



# UHA Connection

Monthly Provider Newsletter



## WELCOME

Thank you for reading our Monthly Provider Newsletter, the UHA Connection. We hope this new format will allow you to easily access content and print it out if you would rather read it that way. In this PDF, you can still click on the links provided throughout the newsletter.

Flip through to learn more on topical information related to:

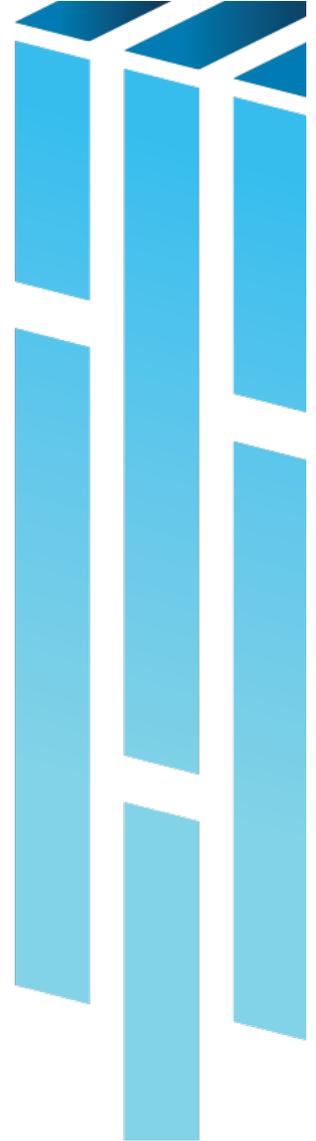
- Practice Tactics
- Clinical Corner
- Better Health For All
- On the Lookout
- CME for Thee

Your success is critical to our member's health, behavioral and physical. Use this newsletter as a tool to succeed as a provider of Umpqua Health Alliance and resource for important updates.

If you have questions or would like to see information on a specific topic in the newsletter please reach out to:

- Dr. Douglas Carr at [dcarr@umpquahealth.com](mailto:dcarr@umpquahealth.com)
- Nicole Chandler at [nchandler@umpquahealth.com](mailto:nchandler@umpquahealth.com)

Thank you for all that you do to keep our members and patients safe and healthy!



## GET CONNECTED

If you're seeking information regarding your patient's benefits, Umpqua Health Alliance is here to help you get the answers you need. Call us today, we're happy to assist you.

- Phone: (541) 229-4842
- TTY: (541) 440-6304 | Toll Free: (866) 672-1551
- Email: [UHAMemberServices@umpquahealth.com](mailto:UHAMemberServices@umpquahealth.com)

Umpqua Health Alliance has adopted the definition of cultural competence that appears on the Oregon Administrative Rules for Cultural Competence Continuing Education for Health Care Professionals (OAR 943-090-0010).



# PRACTICE TACTICS

## *Smoking Cessation Before Surgical Procedures*

UHA requires the smoking status (non-smoker, former smoker, smoker) of members to be indicated within the medical notes provided at the time of the prior authorization. If someone is a “former smoker” there should be an indication of the duration of the cessation. Short time intervals might lead to a request for urine screening to verify status. No documentation of smoking status will yield the same request. The best test to order is a urinary cotinine with an anabasine test reflex order if cotinine positive. UHA has outlined these requirements as listed in the Prioritized Lists of Health Service, Guideline Note A4, smoking cessation is required prior to elective surgical procedures.



## ON THE LOOKOUT

### *COVID-19 Update*

**Douglas Public Health Network** staff are working to address COVID-19 in Douglas County. Click <http://douglaspublichealthnetwork.org/> for information on how to keep up with the latest local news related to coronavirus and be sure to request their expanded daily report of COVID-19 related news to be sent to your inbox.

