



Healthy and Connected Member Newsletter - October 28, 2022

Healthy and Connected is the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services' (SCDHHS) member e-newsletter. Healthy and Connected features tips and tools to help you and your loved ones connect to resources and live healthier lives.

New Website for Annual Reviews



Medicaid eligibility annual reviews have been paused since the federal COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) started in March of 2020. The federal PHE is still ongoing, and an end date has not been announced. SCDHHS made a website to help Healthy Connections Medicaid members prepare for the restart of

annual reviews after the PHE ends.

The website, www.scdhhs.gov/annualreviews, also has important info members can use now. This includes how to update your [address](#) and household info. If we don't have the correct info, you could miss updates about your Medicaid. To change your address, you will need your Medicaid card or Social Security number, date of birth, phone number and new address.

When the federal PHE ends, SCDHHS will restart annual reviews. The website will be updated with details about the process. It is important we know your current address, contact information and any changes to your household by that time.

You can also change your info by phone at (888) 549-0820 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., or by going to your local [eligibility office](#).

Safe Sleep for Babies

Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is the unexplained death of a seemingly healthy baby who is less than one year old. The death usually takes place during sleep. Although the cause is unknown, there are some factors that can put babies at higher risk for SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death.

This October, take some time to learn about the risk factors of SIDS for Safe Sleep and SIDS Awareness Month. Babies are at higher risk for SIDS if they:

1. Sleep on their stomachs
2. Sleep on soft surfaces like adult mattresses, couches or under soft/loose bedding
3. Get too hot while they sleep
4. Are exposed to cigarette smoke while in the womb, or in their home
5. Sleep in the bed with parents, other children or pets

Remember to put babies to bed on their back, in their own space. Use a firm, flat mattress and keep the surface clutter-free (this includes pillows and blankets).

Learn more about safe sleep for babies from the [National Institute of Child Health and Human Development](#).

Managed Care Organizations' Annual Star Rating

Many Healthy Connections Medicaid members are enrolled in a managed care organization (MCO). An MCO is a health care company that offers a network of providers like doctors and specialists. South Carolina Medicaid has five MCOs. They are Absolute Total Care, Healthy Blue by BlueChoice of South Carolina, Molina Healthcare of South Carolina, First Choice by Select Health and Humana Healthy Horizons in South Carolina.

All MCOs are reviewed each year by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). The NCQA evaluates health plans on the quality of care patients receive and how happy patients are with their care. All factors of their evaluations go into a final rating.

The 2022 ratings have been announced. They are available in the table below.

MCO	Star Rating
Molina	3.5 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Healthy Blue	3.5 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
First Choice	3.5 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Absolute Total Care	3.5 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Humana	N/A

Humana is South Carolina’s newest MCO and was not rated in 2022 because data was not yet available. [Each MCO](#) is different and Medicaid members choose which one is best for their own health needs.

Read more about MCO coverage at [SCChoices.com](https://www.scchoices.com).

The Importance of Breast Cancer Early Detection

Did you know the two greatest risk factors of breast cancer are being female and getting older? Women have about a one-in-eight chance of being diagnosed with breast cancer at some time in their life. Many women with breast cancer show no symptoms. Getting regular screenings is the most reliable way to find breast cancer early.

A “screening” is when tests and exams are done to find a disease in people who aren’t showing any symptoms. Breast cancer found during a screening is more likely to be small and less likely to have spread anywhere outside the breast.

Women are also encouraged to do a breast self-exam at least once a month. Examining your breasts on your own can be an important way to find breast cancer early. The earlier it’s found, the more likely it is to be treated successfully. Learn how to administer a self-exam from the National Breast Cancer Foundation [here](#).

Breast cancer screenings and treatments are covered Healthy Connections Medicaid benefits. Read about the coverage details [here](#). October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month – it's a good time to learn more about the importance of early detection.

[Early Detection Details](#)

Mouth Health: Protecting Our Teeth and Gums

Some people might be afraid of the Halloween ghosts and goblins we see in October, but others would likely say they're not as scary as a trip to the dentist. October is National Dental Hygiene Month. It's a time to remember that keeping our mouths and teeth clean is important to our overall health, and that going to the dentist doesn't have to be a frightening experience. There are simple actions that can be taken to keep your own teeth and your children's teeth healthy.



Cavities are one of the most common chronic diseases for children in the U.S. Good oral health for adults is just as important, as poor oral health is linked to other health conditions and chronic diseases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has some [helpful tips](#) to keep your teeth and gums healthy and strong:

- Brush your teeth twice a day and remember to floss.
- Visit your dentist at least once a year.
- Do not use any tobacco products, and limit alcoholic drinks.
- Maintain good oral health especially if you take medication that causes dry mouth.

