



Health Benefits Focus

CONTACTS

Anthem
1-800-552-2682
www.anthem.com/cova

Delta Dental
1-888-335-8296
www.deltadentalva.com

Medco
1-800-355-8279
www.medco.com

ValueOptions
1-866-725-0602
www.achievesolutions.net/covacare

Optima Health
1-866-846-2682
www.optimahealth.com/cova

Kaiser Permanente
1-800-777-7902
www.kp.org/mida/commonwealthofvirginia

DHRM
Office of Health Benefits
1-888-642-4414
www.dhrm.virginia.gov

Questions?

Send an e-mail to ohb@dhrm.virginia.gov or contact your agency Benefits Administrator

Introducing Health Benefits Focus

Welcome to the first issue of Health Benefits Focus from the State Health Benefits Program. We know how important your health benefits are to you. That's why we developed a monthly newsletter to help you understand more about your health plan and benefits. Each month we'll feature one health care issue and discuss its application to or coverage across all state health plans. We want to hear from you! Let us know what you want to read about. Send your comments or suggestions to ohb@dhrm.virginia.gov.

What Coordinated Care Can Mean for You

For the Commonwealth, effective health care is connecting you as a plan member to the right resources for your care. Coordinated disease management and behavioral health can make a big difference in your life. Let's look at two scenarios.

Cheryl's Emergency

Cheryl is a diabetic enrolled in a state health plan, and has three school-age children. She works two jobs, sometimes forgets to take her medicine, suffers from fatigue and often resorts to fast food meals. Any down time is usually spent eating in front of the television.

When first diagnosed with diabetes, Cheryl received a call from her plan's

disease management program. At the time, Cheryl decided not to participate.

A year ago, Cheryl had complications resulting in a trip to the emergency room. Cheryl knew something had to change, and she decided to enroll. A registered nurse contacted her and together they came up with ways for Cheryl to improve her health despite her busy schedule: cooking quick healthy meals, squeezing in exercise and taking her medication regularly.

The nurse was also concerned that Cheryl might be depressed. She talked about having trouble sleeping, increased irritability and feeling sad almost daily, so the nurse referred Cheryl to the



plan's behavioral health program. The care manager helped Cheryl understand the link between her diabetes and depression. She also connected her with an Employee Assistance Program provider who helped Cheryl develop strategies to better balance her work and family needs. The ability to lead a more balanced life, and stabilizing her diabetes, significantly improved Cheryl's mood. In turn, she had more energy to gain control over her busy lifestyle.

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Coordinated Care (continued)

Joe's Wheezing Spell

Joe is an engineer, a state plan participant, and the father of two grown children. He and his wife, Karen, enjoy a home at the beach and spend weekends sailing on the Chesapeake Bay.

While out on the water this summer during the intense heat, Joe started to have trouble catching his breath. One night Joe had a wheezing spell so severe that he ended up in the emergency room. He visited his doctor and was diagnosed with asthma.

While Joe had read about the disease management program offered through his health plan, he had never taken the time to call them. He contacted the program and was assigned a clinical advocate who helped Joe develop a comprehensive plan of care to address his asthma. It included a total menu of medical, prescription drug and disease management care.

Since Joe was very anxious after his wheezing episode, the clinical advocate assessed Joe using a screening tool designed to identify depression, which showed that Joe would benefit from stress management education and other services. With Joe's approval, the clinical advocate transferred the call to

the Employee Assistance Program while Joe was still on the line, and Joe was able to set up an appointment.

With the help of his clinical advocate and EAP, Joe has learned to control his acute asthma episodes and developed some new stress management techniques to help him enjoy his life.

What Your Plan Offers

The integrated approach to care that Cheryl and Joe received takes into account both the physiological and emotional needs of a person dealing with a chronic illness.

The state plans' coordinated disease management and behavioral health programs help members in scenarios like these and many others. When you have a chronic illness, it's important to make life changes and work with health care professionals for continued support.

The Hidden Link

Most of us know someone with a chronic illness or have experienced it for ourselves. People living with a chronic illness must adjust to many changes – both physical and emotional. It can affect their freedom and ability to get around and substantially alter the way they live. It



can change the way they see themselves and relate to others.

Cheryl and Joe took an active role in improving their own health by taking advantage of the support available from their plan. Do you have a “Cheryl” or “Joe” in your life? If so, you have easy access to help for yourself or covered family members.

For more on programs provided by your state health plan, and to learn about the symptoms of depression, see the contacts list on page 1.

Want to suggest a topic for an upcoming newsletter? Send us an e-mail at ohb@dhrm.virginia.gov.



Virginia Department of Human Resource Management
Office of Health Benefits