

Absolute Total Caregivers

Mid-Year 2023 Edition

In This Issue:

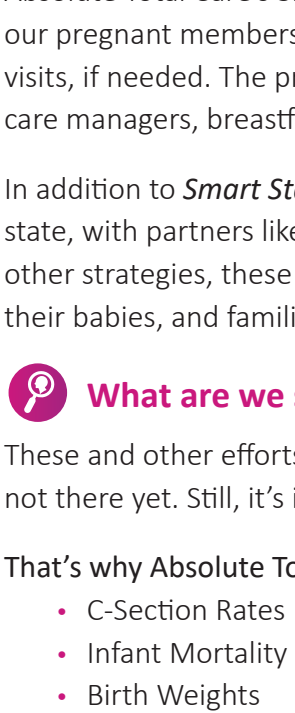
- Provider Links
CEO Message: Transforming Birth Outcomes
Doctor's Corner: Focusing on Behavioral Health
Provider Satisfaction Survey
Operations: Secure Web Portal
Quality: Promoting HEDIS, Ensuring Access
SDOH: HALO, Choose Tomorrow
Compliance: Serving Members by Speaking Their Language
Leadership Spotlight: Jennifer Helms, Vice President Operations
Did You Know?
Stay in Touch



Provider Links

- HEDIS Quick Reference Guide
CAHPS/HOS Provider Resource Guide
Absolute Total Care Provider News
Absolute Total Care Clinical & Payment Policies
Ambetter from Absolute Total Care Provider News
Ambetter from Absolute Total Care Clinical & Payment Policies
Wellcare National Medicare Provider Newsletter
MMP and Medicare Advantage Clinical and Payment policies

Transforming Birth Outcomes



A Message from John McClellan, Chief Executive Officer

'Latest South Carolina infant, maternal, mortality reports reveal alarming trends' (SCDHEC, 4/12/23)
'Charleston County in maternity health crisis' (Charleston City Paper, 5/19/23)
'A striking gap between deaths of Black and White babies plagues the South' (Post and Courier, 5/21/23)

We see the headlines, reminding us of what we already know. Our state's infant and maternal health outcomes are alarming. Yet the myriad issues related to the outcomes are so complex, so deep-rooted and generational in South Carolina...

Absolute Total Care supports about 5,000 births each year. Like many of you on the front lines, we see the obstacles to healthy birth outcomes.

And we see opportunity for transformation.

What are we doing?

Absolute Total Care's Smart Start for Your Baby is our primary program to identify, educate, manage, and ensure care for all our pregnant members and their babies. Smart Start for Your Baby helps members find a doctor/hospital and sets up the visits...

In addition to Smart Start for Your Baby, Absolute Total Care leverages other interventions and collaborations around the state, with partners like Family Solutions, MUSC, and the CDC to promote healthy mothers and their newborns.

What are we seeing?

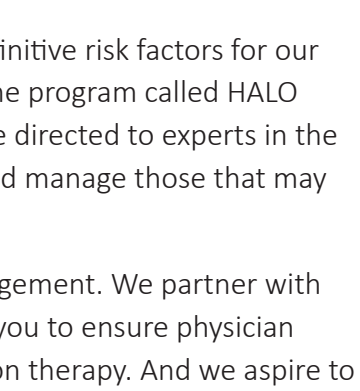
These and other efforts are only part of the solution, promoting improvement as we continue our efforts, because we're not there yet. Still, it's important to measure key outcomes to gauge progress and inform strategy.

That's why Absolute Total Care is closely monitoring data related to many key performance metrics, including:

- C-Section Rates
Infant Mortality Rates
Birth Weights
Gestational Age
Early Intervention for High-Risk Pregnancies Rates
Prenatal and Post-Partum Care Rates

Among the results related to these indicators, Absolute Total Care has seen:

- Almost 90% of high-risk pregnancies correctly identified by predictive modeling
More than 3% decrease in neonatal admissions across the last four years
\$55 million in savings from reduction of low/very-low birth weight deliveries
92% of Absolute Total Care members surveyed found the Smart Start for Your Baby program helpful



Where are we going?

The best way to a healthy life is a healthy start. These represent just some of the programs we offer and measures we monitor, all of which are also evaluated through the lenses of disparity and the particular needs of under-served populations.

At Absolute Total Care, we are committed to thorough assessment of our members' needs, focused yet robust program design, effective and value-based service delivery, honest evaluation of outcomes, and then thoughtful application of what we learn...

