

## Initiation and Engagement of Alcohol and Other Drug Dependence Treatment

Neighborhood News – January 2024

### The Substance Abuse Treatment Dilemma

According to The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, in 2016 approximately 20.1 million Americans aged 12 and above (about 7.5% of the population) were identified as having a substance use disorder involving alcohol or other drugs (AOD). Despite strong evidence supporting treatment efficacy, **less than 20%** of individuals with substance use disorders receive treatment.

### Neighborhood’s Performance

Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island (Neighborhood) measures substance abuse treatment using the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measure “Initiation and Engagement of Alcohol and Other Drug Dependence Treatment (IET).” The IET measure comprises two components:

1. **Initiation of Treatment:** This is the percentage of members aged 13 and older with an AOD dependence diagnosis who initiate treatment within 14 days of diagnosis. Treatment can be an inpatient AOD admission, outpatient visit, intensive outpatient encounter, partial hospitalization, telehealth, or medication assisted treatment (MAT).
2. **Engagement in Treatment:** This is the percentage of members aged 13 and older with an AOD dependence diagnosis who initiated treatment as described and who had two or more additional AOD services or MAT within 34 days of the initiation visit.

Neighborhood’s Medicaid rates are currently well below the goal of achieving the 2023 National Medicaid Quality Compass 90<sup>th</sup> percentiles.

Medicaid IET Rates				
	MY 2020 Rate	MY 2021 Rate	MY 2022 Rate	Goal 2022 QC
<b>IET: Initiation of Treatment</b>	42.35	40.17	40.75	<b>55.24</b>
<b>IET: Engagement of Treatment</b>	16.45	16.05	14.39	<b>24.37</b>

Neighborhood’s IET rates for INTEGRITY (Medicare-Medicaid dual eligible) members are also below the performance incentive benchmarks for these measures established by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the State of Rhode Island.

INTEGRITY (Medicare-Medicaid Dual Eligible)				
	MY 2020 Rate	MY 2021 Rate	MY 2022 Rate	Goal 2022
IET: Initiation of Treatment	40.60	36.31	36.85	45.00
IET: Engagement of Treatment	9.32	8.05	9.94	16.00

### How You Can Help

For patients newly diagnosed with Substance Use Disorder (SUD), prompt treatment initiation **within 14 days** of diagnosis is crucial, followed by **two additional visits within 34 days after their first visit**. These follow-up visits can be conducted in-person or via telemedicine.

### Resources That Can Help You

Neighborhood's Behavioral Health partner, Optum, offers resources for physicians to aid in identifying SUD treatment providers and scheduling appointments:

- **Substance Use Disorder Helpline:** 1-855-780-5955 – Provides 24/7 support for both providers and patients.
- **Screening Tools:** Available at [providerexpress.com](https://providerexpress.com) under Clinical Resources > Alcohol or Other Drug Disorders.
- **Patient Education:** Available at [liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com) using access code “clinician.” Under “Mind & Body” you’ll find links to specific topics.