

# Network News

for professionals in the cigna healthcare network fall 2005



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## CIGNA Enhances Online Tools

We are implementing significant improvements to our CIGNA for Health Care Professionals website at [www.cignaforhcp.com](http://www.cignaforhcp.com). The improved site will offer easy access to real-time transactions and information, letting users view claim status and check eligibility and benefits. Fast, automated access to many day-to-day administrative tasks can give you and your staff the ability to work more efficiently and get the information you need quickly.

### NEW CAPABILITIES

The latest improvements mean users can:

- request fee schedule information for up to 25 codes at one time or a range of codes in a given specialty (available only to physicians and health care practitioners)
- view additional benefit types

- find the claim submission address for a patient
- easily access enhanced claim status information
- view claim status for claims received but not processed
- conduct an eligibility inquiry for up to 10 patients at one time
- search for patients and claims using a variety of criteria
- check patient liability after a claim is processed

### ARE YOU REGISTERED?

If you'd like a sampling of the site's latest features and enhancements, click on the site's free online demo or register today. Just visit [www.cignaforhcp.com](http://www.cignaforhcp.com). To register, click on the "Register Now" button located below

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## > A NEW NAME FOR OUR PROVIDER NEWSLETTER

We've changed the name of our provider newsletter from *Physician Dialogue* to *Network News* and expanded its distribution to facilities. This newsletter contains important information for clinical and administrative staff. Watch for the next edition in early 2006.

## QUALITY INFORMATION ONLINE

At CIGNA HealthCare, we are committed to giving you access to the latest information about our programs, as well as details about key guidelines and procedures. You can access this information through our secure provider website, [www.cignaforhcp.com](http://www.cignaforhcp.com).

Use the following list to learn how the website can help you access information on many topics. To find out more about items highlighted in bold, check in the online "Resources" section under areas listed below each topic. For example, to find out more about Claims Appeals, look in the Resources section under "Procedural Information."

### Claims Appeals

"Procedural Information"

### Coverage Positions

"Procedural Information"

### Credentialing

"Being a CIGNA HealthCare Provider"

### Disease Management

"Being a CIGNA HealthCare Provider"

"Commitment to Quality"

"Member Health & Wellness"

"Care Guidelines"

### Medical Record Reviews

"Being a CIGNA HealthCare Provider"

"Commitment to Quality"

### Member Rights and Responsibilities

"Being a CIGNA HealthCare Provider"

"Member Health and Wellness"

### Patient Safety

"Being a CIGNA HealthCare Provider"

"Commitment to Quality"

### Prescription Drug List

"Pharmacy"

### Privacy Policy and Protected Health Information

"HIPAA"

### Quality Management

"Being a CIGNA HealthCare Provider"

"Commitment to Quality"

### Utilization Management and Clinical Care Guidelines

"Member Health and Wellness"

If you don't have Internet access or need more information about any of the topics listed here, call 1.800.88CIGNA (882.4462).

## Improved Program for Patients With Hip or Knee Surgery

We recently enhanced our total joint recovery support program designed to help improve the quality of care patients receive before and after surgery, while helping with logistical issues that can take up your valuable time.

### CASE MANAGER SUPPORT

Upon precertification of total joint surgery, CIGNA HealthCare assigns a dedicated hip/knee case manager who will contact and support your patient. With physician approval, a case manager assigns a home physical therapist to visit the patient preoperatively. During this visit, the therapist can evaluate any durable medical equipment needs and assess for gait training, hip or knee precautions, and home safety.

Once assigned, the physical therapist can instruct family members or others who can assist the patient when he or

she returns home. This assessment and training helps facilitate the patient's transition to a home setting.

**DETERMINING AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF CARE**  
The hip/knee case manager coordinates inpatient care with an inpatient case manager, who works with the treating physician and hospital discharge planner as the appropriate level of care upon discharge and coverage is determined.

While most patients can return home for postdischarge care, in rare circumstances, some may require a skilled level of rehabilitation first. Coverage for a stay in an acute inpatient rehabilitation setting is subject to CIGNA HealthCare review for medical necessity.

Call 1.800.88CIGNA (882.4462) for information about referring a patient to this program.



helping enhance overall care

Our total joint recovery support program is designed to help improve the quality of care before and after surgery.

## Our Approach to Coverage Decisions

CIGNA HealthCare uses an evidence-based process when reviewing medical products and procedures to determine whether they can be approved for coverage. Whether a plan or procedure is covered also depends on the specific terms of a member's benefit plan.

Once eligibility is verified, our medical directors and clinical staff base coverage decisions on the specific facts and coverage terms of the member's benefits plan. Our employees are encouraged to make objective coverage decisions that promote appropriate care and discourage underutilization.



## New CIGNA Well Aware Programs

Our award-winning CIGNA Well Aware for Better Health<sup>SM</sup> programs have helped more than 1.5 million people manage chronic conditions, improve health and reduce costs.

