AmeriHealth

2009 Annual Update

Connections℠ Health Management Programs

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Annual Update summary

The 2009 Connections℠ Programs *Annual Update* highlights the accomplishments of our Connections Programs during the past year. The program is comprised of two comprehensive disease management and decision support programs — the Connections℠ Health Management Program and the Connections℠ AccordantCare™ Program. Member participation in both programs is extremely high with 99 percent of eligible members taking part in the Connections Health Management Program and 87 percent of eligible members participating in the Connections AccordantCare Program. Both programs strive to improve the quality and reduce the cost of health care through more informed patient-physician communication. This is accomplished by providing individually tailored health coaching and support material to patients and actionable clinical information to physicians.

These robust programs cover a variety of chronic conditions and offer decision support and health information. The Connections Health Management Program focuses on common, chronic diseases such as asthma, coronary heart disease (CHD), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart failure (HF), and diabetes. The Connections AccordantCare Program supports members with one or more of 16 complex, chronic conditions. Interventions include outreach phone calls, interactive voice messaging, and mail campaigns. Providers with patients in the Connections Health Management Program receive a semiannual SMART® Registry, a tailored medical report that assists physicians in better treating patients with specific health care gaps.

This year's *Annual Update* provides general information on the Connections Programs as well as information about new initiatives, new outreaches, and new tools to help you provide support to your patients, our members.

Connections℠ Health Management Program

The Connections Health Management Program, offered in partnership with Health Dialog, provides disease management and decision support to eligible members 24 hours a day, seven days a week, through Health Coaches and online resources. For providers, it is a resource to help you manage your patients with asthma, CHD, COPD, HF, diabetes, migraines, hypertension, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), peptic ulcer disease (PUD), cardiometabolic risk, and poor medication persistence.

The SMART® Registry

AmeriHealth distributed two releases of the SMART Registry in 2009. The SMART Registry tracks important evidence-based aspects of care for patients with one or more of the following conditions:

- asthma
- CHD
- COPD
- diabetes
- co-morbid hypertension
- HF

The most recent SMART Registry was sent to 1,122 AmeriHealth primary care practices and provides information on 4,785 AmeriHealth members. These reports offer practical, relevant information about your Connections-eligible patients in a convenient format to help you stay informed about your patients and monitor their care plans.

During the past year, physicians with 11 or more chronic-condition patients received the Registry in a CD format instead of on paper. Since 2008, a number of enhancements have been made to the CD version of the SMART Registry:

- Template letters to remind your patients of needed tests and treatments were added for patients with COPD, CHD, HF, and hypertension. These four new letters are in addition to the existing template letters for patients with asthma or diabetes.
- Packaging was enhanced through the use of an unbreakable CD case and shipment via Fed Ex® in a standard letter-size mailer rather than a box.

In addition, the June 2009 SMART Registry CDs were password-protected to ensure the safety of our members' protected health information. Physicians received a separate letter with a unique, random password for opening the

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protected files. Passwords were also posted on the NaviNet® web portal for your convenience. To locate your password, select *Reference Materials and Reports* from the *Plan Transaction* menu, then select *SMART Registry Password*.

Please refer to your most recent SMART Registry to update the clinical care your patients have received and to refer your patients who may benefit from health coaching to the Connections Program.

Provider Service Specialists support provider offices

Provider Service Specialists (PSSs) are local clinical professionals who provide support and offer information about the Connections Health Management Program. Your PSS can:

- help you understand the Connections Program and become an active participant;
- provide assistance and best practices for using the SMART Registry;
- provide you with clinical support tools to refer your patients to a Connections Health Coach.

Please call the Provider Support Line at 1-866-866-4694 for more information about how a PSS can help you or to schedule a visit from a PSS.

Targeted provider outreach: Improving clinical quality indicators

In February 2009, the Connections Health Management Program began a targeted clinical initiative to help providers interested in improving their clinical quality indicators. A secondary focus of this program is to help improve heart failure beta blocker persistence. This initiative will run through January 2010. As part of this initiative, PSSs:

- meet with physicians and other clinical care practitioners to discuss the use of the SMART Registry and to provide clinical resources for use by providers and patients;
- furnish practices with a printout of the practice's Registry, filtered to focus on patients fitting the initiative's criteria;
- provide monthly lists to providers who are interested in seeing what type of outreach their patients are receiving from the Connections Health Management Program, as well as identifying gaps;
- work with the practices to send out letters to their patients who are non-compliant or in need of follow-up, utilizing the SMART Registry template letters via a mail merge on the practice's own letterhead.