**Given the continuation of the COVID-19 epidemic, it is even more important this year to ensure all of our patients receive Influenza Vaccine!**



#### **Elective Procedures (4 week cessation):**

- Active tobacco users, must have proof of cessation at least 4 weeks prior to the elective procedure.
- These are defined as flexible in their scheduling because they do not pose an imminent threat nor require immediate attention within 1 month.
- These are NOT procedures for contraceptive/sterilization purposes, procedures targeted to active cancers (i.e. when a delay in the procedure could lead to cancer progression), diagnostic procedures, and bloodless surgery (e.g., cataract surgery, certain skin procedures).
- This guideline applies regardless of procedure location and anesthesia type.

#### **Elective Procedures (6 month cessation):**

- Certain procedures, such as lung volume reduction surgery, bariatric surgery, erectile dysfunction surgery, and spinal fusion have 6 month tobacco abstinence requirements.

#### **Testing and documentation requirements:**

- The well-studied tests for confirmation of smoking cessation include cotinine levels and exhaled carbon monoxide testing. However, cotinine levels may be positive in nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) users, smokeless tobacco and e-cigarette users (which are not contraindications to elective surgery coverage).
- In patients using nicotine products aside from combustible cigarettes the following alternatives to urine cotinine to demonstrate smoking cessation may be considered:
  - Exhaled carbon monoxide testing
  - Anabasine or anatabine testing (NRT or vaping)

## *Trouble Getting Medications from the Pharmacy? We have a Mail-Order Pharmacy That Can Help!*

Recent changes in local pharmacies, including the recent closure of Bi-Mart Pharmacies has created problems for our members to get prescriptions. One option that can help is to get your prescriptions through the mail! UHA has a mail-order pharmacy, Postal Prescription Services, in our pharmacy network. A mail order pharmacy is a pharmacy which delivers drugs through the mail directly to your home.

- For more information on how to get your prescriptions through the mail, click [here](#)
- For the new customer order form, click [here](#)
- Mail-Order Pharmacy Contact Information:
  - Postal Prescription Services  
PO Box 2718  
Portland, OR 97208-2718
  - Telephone: 800-552-6694
  - [www.ppsrx.com](http://www.ppsrx.com)

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## *New Provider for Non- Emergent Transportation in 2022*

Umpqua Health Alliance (UHA) is pleased to announce that starting January 1, 2022, we will change to a new Non-Emergent Medical Transportation provider (NEMT). The new provider is **Medical Transportation Management (MTM)** who is one of the nation's most experienced and qualified NEMT brokers. MTM was founded in 1995 as a family owned and operated privately held "S" corporation. MTM has Community Outreach staff who are dedicated to ensuring medical providers receive the attention and guidance needed to schedule rides for both routine and life-sustaining appointments for patients.

MTM has scheduled several virtual meetings to discuss their Umpqua Health Plan non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) operations with medical facilities in Oregon. We hope you can join to find out more about MTM and their scheduling processes and tools. MTM Link Facility Portal offers scheduling options that include a new on-line portal for medical facilities to schedule both routine and life sustaining appointments for patients. This additional service will provide health care providers with a resource that removes barriers to healthcare in our community. Come learn more and RSVP for the session of your choice below!

Oregon Medical Facility Town Hall RSVP:

[https://mtminc.formstack.com/forms/oregon\\_facility\\_town\\_hall\\_rsvp](https://mtminc.formstack.com/forms/oregon_facility_town_hall_rsvp)

## **CLINICAL CORNER**

### *Primary Care Providers Can Treat Hepatitis C*

UHA is encouraging PCPs to initiate treatment in members who have chronic Hepatitis C. Recent studies have shown that hepatitis C treatment by primary care providers can result in cure rates similar to those achieved by hepatologists and infectious disease specialists.