Building on this success, in 2006 (for most plans) we're adding several new programs that address conditions of growing concern, including obesity, depression and other medical conditions that can contribute significantly to health care costs.

### HIGH-RISK OBESITY

Well Aware for Weight Complications, our high-risk obesity program, is part of a broad approach to weight management. The program's goal is to help overweight and obese individuals manage and control health risks such as high blood pressure, heart disease and pre-diabetes.

The obesity program focuses on helping members stop or reverse unhealthy patterns of escalating weight gain, using behavior modification to encourage healthy nutrition, exercise and lifestyle changes. It also helps identify and assist members with the management of metabolic syndrome, an often undiagnosed obesity-related condition.

### DEPRESSION

Designed and delivered by CIGNA Behavioral Health, the depression program helps identify individuals with a diagnosis of depression or anxiety whose treatment plans could be more effective. Often, these individuals

are receiving treatment and/or antidepressants from their primary care physician. Leveraging information from our medical, pharmacy and behavioral claims databases, we promote an approach to care that focuses on blending medical, pharmacy and behavioral health interventions to help improve health and lower costs.

The program is designed to:

- deliver personalized health coaching to support treatment plan compliance
- provide guidelines for depression management
- operate in tandem with CIGNA's existing physician outreach program for depression

### TARGETED CONDITIONS

CIGNA Well Aware for Better Health now includes a program to help members manage 10 common medical conditions we call targeted conditions:

- acid-related disorders
- atrial fibrillation
- decubitus ulcer
- fibromyalgia
- hepatitis C
- inflammatory bowel disease
- irritable bowel syndrome
- osteoarthritis
- osteoporosis
- urinary incontinence

Disease management nurses can assist members with these conditions to help them get appropriate treatment and encourage lifestyle changes to lessen the severity of symptoms or prevent recurrence.

## PRESCRIPTION DRUG UPDATE

The CIGNA HealthCare Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee meets four times a year to review available data on the safety and effectiveness of drug therapies. It also develops and maintains the CIGNA HealthCare Prescription Drug List.

Recent additions to the list include:

- Apokyn
- Aranesp
- Arixtra
- Avinza
- Fosamax Plus D
- Innopran XL
- Invirase
- Lantus
- Nordette
- Novolog
- Novolog mix 70/30
- Rebif
- Spriva
- Uroso Forte
- Vigamox

## HELPING YOUR PATIENTS MANAGE ANTIDEPRESSANTS

To help you manage your patients' adherence to antidepressant medication treatment, for your patients with CIGNA HealthCare pharmacy benefits, you may receive a member antidepressant adherence report summarizing prescription drug fill patterns. In addition, we offer the following tools:

- PHQ-9, a depression screening and monitoring tool used to help detect depression, track progress and aid in the decision of whether an antidepressant should be prescribed
- depression treatment tracking form, used in a medical record to help monitor treatment response
- *Generic Antidepressants Are a Great Value*, a brochure with information on the cost advantages of generic antidepressants
- *Taking Antidepressant Medication*, an educational brochure and medication log to share with patients when they start taking an antidepressant

To access these tools, visit [www.CIGNABehavioral.com](http://www.CIGNABehavioral.com), choose "Are You a Provider," then "Primary Care Physicians and Medical Providers."



## patient care

### High-Risk Maternity and NICU Case Management

CIGNA HealthCare's Specialized Case Management program provides information about staying healthy during pregnancy and helps women and their babies identified as high-risk, who may benefit from specialized case management.

**IDENTIFYING HIGH-RISK MEMBERS**  
Members who are at risk for pregnancy complications or prenatal admissions can be referred to our High-Risk Maternity Case Management program for specialized intervention.

They can be identified through several methods:

- referrals from a CIGNA HealthCare 24-Hour Health Information Line<sup>SM</sup> nurse, when a member enrolls in the CIGNA HealthCare Healthy Babies<sup>®</sup> program or seeks medical intervention

- physician referral
- self-referral
- requests for precertification of medical services that indicate pregnancy or home care needs
- discussions with a Health Advisor nurse, when the member's benefits include CIGNA Health Advisor<sup>SM</sup>
- maternity-related inpatient admissions

#### NICU SPECIALTY CASE MANAGEMENT

We also help identify infants who may benefit from specialized care. Case managers in the high-risk maternity program are trained, experienced obstetrical (OB) nurses led by an OB medical director. They use condition-specific case management tools to help identify key actions needed or taken

to fill any gaps in care.

The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Specialty Case Management program is designed to help achieve superior outcomes. Working with NICU specialty nurses and neonatologists, the program can assist in the coordination of services.

By resolving barriers to discharge and facilitating parental education and access to community resources, we can help reduce the length of stay for infants in the NICU. Our specialty nurses follow these infants after they are discharged for as long as they need case management and remain covered by CIGNA.