If you would like to speak with a PSS about reaching out to your patients, please contact the Connections Provider Support Line at 1-866-866-4694.

Tools and resources for providers who treat patients with chronic conditions

Several tools and resources are available to your office to help manage your patients with chronic conditions. Visit *www.amerihealth.com/providerconnections* to find tools such as the BMI resource card, microalbuminuria brochure, response plans for asthma and heart failure, a list of Shared Decision-Making® videos, and more. Additional quantities of print materials are available by contacting your PSS at 1-866-866-4694.

Provider satisfaction survey

The annual provider satisfaction survey for the Connections Health Management Program was conducted by an independent research company in the fourth quarter of 2008. A new approach was used in surveying providers this year. A select number of physicians were invited to participate in a structured interview by phone to evaluate their experiences and to solicit ideas for future improvements and enhancements to the Connections Program. As a result of this feedback, we are developing new clinical tools and communication/feedback avenues.

Member satisfaction survey

Each year, AmeriHealth surveys a sample of members to determine their levels of awareness, use, and satisfaction with the Connections Health Management Program. The survey is conducted by telephone by an outside company at the end of the year.

The 2008 survey sample population included members with and without one of the five managed chronic conditions (asthma, CHD, HF, diabetes, and COPD), members who have had telephone contact with a Health Coach, and members who have never spoken to a Health Coach. The survey found that:

- Eighty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that their impression of AmeriHealth was positively affected because of the Connections Program.
- Eighty-seven percent of the respondents would recommend Connections to family and friends.
- Sixty-nine percent of the respondents indicated that it is important that AmeriHealth continue to offer the Connections Program.

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The most frequently cited reasons for using Connections are:

- to obtain information about an illness or condition;
- to understand treatment options and choose among them;
- to help manage a chronic illness.

We encourage you to use the Connections Program to help you support your patients by calling 1-866-866-4694.

Connections℠ AccordantCare™ Program

The Connections AccordantCare Program is offered through a partnership with Accordant Health Services, an independent company, which is a specialized health management organization. The program provides resources to assist you and your eligible AmeriHealth patients who live with one or more of the 16 complex chronic conditions that the program supports.

The goal of the program is to work with you to improve the clinical outcomes for these patients. Prevention of complications is the cornerstone of the program. Healthy behaviors are promoted and a support system is developed around each individual's unique needs. Accordant interventions are evidence-based, and the program has earned full accreditation from the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

AccordantCare staff offer support to your patients through frequent assessments and 24/7 availability. Licensed health care professionals, including nurses and social workers, emphasize and reinforce your treatment plan. Conversations are designed to detect changes in the member's health status. You are notified of any important changes in your patient's health status.

Members receive educational mailings specific to their conditions; the mailings cover topics from preventive strategies to acute management. Resource specialists work to find resources, such as financial assistance, transportation services, and local support groups. Exclusive online health resources are provided for members and their caregivers.

As with our other health management program, the Connections AccordantCare Program is designed to improve patients' compliance and self-management skills and to support your treatment plans.

More than 9,800 members were participating in the Connections AccordantCare Program as of May 31, 2009. More than 65 percent participated at an "interactive status" (active communication with a disease management nurse and completion of quarterly assessments).

Program diseases

The diseases covered by this program are:

- seizure disorders
- rheumatoid arthritis
- multiple sclerosis
- Crohn's disease
- Parkinson's disease
- systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE)
- myasthenia gravis
- sickle cell disease
- cystic fibrosis
- hemophilia
- scleroderma
- polymyositis
- chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyradiculoneuropathy (CIDP)
- amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)
- dermatomyositis
- Gaucher disease

The Connections AccordantCare Program assists you by:

- offering support to your patients who have questions about their conditions 24 hours a day, seven days a week;
- educating your patients through AccordantCare's informative website, *www.accordant.com,* monthly newsletters, and contact with AccordantCare nurses;
- improving patient compliance with your prescribed treatment plan through educating patients and notifying you of pertinent changes in health status;
- conducting routine health evaluations with your patients by telephone or email to detect early warning signs of complications;
- providing you with access to AccordantCare's nationally recognized medical advisers who are available to discuss complex patient or treatment issues at no cost to you;
- offering specialized care coordination services to coordinate the care of critically ill patients;
- coordinating care among all members of the patient's health care team.

For more information, visit the AccordantCare website at *www.accordant.net.* If you have questions, call the Connections AccordantCare Program at 1-866-398-8761, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Thursday, or 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, EST. Messages left after hours will be returned the next business day.