We know there are lives behind the data. And no program, no outcome, can adequately address all the dynamics involved with human health, and especially the complexities involving the birth of children.

Thank you for helping us find those solutions. Here's to future better headlines.

Just What The Doctor Ordered

A Message From Dr. Barry Lewis, Chief Medical Director

Focusing on behavioral health to support those we serve

In May we recognized mental health awareness month. Of course attention to our mental health is a daily endeavor, every month.

I was recently reminded of this on my morning breakfast routine. I was in line waiting for my order and I saw two energetic college students saying hello...

I couldn't help but share the joy of these two, as they truly reflected the milestone.

We admire the transformative process from youth to adulthood. Celebrating on this, we can enjoy a moment of self-reflection and hope.

The constant grind and stress of life are showing clear manifestations of behavioral health conditions. This is especially relevant for teens.

Here are some statistics on behavioral health. Anxiety disorder affects 6.8 million adults or 3.1% of the U.S. population, yet only 43.2% are receiving treatment.

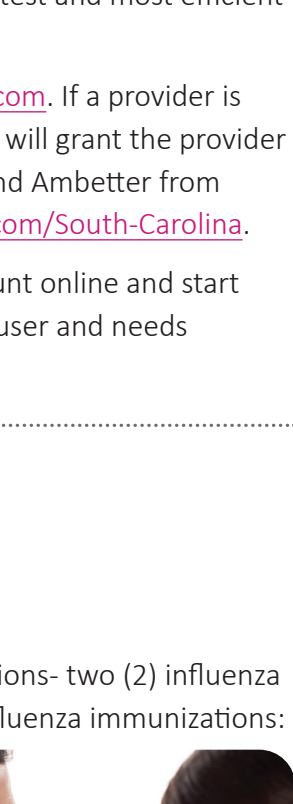
Like any health risk, we arm ourselves with information to prepare for the necessary care required.

To avoid advanced behavioral health conditions, we at Absolute Total Care aspire to identify definitive risk factors for our diverse communities.

Behavioral health care can be identified as a continuum of prevention, identification, and management.

We appreciate your dedication in helping patients with their behavioral health needs.

Dr. Barry Lewis
barry.lewis@centene.com



Provider Satisfaction

We Want to Hear From You! Provider Satisfaction Survey Coming Soon

You are our trusted partner. Together, we are helping almost 400,000 Absolute Total Care members along their health journey.

Secure Web Portal: The Best Way for a PA to Avoid Delay!

Providers must obtain prior authorization for certain services and procedures. The fastest and most efficient way to request an authorization is through the secure Provider Portal.

To access the Absolute Total Care secure Provider Portal visit www.absolute-total-care.com. If a provider is already registered for the Absolute Total Care secure Provider Portal, that registration will grant the provider access to submit requests for Absolute Total Care (Medicaid), Wellcare Prime (Medicare-Medicaid), and Ambetter from Absolute Total Care (Marketplace).

Not registered on our secure Provider Portals yet? If only takes a few moments to sign up for an account online and start benefiting from the many useful features provided.

Quality
A focus on HEDIS®: Influenza Immunizations

As you know, a key HEDIS Measure relates to childhood immunizations, including the flu vaccine.

This measure assesses the percentage of children who have had the appropriate number of vaccinations: two (2) influenza (flu) on or before the child's second birthday.

- Make a vaccine recommendation
Discuss the benefits of getting the flu shot
Provide patients with information on:
Educate patients on getting vaccinated soon after the flu vaccine becomes available to ensure that as many people as possible are protected.



Helpful resources:
https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/flu-vaccine-recommendation.html
https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/prepare-practice-tools.htm
https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/professionals/acip/acip-2022-23-summary-of-recommendations.pdf

A focus on HEDIS®: Category II Codes

CPT Category II codes are supplemental tracking codes that can be used for performance measurement. The use of the tracking codes for performance measurement will decrease the need for record abstraction and chart review.

Several HEDIS®, QRS and Stars measures care gaps can be closed with the use of category codes.

- blood pressure readings (CBP, BPD)
hemoglobin A1c results (HbD)

Other examples include measures that tell us a specific service as complete or the status of a service:
Pain Assessment
Eye exams and evidence or no evidence of retinopathy

For more information on HEDIS, see the Quick Reference Guide: https://www.absolute-total-care.com/content/dam/centene/absolute-total-care/pdfs/SCIPROGDE82099F_0000_Final_ORG-508R.pdf

Ensuring Access: Appointment Accessibility

Are your patients able to obtain services when they are needed? Absolute Total Care monitors the availability of our network practitioners. Availability is key to member care and treatment outcomes.