Call 1.800.88CIGNA (882.4462) for information about referring a patient to CIGNA HealthCare's Specialized Case Management program.



## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS BENEFIT YOUR PATIENTS

### The Healthy Kids Challenge: New Tool Kit Aimed at Childhood Obesity

A study published in the March 17, 2005, issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine* estimates that obesity could reduce life expectancy by two to five years sometime in the first half of this century. That's because rates of childhood obesity in America have at least doubled in the last several decades.

As part of an effort to reduce the country's childhood obesity problems, CIGNA has teamed with the Healthy Kids Challenge to produce a new educational package, the *Fit & Fun Families* informational tool kit for kids, parents and health care professionals.

The *Fit & Fun Families* tool kit uses engaging, helpful methods to encourage a healthy lifestyle through proper eating habits and regular physical activity. It is designed to set a new standard for the way health professionals, schools, businesses and families work together to battle the childhood obesity crisis.

You can access the tool kit and its helpful resources online at [www.cigna.com/healthykids](http://www.cigna.com/healthykids).

Because of the increasing rates of obesity, unhealthy eating habits and physical inactivity, we may see the first generation that will be less healthy and have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.

—U.S. Surgeon General Richard Carmona, in an address to Congress last year



Many of your patients may have access to important behavioral health and substance abuse benefits through an employer-sponsored employee assistance program (EAP). This confidential program provides clinical services designed to help patients deal with key problems and stresses, generally at no charge to the patient.

Taking full advantage of an EAP can help patients. A recent CIGNA survey showed 90 percent of respondents were able to "resolve their issue" with the help of the CIGNA Behavioral Health EAP.

Through an EAP, individuals can access short-term counseling with licensed behavioral health professionals. The program's services can often supplement a clinical treatment plan or provide support services in situations that cause or exacerbate stress. EAP counselors can even suggest community resources or assist with referrals for ongoing counseling.

Employers who offer an EAP usually offer related programs to help address stress at work, relationship issues, financial worries or legal difficulties—all of which can aggravate or lead to clinical problems.

If patients have access to EAP services, encourage them to take full advantage by calling Member Services.

## Achieving Quality Results

CIGNA HealthCare 2005 national results for the Health Plan Employer Data and Information Set (HEDIS®)\* Effectiveness of Care (EOC) measures increased this year by 3.12 percent (1.68 percentage points) over 2004. Our strong results continue to demonstrate our success in supporting quality care for our members.

During the last four years (2002 through 2005), our overall Effectiveness of Care measures have increased 15.97 percent (6.19 percentage points). The accompanying table shows a sampling of the national HEDIS results.

Similarly, results from our Consumer Assessment of Health Plans (CAHPS®)\*\* survey show an improvement in the very important "Overall Rating of Health Plan," with results rising from 58 percent to 61 percent. Most of the other ratings as part of this survey increased or remained stable.

### 2004 INITIATIVES—RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

As a provider in the CIGNA HealthCare network, your commitment to quality care greatly contributes to these results. CIGNA HealthCare quality initiatives are evidence of our commitment to preventive care and quality chronic care. Programs contributing to the 2004 results include:

- reminder mailings about missed health services to members and their primary care physicians
- national antidepressant medication management initiative
- colorectal cancer screening member education pilot program
- blood pressure control member education pilot program
- preventive health promotions throughout the year

### LOCAL RESULTS ONLINE

In 2005 we extended our quality improvement activities to PPO plan participants. We will be the first national health plan to measure and report this data voluntarily in 2006.

If you are interested in seeing 2005 HEDIS and CAHPS results for the CIGNA HealthCare plan in your area, log on to [www.cigna.com/health/provider/medical/quality.html](http://www.cigna.com/health/provider/medical/quality.html).

\* HEDIS is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

\*\* CAHPS is a registered trademark of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

### 2005 HEDIS RESULTS

Adolescent Immunizations Combo 2	45.98%
Antidepressant Medication Management:	
Acute Phase	61.16%
Continuation Phase	44.74%
Asthma (Using Appropriate Medications)	71.95%
Beta Blocker Treatment After Heart Attack	97.15%
Breast Cancer Screening	72.95%
Cervical Cancer Screening	82.16%
Childhood Immunizations Combo 2	76.59%
Cholesterol Management After an Acute Cardiovascular Event:	
LDL-C Screening	83.25%
Colorectal Cancer Screening	52.26%
Comprehensive Diabetes:	
Eye Exam	49.38%
Hb A1c Screening	88.71%
Controlling High Blood Pressure	71.08%
Prenatal Care (Timeliness)	95.49%
Postpartum Care (Access)	84.96%

### 2005 CAHPS RESULTS

Overall Rating of Health Plan	61%
Claims Processing	84%
Courteous and Helpful Office Staff	92%
Customer Service	66%
Doctors' Communication	92%
Getting Care Quickly	79%
Getting Needed Care	76%
Rating of All Health Care	77%
Rating of Personal Doctor/Nurse	76%
Rating of Specialist	78%



## Strategies for Assessing and Monitoring Pain Medication

One of the greatest challenges in treating chronic pain is assessing and monitoring the use of prescribed medications.