UHA has created the following resource to provide a step-wise approach for initiating Hepatitis C virus (HCV) treatment in primary care settings: [https://www.umpquahealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/uha-provider-guidance\\_-hcv-treatment\\_11-29-21.pdf](https://www.umpquahealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/uha-provider-guidance_-hcv-treatment_11-29-21.pdf)

*Clinical Corner Continues on next page>>>*

# Pharmacy Network Capacity Challenges

Douglas County has been experiencing unprecedented capacity limitations within our pharmacy network. In October the first Bi-Mart pharmacy closures hit Douglas County, days after Walgreens announced it would be absorbing the chain. Currently, Walgreens is not in UHA's pharmacy network, so **we do not pay for prescriptions filled at Walgreens**. This change, combined with pharmacy staffing shortages and increases in vaccinations has impacted our pharmacy network and led to excessive wait times and unpredictable pharmacy hours for many of our pharmacies. To help with these capacity issues, UHA is asking providers to:

## 1. Encourage members to utilize our mail-order pharmacy to fill maintenance medications:

- Postal Prescription Services  
PO Box 2718  
Portland, OR 97208-2718
- Telephone: 800-552-6694
- [www.ppsrx.com](http://www.ppsrx.com)
- For more information about getting prescriptions through the mail, [click here](#)
- For the new customer order form, [click here](#)

## 2. Provide prescription hard copies to members or the member's pharmacy of choice.

- Bi-Mart transferred prescriptions to Walgreens, but they are not currently in the UHA pharmacy network. We have had many reports from members and pharmacies reporting that Walgreens is unable to transfer prescriptions to another pharmacy in a timely manner.
- You may receive calls from members who are trying to transfer these prescriptions to a pharmacy in our network. For these members, please provide prescriptions to members or send them via fax or electronically to the pharmacy of their choice.

## 3. Review UHA's formulary (list of covered drugs) and prior authorization guideline documents found [here](#) to proactively submit prior authorizations for drugs not on our formulary or that require a prior authorization. Pharmacies ability to coordinate prior authorizations have been severely impacted and they may not be notifying providers when prescriptions require a prior authorization.

- **Note: UHA has removed restrictions from Direct Oral Anticoagulants**, including Xarelto, Eliquis, Pradaxa, and Savaysa, effective immediately.

# BETTER HEALTH FOR ALL

## Health Equity and Quality Measurements

The intersection of Clinical-Care and Health-Equity creates an opportunity to analyze quality data from a REALD perspective – We all need to get educated on how to separate disparities (differences in health outcomes that may be rooted in genetics) from inequities (differences in health outcomes that are unfair, avoidable and rooted in social injustice) – the Quality incentive program can be leveraged to meet the goal of eliminating health inequities by 2030.

To ensure a meaningful change UHA has redesigned the Quality Metrics reports in the Umpqua Health Business Intelligence (UHBI) platform by adding REALD data-points; now when you log into the UHBI Provider Portal you will see that all gap reports will include REALD information at the member level. The goal is to help providers make decisions by associating SDOH and REALD with quality data:

Member Name	Race	Ethnicity	Language	Disabilities
NAME	White	Unknown	English	Limited Activity in Any Way (Age:

# CME FOR THEE

## *Virtual learning sessions: Pediatric COVID Vaccines for Clinics*

**Next session December 9**

**Contact:** Alissa Robbins (Alissa.Robbins@dhsosha.state.or.us)

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Transformation Center, in partnership with the OHA Vaccine Planning Unit, is hosting a learning session focused on pediatric COVID immunizations. As a participant, you will hear from subject matter experts and from peers on key topics such as pediatric COVID vaccine updates, how to build vaccine confidence in parents, and using equity in all planning and delivery of vaccine. Time will be reserved to answer questions from clinical staff.

This is an ongoing learning series with new topics covered each session. Space will be limited to the first 500 participants. Please register for each date below and join us via Zoom:

- **12/9/21 (Noon–1 p.m.)** Register here: <https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJlSfuyhrTsvGma2LeibZAdW6YYUKqlwCTw>
- **12/16/21 (Noon–1 p.m.)** Register here: <https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJlTcuqvpzgiGrZbxCab-zgQVD3XpCt-tJ0>

**Audience:** Vaccinators, including FQHC staff, clinical pediatric staff, family medicine staff, pharmacists

**Meeting accommodations:** If you require accommodations to fully participate in this meeting, such as closed captioning, American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation or language interpretation, please contact Tom Cogswell (thomas.cogswell@dhsosha.state.or.us).