Absolute Total Care follows the accessibility requirements set forth by applicable regulatory and accrediting agencies. We monitor compliance with these standards annually and use the results of monitoring to ensure adequate appointment availability and reduce the unnecessary use of emergency rooms.

Please review the appointment availability standards in the Provider Manual.

Table with Appointment Type and Access Standard columns. Rows include Routine visits with a PCP, Routine visits with a unique specialist, Urgent or nonemergency visits, Emergent or emergency visits, Office wait time for scheduled routine appointments, Walk-in nonurgent appointments, and Walk-in urgent appointments.

Social Determinants of Health:



New programs offer members support and services with life issues

Absolute Total Care is offering new resources to help members with Substance Use Disorder (SUD), as well as support those at risk for suicide.

Substance Use Disorder

The HALO (Health Assistance, Linkage, and Outreach) integrated care management program enhances current SUD treatment and recovery efforts.

"Almost ten percent of South Carolinians live with substance-use related problems," says Eve Williamson, RN, HCM, manager of clinical case management.

"A Peer Recovery Specialist can be a trusted partner for our members, because the PRS has been there, and knows what the member is experiencing," says Williamson.

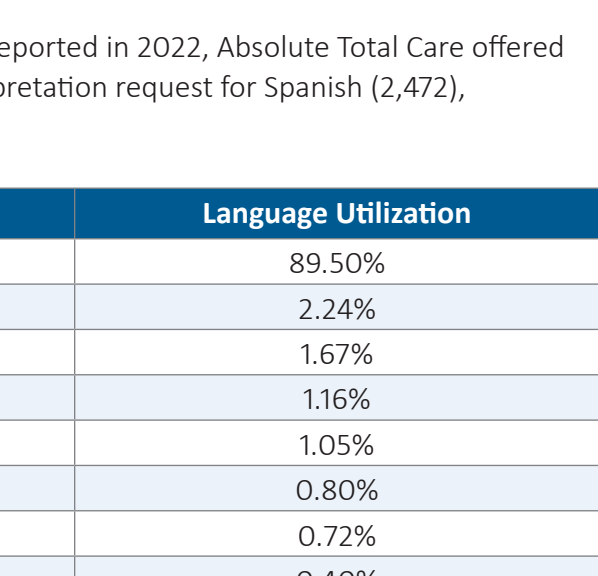
Launched in April 2022, the vision for HALO is healthier members, and a more cost-effective service structure.

"Plus, we know these members have greater ED and inpatient utilization, and average length of stays, all of which costs the system nearly twice as much as members without SUD."

Built on the platform of member and provider engagement, plus key community partnerships for services, HALO is delivering that effective combination of early intervention and proven treatment.

Suicide Prevention

The HALO project, a forthcoming Absolute Total Care initiative beginning in August will use data and community partnerships for early identification and service delivery for another population: those at risk of suicide.



"The program is called Choose Tomorrow, which I think beautifully captures our hope for our members," says Beth Schuppert, senior manager of care management.

Choose Tomorrow promotes care options first by finding members in need. Utilizing an innovative modeling tool, Choose Tomorrow targets and outreach to members who score at 95% or higher on a suicide-related predictive risk indicator.

Once an Absolute Total Care member is identified as at-risk, care managers provide help through assessments, safety planning, enrollment in programs and service delivery, and ongoing support and follow-up.

"More than 800 South Carolinians committed suicide in 2021," says Schuppert. "And many more experience suicidal ideation, long before attempting suicide. Choose Tomorrow is helping us help our members not only during crisis, but even upstream for at-risk members prior to crisis stage.

Compliance:

Serving Members Better by Speaking Their Language

Treating the whole patient – not only their conditions – is a major component of delivering quality healthcare. Absolute Total Care offers you information and tools to help make that possible.

Absolute Total Care's 2022 Enrollment data. The graph shows a large population that did not provide or report their Race and Ethnicity (117,842 Members).

The following table (Table 1) reveals Absolute Total Care members speak more than eight reported languages from Membership data, and the population grows more diverse each year.

The following table (Table 2) reveals Absolute Total Care members speak more than eight reported languages from Membership data, and the population grows more diverse each year.

Table 1. Absolute Total Care 2022 Membership Data

Table with Languages, Membership Count, and Percentage of Total Population columns.

Absolute Total Care translates state-level census data to determine the languages spoken in their service area and determine threshold languages for evaluation.