Many patients who complain of pain are seeking relief from disabling or unbearable discomfort. However, some individuals seek drugs to cope with an addiction or to sell illegally.

CIGNA HealthCare uses pharmacy claim data to help identify patterns of narcotic medication use that may require evaluation. If you are notified of a patient with such a pattern, we can assist you in intervening as appropriate.

### PRE-ASSESSING PATIENTS

Before prescribing opioid medications to patients with chronic pain, assess patients for potential abuse. Be sure to evaluate individual risk factors, such as a personal or family history of substance abuse.

In addition, watch for aberrant behaviors associated with drug abuse, such as increased medication use and requests for early refills.

Three common characteristics observed in the drug-seeking patient are:

1. escalated use
2. doctor shopping (the practice of regularly changing physicians to obtain prescriptions)
3. “scamming” (techniques to procure additional medications by forging prescriptions, using the prescriptions of others, feigning illness or requesting a specific controlled substance)

### MANAGEMENT TIPS

You can use several strategies to manage interactions with drug-seeking patients:

- Contact past providers and pharmacies to confirm information provided by new patients. Communicate with pharmacies and other providers involved in patient care throughout treatment.
- Educate patients about their medication, including expected effects, dosing schedule and a drug's potentially addictive properties.
- Use a pain-control contract to outline treatment goals and verify the patient's understanding of the risks, benefits and personal expectations of drug therapy.
- Schedule regular, follow-up office visits to monitor the effectiveness of a treatment regimen and screen for behaviors that suggest drug abuse. Write prescriptions for the exact amount needed until the next visit.
- Avoid renewing prescriptions by phone. Be cautious of calls requesting refills after business hours and on weekends.
- Consider asking patients to bring all medications to appointments for a periodic review and pill count.
- Use periodic urine toxicology screens to evaluate treatment compliance.
- Be clear about the grounds for discontinuing therapy.
- Use a multidisciplinary treatment approach involving a behavioral health professional for managing substance abuse in patients with chronic pain.

### REPORT HIGHLIGHTS DISPARITIES IN QUALITY AND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

The 2004 National Healthcare Disparities Report found that disparities related to race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status continue to pervade the American health care system in terms of quality and access to health care. The report found many gaps in information and noted the critical need for improvements in monitoring and tracking disparities.

CIGNA HealthCare works with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), as well as nine other health plans in the National Health Plan Learning Collaborative to Reduce Disparities and Improve Quality.

CIGNA is collecting race and ethnicity data in its chronic care disease-management programs and working to target quality improvement initiatives. These efforts are designed to help address health care disparities in our membership, improve overall HEDIS scores and reduce medical costs.

Look for more information about the Healthcare Disparities Report and related topics online at the AHRQ website, [www.ahrq.gov](http://www.ahrq.gov).

### PRECERTIFICATION UPDATE — DID YOU KNOW?

CIGNA makes changes to the list of outpatient services, CPT codes and HCPCS codes requiring precertification four times a year: January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1. Deletions to the list may be implemented on any of these dates. Additions are implemented on January 1 and July 1. Changes are posted on our secure provider website at [www.cignaforhcp.com](http://www.cignaforhcp.com).

## CIGNA Enhances Online Tools

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the login section. Or choose the “Try the Demo” link to learn more about the site’s secure, online capabilities.

To gain full access to the site, you must be a registered user. You may also designate access to your staff.

Even after registration, your initial access to the site may be limited. Once your registration is verified, you will receive a registration confirmation letter giving you full access to the website.

We continue to look for ways to improve service and provide tools that allow you to use your time more efficiently. Our resources help you get information fast, so you can focus on your first priority—the health and well-being of patients—as well as other business responsibilities.

### YOUR OPINION COUNTS

We recently asked users from health care facilities and physician offices to test planned enhancements to our CIGNA for Health Care Professionals website. This sampling resulted in positive feedback on key areas of the site, including:

- the layout, functionality and design of the site
- the site’s new search capabilities, including the ability to conduct up to 10 eligibility inquiries at one time
- the ease of site navigation
- expanded benefit detail as part of the benefit inquiry tool

We’ve incorporated this feedback into recent enhancements and plan for continued improvements in the coming months.

[www.cignaforhcp.com](http://www.cignaforhcp.com)

More than 80 percent of primary care physicians in a recent survey agreed the CIGNA for Health Care Professionals website saves time for their staff.

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