

The School Employees Health Care Board – 4 Best Practice Standards And What the EPC is Doing About Them

What: Specialty Networks
Disease Management Program
Wellness Program
Dependent Eligibility Audits

When: Effective 1/1/09
Districts should be in compliance the later of 12 months from the effective date (1/1/2010) or the expiration of the current negotiated agreement.

Specifics

Specialty Networks: These are frequently referred to as Centers of Excellence handling relatively rare and complex procedures such as transplants.

We have these in place with both UHC and Anthem and can get statements from both that you are in compliance.

Disease Management Programs: These programs target chronic diseases such as diabetes and asthma and provide individual patient education and support.

We have some level of Disease Management with both UHC & Anthem, however, many of the features called for in the regulation are more detailed than the programs either carrier offers, especially in the area of reporting.

We have been in discussions with a Disease Management & Wellness company called **Alere** and visited their support center last summer. Following an in depth presentation by Alere and subsequent discussion, the EPC Insurance Committee voted to hire Alere to provide Disease Management services for districts in the medical Benefit Plans. Alere has been providing Disease Management services for the districts in OMERESA since January '08 and will be able to provide all the services listed in the regulation.

Wellness Programs: The regulations state the wellness program shall include:

- An evaluation of claim data
- A Health Risk Assessment
- Access to a biometric screening (Blood pressure, cholesterol, BMI etc)
- Health coaching for those who need help
- Regular reports on how well the program is doing

We can handle everything but the health coaching and reporting. We are also thinking of working with Alere on this since their health coaching for wellness will be a natural fit with their Disease Management services. After we have established the Alere Disease Management program, we will consider expanding their services to include the health coaching and reporting part of the wellness program. We will also be developing an EPC level wellness committee to help define the what & how of a school district wellness program so everyone doesn't have to reinvent the wheel. We are currently forming that committee; anyone who would like to participate is welcome.

Dependent Eligibility Audits: The regulation states that these should be performed "periodically" - not that they shall be completed by the effective date. The goal in the audit is to remove dependents who should no longer be covered by the Plan.

There are usually 2 parts to a dependent audit:

- Amnesty period – Employees are told to check their dependents and remove any who no longer qualify – with no penalty.

We can use the Benelogic system for this. Employees will be able to go online to see their dependents and verify that they qualify. They can then print out a form which we can post on the system to sign off that they have done so and that the dependents listed qualify under the plan definitions.

- Verification of Dependent Status – Employees are requested to provide documentation that dependents qualify – usually by providing a copy of the 1st page of their last Income Tax return with financial information blacked out. The dependent information is then matched to the enrollment system to verify coverage.

This is the part of the audit that we may need to hire additional help for. Small districts may choose to handle this part themselves; larger districts and those who don't confidential employee information coming into the office will probably want to hire some help. We have contacted Chapman Kelly - who sent letters to all districts – to get more info about their services and to start to discuss a lower price. We will also be meeting with another firm which offers a similar service.

Bottom Line:

The earliest anything has to be done is 1/1/2010. We still have a minimum of 13 months to work on this.

Specialty Networks – We're done

Disease Management – We have hired a quality vendor who will provide the services necessary which should actually produce the savings intended.

Wellness – We have identified a resource but this is the one we'll need to work on.

Dependent Eligibility Audits – The deadline is not as specific as the others. We have a good start having put in the online enrollment system. We need to find a vendor at a good price for follow up services.

A section dedicated to the SEHCB Best Practices will be established at our website where the complete regulation 3306-2-01 will be posted www.epc-online.org

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