

PROVIDER Update



NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS | APRIL 24, 2023 | UPDATE 23-339m | 2 PAGES

Reminder: Screen Members Annually for Depression

Refer members to your behavioral health administrator for help with behavioral health needs

Wellcare encourages physicians and other providers to screen all members annually for depression.

Clinical recommendation

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends screening for depression among adolescents ages 12-18 and the general adult population, including pregnant and postpartum women. The USPSTF also recommends that screening be done with adequate systems in place to ensure accurate diagnosis, effective treatment and appropriate follow-up.

Quality measures that monitor depression screening and follow-up

Wellcare uses the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®)¹ Depression Screening and Follow-Up (DSF-E) measure to monitor depression screening and follow-up rates. Refer to the following list for screening tools and follow-up requirements for supporting annual screenings, and follow-up for depression:

Screening tools for adolescents and adults

- Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) – **positive finding:** Total score ≥ 10 .
- PRIME MD PHQ-2² – **positive finding:** Total score ≥ 3 .
- Beck Depression Inventory-Fast Screen (BDI-FS)^{2,3} – **positive finding:** Total score ≥ 8 .
- Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale-Revised (CESD-R) – **positive finding:** Total score ≥ 17 .
- Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) – **positive finding:** Total score ≥ 10 .
- PROMIS Depression – **positive finding:** Total score (T Score) ≥ 60 .

¹ National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

² Brief screening instrument. All other instruments are full-length.

³ Proprietary; cost or licensing requirement may be associated with use.

THIS UPDATE APPLIES TO:

- Physicians
- Hospitals
- Ancillary Providers
- Independent Practice Associations

PROVIDER SERVICES

866-999-3945

PROVIDER PORTAL

provider.wellcare.com/california

Follow-up requirements for positive screens

Any of the following on or 30 days after the first positive screen:

- An outpatient or telephone follow-up visit with a diagnosis of depression or other behavioral health condition.
- A depression case management encounter that documents assessment for symptoms of depression or a diagnosis of depression or other behavioral health condition.
- A behavioral health encounter, including assessment, therapy, collaborative care or medication management.
- A dispensed antidepressant medication.
- Additional evaluation for depression: Can include receipt of an assessment on the same day and subsequent to the positive screen.
 - Documentation of additional depression screening indicating either no depression or no symptoms that require follow-up. For example, if the initial positive screen resulted from a PHQ-2 score, documentation of a negative finding from a subsequent PHQ-9 qualifies as evidence of follow-up.

Tips and best practices for medical records

Keep these tips in mind:

- Make sure there is documentation of a referral or the need for further evaluation on the encounter date, where applicable.
- If the screening is positive for depression, ensure there is documented evidence of follow-up care. If screening is positive and there is no follow-up plan, the visit will only count for the screening and not for follow-up care.

Primary care physician (PCP) referrals to behavioral health

Refer members with behavioral health needs to your behavioral health administrator.

Share information to improve treatment results

Make sure you have obtained the member's signed Authorization for Disclosure form to disclose patient information to the designated behavioral health specialist. Give a signed copy of the document(s) to the patient, or the patient's parental or legal guardian.⁴

myStrength

Wellcare also offers myStrength. myStrength is a free, dynamic and personalized website that offers clinically proven mental health applications and tailored wellness resources to help with mental health challenges. If a member is struggling with mental health or simply needs a lift, advise the member to visit www.myStrength.com to access and sign up for the online program. Once members are registered online, they can also use their username and password to log in to the myStrength mobile app.

Sign up today!

For members with depression, the myStrength program can provide an additional resource. To refer a member to myStrength, members can visit myStrength.com to sign up online or download the myStrength app at **Google Play**^{TM, 5} or the **Apple Store**.

To join online, go to mystrength.com/go/healthnet/wellcareca, click *Sign Up* and complete the sign-up process.

If you have questions regarding the information contained in this update, contact 866-999-3945.

⁴ Any transfer of information or data between providers and/or facilities about a member's Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) or SUD must first be authorized by the member before transferring the information or data between providers and/or facilities. This can be done by having the member sign an Authorization for Disclosure (AFD) form and designating the provider or entity that will be reviewing the member's data.

⁵ Google Play and the Google Play logo are trademarks of Google LLC.