One of the best ways to prevent tooth decay in children is by applying fluoride varnish on the surfaces of the teeth. Did you know your child's pediatrician can apply fluoride varnish on your child's teeth? They can also refer you to a dental "home" for your kids, for further dental care and more information.

Healthy Connections Medicaid covers some dental care services for adults and children. This includes a cleaning once a year for adults and every six months for kids. Learn more about what services are covered by calling DentaQuest at 1-888-307-6552 or [DentaQuest.com](https://www.dentaquest.com).

Diabetes Prevention and Management

Diabetes is a disease that affects how our bodies turn food into energy. National Diabetes Month, held every November, serves as a time to educate ourselves and others about the risk factors and the three main types of diabetes.

1. **Type 1 diabetes** is a condition where your body makes little or no insulin. Insulin helps blood sugar, also called glucose, get into your cells to be used for energy. It usually appears in children or teens but can develop at any age.
2. **Type 2 diabetes**, the most common form of diabetes, happens when your blood glucose is too high. With type 2 diabetes, your body doesn't make enough insulin, or doesn't use insulin well. It causes too much glucose to stay in your blood. High glucose comes mainly from the food you eat.
3. **Gestational diabetes** can develop during pregnancy in women who don't already have diabetes. Between 2-10% of pregnancies in the US are affected by gestational diabetes. Managing this type of diabetes will help make sure the baby stays healthy.

There are ways to help prevent, manage or lower the risk of diabetes:

- Eating healthy foods and maintaining a balanced diet will help manage blood sugar.
- Remembering to incorporate physical activity into your daily life.
- Stopping smoking or using tobacco products.
- Working with your doctor to help manage your blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Help with managing all types of diabetes is a covered benefit for Healthy Connections Medicaid members. Learn more about diabetes management from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Staying Protected from the Flu



The COVID-19 vaccine has been such a huge topic of discussion, it can be easy to forget there are other vaccines that are also important. Dec. 5-9 is National Flu Vaccination Week. According to the CDC, everyone six months and older should receive a flu shot. The vaccine protects us from the different kinds of influenza viruses that are expected to be most

common during the upcoming season.

People 65 years old and up are at a higher risk of developing more serious complications from the flu compared to young, healthy adults. This year, the CDC recommends those 65 and older get a higher-dose flu vaccine. Read more about the three different types of higher-dose vaccines [here](#).

Healthy Connections Medicaid full-benefit members can receive a flu shot for free. Children can get the shot from their pediatrician or primary care doctor. Adults can receive their shot from any in-network pharmacy or through their primary care doctor.

Some easy things we can do to help protect ourselves from the flu include washing our hands often, wearing a mask, covering coughs and sneezes and staying home when sick.

Lowering Your Risk of Lung Cancer

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among men and women in the nation. Smoking tobacco products causes almost nine out of every 10 lung cancer cases. The biggest thing you can do to prevent lung cancer is to not start smoking. If you already do smoke, the best way to prevent lung cancer is to quit. November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month. Remember that

keeping your lungs smoke-free will not only reduce your risk of lung cancer, but also improve your overall health.

Quitting smoking can also help the health of others around you. Secondhand smoke is when a person who is not smoking breathes in the smoke from someone else's cigarette, pipe or cigar. Secondhand smoke can cause lung cancer in adults who have never even smoked.

Using e-cigarettes, or "vapes," can also be a harmful tobacco product for youth, young adults, pregnant women and adults who aren't current smokers.

People have different symptoms for lung cancer. Some possible symptoms can include:

- Coughing that doesn't go away
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Coughing up blood
- Feeling very tired all the time
- Weight loss with no known cause

These symptoms can also happen with other illnesses. If you are experiencing some of these, talk to your doctor. Healthy Connections Medicaid members have covered benefits for medications that can help you quit smoking. Members also have access to free one-on-one telephone and web-based counseling through the South Carolina Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW, or quitnowsc.org.



New Phone Numbers for Estate Recovery, Casualty and Special Needs Trust

The phone numbers for SCDHHS' Estate Recovery, Casualty and Special Needs Trust programs have changed.

Estate Recovery assistance can be reached at (803) 898-2932.

Casualty and Special Needs Trust assistance can be reached at (803) 898-2977.

Anyone who calls the old numbers will be forwarded to the new numbers for a short time after the transition. But, the old numbers will soon become inactive.

Estate Recovery contact information:

SCDHHS Estate Recovery

P.O. Box 100127

Columbia, SC 29202

(803) 898-2932

Fax: (803) 462-2579

Casualty and Special Needs Trust contact information:

SCDHHS Casualty and Special Needs Trust

P.O. Box 100127

Columbia, SC 29202

(803) 898-2977

Fax: (803) 462-2579

Thank you for reading Healthy and Connected. Follow SCDHHS on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for regular updates. You can also view the Medicaid Member Handbook [here on SCDHHS' website](#) to learn more about what is covered, where to go to ask questions and more.