

Follow-Up Care for Children Prescribed ADHD Medications

Neighborhood News – July 2023

Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island (Neighborhood) seeks your assistance in enhancing the performance on the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measure “Follow-Up Care for Children Prescribed ADHD Medications (ADD).”

Why is ADD significant?

Research suggests that the best outcomes for most individuals, especially those with moderate to severe attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), are achieved through a combination of behavioral therapy and medication. A study from Massachusetts General Hospital,¹ corroborates this, stating, “Pharmacologic treatment in children and adolescents with psychiatric disorders reduces the risk of substance use later in life, especially in ADHD.”

How is ADD measured?

The ADD measure includes two separate components that are based on the percentage of children **newly** prescribed ADHD medication who had at least three follow-up care visits within a 10-month period, one of which should occur within 30 days of when the first ADHD medication was dispensed. All three visits may be conducted remotely via Zoom, Skype or similar platforms, or through voice-only telephone visits.

- **Initiation Phase.** The percentage of members 6–12 years of age with a prescription for ADHD medication dispensed by an ambulatory care provider, who had one follow-up visit with a practitioner with prescribing authority during the 30-day Initiation Phase.
- **Continuation and Maintenance Phase.** The percentage of members 6–12 years of age with a prescription dispensed for ADHD medication, who remained on the medication for at least 210 days and who, in addition to the visit in the Initiation Phase, had at least two follow-up visits with a practitioner within 270 days (nine months) after the Initiation Phase ended.

¹ Brown, N. (2022, May 25). *Medication for pediatric psychiatric disorders reduces later onset of substance use problems*. Retrieved from Massachusetts General Hospital:
<https://www.massgeneral.org/news/press-release/medication-treatment-pediatric-psychiatry-reduces-later-substance-use-problems>

What is Neighborhood's performance on the ADD measure?

For Measurement Year 2022, Neighborhood's Medicaid HEDIS rate stands at 47.57% for Initiation and 54.40% for Continuation and Maintenance. Both rates have decreased from Measurement Year 2021, positioning them below the 2022 National Medicaid Quality Compass 90th percentiles.

How you can help?

- For your patients newly diagnosed with ADHD, schedule a follow-up appointment within 30 days and then two more within nine months after the initial 30 days.
- Educate the child's parent or guardian about the necessity of an evaluation within 30 days of starting the medication to assess its efficacy and any potential side effects.
- When discussing follow-up appointments, inform the patient's parents or guardians about the telehealth options to overcome any access issues.
- Highlight the importance of medication adherence.

Resources

Neighborhood and its behavioral health partner, Optum, offer the following resources to all physicians:

- **Request coordination of care and referrals** for your patients by calling the number on the back of the member's health plan ID card to speak to a licensed clinician, or by searching liveandworkwell.com using access code "clinician."
- **Access additional tools and information about behavioral health issues** on providerexpress.com > Clinical Resources > Behavioral Health Toolkit for Medical Providers.
- **Find patient education information** on liveandworkwell.com using the access code "clinician." Navigate to "Mind & Body" at the top and scroll down to find the links to specific topics.
- **Review Neighborhood's [Clinical Resources](#)** for more information on the ADHD, coding, and best practices.