

## Improving Follow-Up Care for Children Prescribed ADHD Medications

Neighborhood News – July 2025

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

### Why is the ADD Quality Measure Important?

Research shows 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,<sup>1</sup> 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 and assesses the percentage of children newly prescribed attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) medication who had at least three follow-up care visits within a 10-month period, one of which must occur within 30 days of when the first ADHD medication was dispensed. These follow-up visits may be conducted remotely via video platforms like Zoom or Skype, or through voice-only telephone visits.

- **Initiation Phase:** The percentage of members 6–12 years old who were dispensed an ADHD medication and had one follow-up visit with a prescribing practitioner within 30 days of starting treatment.
- **Continuation and Maintenance Phase:** The percentage of members 6–12 years old who remained on their ADHD medication for at least 210 days and, in addition to the Initiation Phase visit, had at least two follow-up visits with a prescribing practitioner within the next 270 days (9 months).

### What is Neighborhood’s performance on the ADD measure?

For Measurement Year (MY) 2024, Neighborhood’s Medicaid HEDIS rates are:

- Initiation Phase: 49.82%
- Continuation and Maintenance Phase: 53.91%

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<sup>1</sup> 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>

While the Initiation rate improved compared to MY2023, the Continuation and Maintenance declined. Both rates remain below the National Medicaid Quality Compass 90<sup>th</sup> percentile benchmarks.

### **How You Can Help**

- For patients newly diagnosed with ADHD, schedule a follow-up appointment within 30 days, and two additional appointments within nine months after the initial 30 days.
- Educate the child's parent or guardian about the importance of an evaluation within the 30 days of starting medication to monitor effectiveness and potential side effects.
- When discussing follow-up appointments, inform families about telehealth options to help address potential access barriers.
- Reinforce the importance of medication adherence as part of effective treatment.

### **Resources**

Neighborhood and its behavioral health partner, Optum, offer the following tools to support providers:

- A new ADHD follow up tracking form, available in multiple languages, under [Clinical Resources](#) for members newly prescribed ADHD medication.
- Access to additional behavioral health tools on [providerexpress.com](https://providerexpress.com) under Clinical Resources > Behavioral Health Toolkit for Medical Providers.