

Case In Point: Teamwork Avoids Hospital Readmission

Teamwork, communication, and quick thinking from primary care sites avoided an unnecessary readmission to the hospital for a Senior Care Options member last month — and it happened in a single day.

The member, an Upham's Corner Health Center SCO patient, had recently been in the hospital with a history of complex medical conditions. He insisted on being discharged from hospital to his home with support services, but was not doing well. His primary care team (PCT) was worried about him and knew, unless there was some kind of additional intervention, the member would likely return to the hospital.

The member's nurse practitioner called the clinical team at Commonwealth Care Alliance and her suggestion, which was supported by the member's PCP, was to place him in a skilled nursing facility (SNF) for a short term stay.

While waiting on a specialist's opinion, the PCT went into action and began planning to admit the member directly to a SNF and clinicians at our central office helped

locate a facility with Commonwealth Care Alliance SCO rounding capabilities. A feature of our overall system of care is the ability to match capabilities that support primary care sites in extending their reach. (Although Upham's does not



have the capability of providing medical management when their members are residing in a SNF, Boston University Geriatrics Services (BUGS) and Urban Medical Group often provide coverage when necessary.) The PCT provided the member's history and other related medical

information to the facility. The member was accepted for admission, and the BUGS clinical team agreed to care for the Upham's member; BUGS had access to the member's BMC medical records allowing them to gain more knowledge of the

Upham's member's history. After a gently persuasive discussion with his PCT, the member agreed to enter the facility. He was in his room at the SNF by the end of the same day.

This exemplifies the teamwork and continuity that we hope is the essence of Commonwealth Care Alliance's system and model of care — Upham's recognized an opportunity to avoid a hospitalization, the BUGS team agreed to care for him in the SNF, and the contracted facility was willing to accommodate the member at short notice.

Commonwealth Care Alliance is working on detailed procedures to improve hospital discharge planning and aftercare arrangements in order to reduce hospital readmissions that negatively affect our members' care and result in unnecessary increases in medical expenses. While still a work in progress, it is encouraging to note that quick action, effective communication, initiative and collaboration avoided an unnecessary readmission to the hospital for this member.

If you have a member who you feel would benefit from a direct admission to a SNF in lieu of a hospitalization, please contact Barbara Mitzan, Clinical Program Manager, at (617) 426-0600 ext. 228 or bmitzan@commonwealthcare.org ♦

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HEDIS 2008

This year, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) partnered with the National Commission on Quality Assurance (NCQA) to implement a strategy to evaluate the effectiveness of all Medicare Advantage plans offering Special Needs Plan (SNP) benefit packages. CMS required that all SNP plans submit Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measures. Developed and maintained by NCQA, HEDIS is the most widely used set of performance measures in the managed care industry. The goal is to compare SNP performance in such areas as preventive care, up-to-date treatments for acute episodes of illness, chronic disease care and appropriate medication treatment.

CMS selected 13 HEDIS measures for Commonwealth Care Alliance to report for both the Senior Care Options (SCO) and Commonwealth Care Connection (CCC) programs, including:

- Colorectal Cancer Screening
- Glaucoma Screening in Older Adults
- Use of Spirometry Testing in the Assessment & Diagnosis of COPD
- Pharmacotherapy of COPD Exacerbations
- Controlling High Blood Pressure
- Persistence of Beta Blocker Treatment After a Heart Attack
- Osteoporosis Management in Older Women
- Antidepressant Medication Management
- Follow-up After Hospitalization for Mental Illness
- Annual Monitoring for Patients on Persistent Medications
- Potentially Harmful Drug-Disease Interactions
- Use of High Risk Medication in the Elderly

HEDIS data is collected administratively through claims data and through a hybrid methodology that looks at claims data and medical records. In addition, each measure includes only members continuously enrolled with Commonwealth Care Alliance for a specified period of time, usually 12 months. All of our data was required to pass review by an external certified HEDIS auditor prior to submission.

Although performance benchmarks are not yet available for SNPs, our performance on HEDIS over time will help to identify areas of strength and weakness in order to inform ways in which we can make positive changes.

Planning for next year's HEDIS submission is currently underway. In 2008, 477 SNPs submitted HEDIS data; this number is expected to grow to over 780 SNPs in 2009. In addition, CMS is planning to add 15 new measures. Many measures will require a hybrid review and we thank you in advance for your cooperation as we coordinate medical record reviews.

Questions? Please contact Kerry Markert, Quality Improvement Coordinator, at (617) 426-0600 ext. 261 or kmarkert@commonwealthcare.org ♦



Contracts Corner

Please join us in welcoming the following providers:

Name	Location	Provider Type
Malden Primary Care	Malden	Primary Care Site
Donna Bertolotti, LICSW	Dorchester	LICSW
Youville House	Cambridge	Assisted Living Facility
Metropolitan Home Health	Arlington	PC/Homemaker
Farmland	Wakefield	Grocery delivery
Clean 'n Brite Laundromat	Medford	Laundry services
Don Orione Adult Day Health	Boston	Adult Day Health
Assisted Living Center Salisbury	Salisbury	Assisted Living Facility
Susanna Daniels	Andover	Therapist
Caritas Hospice	Brighton	Hospice
Mystic Valley Elder Services	Malden	ASAP
Audiology Services, Inc.	Belmont	Audiology
Raymond S. Murano, DPM, PC	Medford	Podiatry
FootMed	Malden	Podiatry
Comfort Keepers	North Reading	Home Health
Crittenton Women's Union	Boston	Meals on Wheels
Merrimack Valley Anesthesia, PC	Westwood	Anesthesia and Pain management

Questions? Please contact Provider Network Management by calling 617.426.0600.♦

Staff Spotlight

Diane Ryberg, Provider Network Manager

Welcome to our new Provider Network Manager, Diane Ryberg. We interviewed Diane to find out a little more about her:

Tell us about your professional background: I've spent many years at health care companies in Provider Relations and Network Development. I also spent a year as Office Manager in an OB-GYN office, which gave me a useful perspective into the world of the provider.



