Audubon Society of Rhode Island

(Bristol, 1-401-245-7500, ext. 19)

Save the Bay

(1-401-272-3540, ext. 130)

Find More Online

Find many more ideas for kids' activities at these websites:

www.rifamilyguide.com

www.visitrhodeisland.com

www.riparks.com

The Library: Your Pass to Fun

Did you know that your local library is the coolest place to be this summer—and all year, too? With an up-to-date library card, you can borrow books, videotapes, CDs and DVDs. You also can go online on their computers.

Some libraries even have free or discounted passes to places like the New Bedford Whaling Museum, Slater Mill Historic Site, Mystic Seaport, and more!

Most Rhode Island libraries have summer reading programs, where children can earn prizes for reading books. Look in your library's calendar and you'll find craft days, movies, cooking classes, and more. You can even bring kids in to play—many libraries have children's rooms for quiet play.

Call your local library for details or visit today!



Member Rights and Responsibilities

We support your rights as a member of Neighborhood and want you to receive quality care and service.

Please read the following rights and responsibilities carefully.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A MEMBER

- You have the right to receive information about Neighborhood, its services, practitioners and providers, and members' rights and responsibilities.
- You have the right to be treated with respect and recognition of your dignity and right to privacy.
- You have the right to participate with your practitioners in decision making regarding your health care.
- You have the right to privacy of all records and communications to the extent required by law. (Neighborhood employees follow a strict confidentiality policy regarding all member information.)
- You have the right to respectful, personal attention without regard to your race, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, or preexisting conditions.
- You have the right to obtain a second medical opinion for medical and surgical problems.
- You have the right to a candid discussion of appropriate or medically necessary treatment options for your conditions, regardless of cost or benefit coverage.
- You have the right to voice complaints or appeals about Neighborhood or the care provided by its practitioners.
- You have the right to make recommendations about Neighborhood's member rights and responsibilities policies.



If you have any questions, call Customer Service at **1-800-459-6019**.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A MEMBER

When you enroll with Neighborhood, you agree to the following:

- Choose a PCP and primary care site. Your PCP will coordinate all of your medical care. You may change your PCP at any time by calling Customer Service at **1-800-459-6019**.
- Have all of your medical care provided by an Neighborhood participating doctor.
- Carry your Neighborhood ID card with you and show it whenever you seek medical care.
- Provide, to the extent possible, information that Neighborhood and its practitioners and providers need to care for you.
- Learn about your health problems and help plan treatment you and your PCP agree on.
- Follow the plans and instructions for care that you have agreed on with your practitioners.
- Talk with your PCP about all specialty care. If you need a

specialist, your PCP will work with you to make sure you get quality care.

- Call your PCP first for help if you have an urgent medical condition. If an emergency is life threatening, go immediately to the nearest emergency room or call 911. You or a friend or relative should contact your PCP the next day.
- *Let Neighborhood know about changes to your name, home address, telephone number, marital status, number of dependents, or if you have other insurance coverage.* If you have any questions, call Customer Service at **1-800-459-6019**. ●



close friends

Close Friends is published by Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island for its members. The information is intended to educate its members about subjects pertinent to their health and is not a substitute for consultation with their doctor. © 2007. Printed in U.S.A.





Notice of Privacy Practices

Effective June 2005*

Please review this notice carefully. It describes how health information about you may be used and shared and how you can get this information.

Does Neighborhood share my health information with others?

We may share your health information with others, without your approval, for the following reasons:

- to review claims for billing errors or possible fraud
- to determine if requested services are medically necessary
- to our business partners that pay for services on behalf of Neighborhood
- for the purposes of health care operations, which includes things like quality improvement activities, legal services, and auditing functions, as well as the improved payment methods.

We may also share your health information, without your approval, in an emergency, when it is required by law or by public health authorities.

Does Neighborhood need my approval before it shares my health information with others?

Except for the purposes listed above and those permitted or required by the government, Neighborhood will not share your information without your written approval. Even when you have given your approval, you can change your mind as long as you do so in writing before we have shared your information.

What are my health information rights?

You have the right to:

- get a paper copy of this notice if you ask for it
- ask us to limit the way we share your information, although we are not required to agree to what you ask
- look at and get a copy of the health information we have about you, as provided by law
- ask us to change information we have about you in our member file. You must ask us in writing and tell us why you are asking for the change, although we are not required to agree to the change
- ask us to contact you in an alternative way. For example, you may ask us to contact you at work only

**The Notice of Privacy Practices has been in effect since April 2003 and it is published annually to remind our members of Neighborhood's privacy practices.*

- take back your approval that we share your information. However, you can only do that if the information hasn't already been shared.
- receive an accounting of when we shared your information, except if it was for payment, treatment, or operations, or with your approval.

What are Neighborhood's duties?

Neighborhood is required by law to:

- keep your health information private
- provide you with this notice and follow the rules listed here
- let you know if we cannot agree to limit how we share your information
- agree to reasonable requests to contact you by alternative means or at alternative locations
- get your written approval to share your health information for reasons other than those listed above and permitted by law.

Neighborhood reserves the right to change its privacy practices. If our practices change, we will revise this notice and send it to all Neighborhood members. The new practices would apply to all of the health information we have, including the health information we already have about you.

What if I have questions or need help with this?

If you need help understanding this notice or you want to exercise any of your rights stated within this notice, please contact our Customer Service Department at 1-800-459-6019.

What if I think Neighborhood shared my information incorrectly?

You may complain to the Neighborhood Privacy Officer by calling 1-800-963-1001 or writing to:

Privacy Officer
Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
299 Promenade Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

You also have the right to complain, in writing, to the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Please ask us if you need help doing that. Your benefits will not be affected if you make a complaint. Here is the address and phone number:

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
JFK Federal Building, Room 1875
Boston, MA 02203

1-866-627-7748