What does a typical workday look like for you? Lots of interactions with others. I spend a big part of the day handling phone calls and e-mail requests from nurse care managers and clinical sites. Lately, I've been working on the implementation of our new provider database.

What is the best part of your job? I love talking to different people every day. Customer service is incredibly important to me. That is my highest priority — to both internal and external colleagues.

What makes Commonwealth Care Alliance special? Coming from a commercial background, I see a huge difference in the way Commonwealth Care Alliance operates. It's not about making as much money as possible — it's about ensuring that our members receive the best possible care.

What do you like to do when you are not at work? I really enjoy fitness and exercise. Every morning I'm up at 4:30 a.m. to work out. I love running, yoga, biking — I ride around with my dog, Carly, in my backpack. When I'm not exercising, I love to garden and spend time

with my family.

If you could invite any five people to dinner, who would you choose? Mother Teresa, Princess Diana, Oprah, Deepak Chopra, and the Dalai Lama — now that would be some interesting conversation.

REMINDERS

Flu Shots

Flu season is all but upon us, and it is timely to remind all providers to schedule a flu shot for themselves and our members. The CDC advises the following groups of people to get a flu shot:

- Health care providers
- All persons over 50 years old
- Adults and children who have a weakened immune system
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities
- Anyone who lives or cares for people at high risk for influenza related complications

eFax Numbers

We have supplemented our Member Service fax line with two new eFaxes. All fax lines are now in operation:

- Enrollment (617) 830-0534
- Clinical (617) 507-0416
- Member Services (617) 426-1311

Pharmacy Update

The following is a summary of recent pharmacy changes. For more information about the Commonwealth Care Alliance Pharmacy program, please visit our web site at www.commonwealthcare.org and click on the “Pharmacy Program” tab.

Formulary Changes

Additions: Effective August 1, 2008, the following medications were added to the Medicare Part D formulary:

- Amitiza 8mcg
- Acarbose 25, 50 & 100mg
- Certizine 1mg/mL
- Paroxetine 12.5 & 25mg
- Propinirole 0.25, 0.5, 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5mg

Removals: Effective September 21, 2008, the following medication was removed from the Medicare Part D formulary due to manufacturers’ discontinuation:

- Sular 10, 20, 30 & 40mg

Effective September 21, 2008, the following medications were removed from the Medicare Part D formulary due to generic availability:

- Activella
- Dovonex
- Efudex

Questions? Please contact Basem Shebli, Pharmacy Director, at 617.426.0600 ext. 238 or bshebli@commonwealthcare.org ♦

Enrollment Numbers

As of October 1, 2008

Senior Care Options (SCO)

= 1795 members

Commonwealth Care Connection (CCC)

= 226 members

Clinical Staff Hires

June– August, 2008

Kelly Marciane, *RN Care Manager*
Commonwealth Clinical Alliance at Brightwood

Christine Spruill, *RN Care Manager*
Commonwealth Clinical Alliance at Brightwood

Bridgette Hunt, *Administrative Assistant*
Commonwealth Care Alliance central office

Communications Standards

Commonwealth Care Alliance is committed to strong, collaborative relationships with fellow staff, providers, and members. To that end, staff are required to make a concerted effort to respond to all telephone calls and e-mail in a timely manner.

Commonwealth Care Alliance’s communication standards are summarized in the table to the right.

Additionally, employees have a uniform e-mail signature and out-of-office messages.

Questions? Please contact Annie Halland, Benefits Operations Coordinator, at 617.426.0600 ext. 250 or ahalland@commonwealthcare.org ♦

	Urgent e-mail/call	Non-urgent e-mail/call
External	Respond within same day	Respond ASAP but no later than 2 bus. days
Internal	Respond within 24 hours	Respond ASAP but no later than 3 bus. days

Casenet Transition

Commonwealth Care Alliance is in the process of designing and implementing a new electronic care management system, to replace the existing Wellogic CONSULT system, plus other internal management systems.

“The Casenet platform and philosophy are a perfect fit for our team-based approach to care management. This is designed to unify multiple systems and provides everyone involved with a complete, single view of each member’s record,” says Lois Simon of Commonwealth Care Alliance. “With Casenet, we’ll be able to improve the quality and delivery of care while at the same time improve efficiencies by streamlining work flows. This is critical as our members have complex medical needs and our care managers have demanding jobs to do in meeting our members’ needs management.”

Planning and development sessions have included a number of clinicians, including Mary Glover of Boston’s Community Medical Group and Laurie Wojtusik of Brightwood Health Center, who have added a real-world perspective to the creation of this tool. Clinicians will also play pivotal roles in the testing process.

Rollout of new clinical processes and the new system is planned for late 2008/early 2009, with training sessions to be conducted at various locations. Watch this primary care site newsletter for more detailed information in the coming months.

Questions? Please contact Janet Norton, SCO Nurse Clinical Coordinator, at jnorton@commonwealthcare.org ♦