Table 2. United States Census Data – South Carolina

Table with Language Spoken at Home (Population 5 Years and over), Estimate, and % Of Population columns.

Additionally, Absolute Total Care uses census or community-level data to determine and report the languages spoken by 5 percent or 1000 residents' thresholds.

Absolute Total Care's 15 non-English languages meeting a viable threshold among members in 2022 include:

- Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Russian, Vietnamese, Brazilian Portuguese, Chinese, Falam Chin, Hindi, Korean, Chin, French, Karen, Amharic, Burmese

Although there were only eight reported languages from Membership data reported in 2022, Absolute Total Care offered 2,762 requests for Language Interpretation assistance with the top five interpretation request for Spanish (2,472), Vietnamese (62), Arabic (46), Russian (32) and Mandarin (29).

Table with Language, Calls Offered, and Language Utilization columns.

In the table below, Absolute Total Care noticed that 74 Members from the 2022 Membership data listed American Sign Language (ASL) as their language; however, there were only nine requests for ASL interpretation.

Table with Sign Language Interpreter Requests columns: Count of ASL Language from Membership Data, Request for ASL Services, Total Medicaid Membership, and Percentage of Members Identified with ASL/Total Medicaid Membership.

If you have patients who need ASL interpreters, please contact Absolute Total Care Language Assistance line as you would with spoken language request.

Accessing an Interpreter for Absolute Total Care Members in Your Office

To request an on-demand telephonic interpreter, please call Member Services at 1-866-433-6041 (TTY: 711) and provide your patient's Member ID number.

Using the speakerphone function is recommended for communication efficiency between you, your patient and the interpreter.

All participating Absolute Total Care providers are required to comply with certain interpreter requirements.

- Providers must ensure that bilingual staff who act as interpreters are qualified and meet the quality standards, which includes documentation that the staff member's proficiency was assessed.
Patients can never be required to bring their own interpreters.
Minors may not interpret, even if their parent or other relative consents, unless there is an emergency and there is not a qualified interpreter immediately available.
An accompanying adult may interpret if the patient agrees and if it is appropriate to the situation.

Providers that use bilingual staff to communicate with patients must ensure that bilingual staff can interpret effectively, accurately, and to and from the language of the patient and English, using any necessary specialized vocabulary terminology and phraseology.

Providers are strongly encouraged to document in the medical record the use of family, friends and minors as interpreters. If an interpreter is offered and the patient declines, the provider should also document this in the medical record.

Reach out to your Provider Relations Specialist with Absolute Total Care to learn more about these requirements, and how you can use them to make your relationship with your patients stronger and more effective.

Interpreter/Translation Services Offered by Absolute Total Care

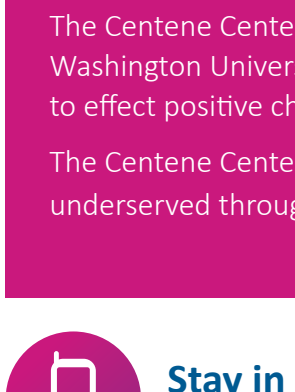
Absolute Total Care is committed to ensuring that staff and subcontractors are educated about, remain aware of, and are sensitive to the linguistic needs and cultural differences of its members.

- Having individuals available who are trained professional interpreters for Spanish and American Sign Language and will be available on site or via telephone to assist providers with discussing technical, medical, or treatment information with members as needed.
Providing language line services that will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week in 140 languages to assist providers and members in communicating with each other when there are no other translators available for the language.
In-person interpreter services are made available when Absolute Total Care is notified in advance of the member's scheduled appointment in order to allow for a more positive encounter between the member and provider; telephonic services are available for those encounters involving urgent/emergent situations, as well as non-urgent/emergent appointments as requested.
Providing TTY access for members who are hearing impaired through 711.
Absolute Total Care medical advice line, nurse advice line, provider 24-hour access, seven days a week for interpretation of Spanish or the coordination of non-English/Spanish via the Language Line.
Providing or making available Member Services and health education materials in alternative formats as needed to meet the needs of the members, such as audio tapes or language translation; all alternative methods must be requested by the member or designee.
Providers must call Member Services at 1-866-433-6041 if interpreter services are needed. Please have the member's ID number, date/time service is requested, and any other documentation that would assist in scheduling interpreter services.

Thank you for partnering with us in meeting the culturally linguistic needs of our members and please let us know if we can do anything to improve our services to you.

Why We Do What We Do:

Q & A with Jennifer Helms, Vice President Operations



Where are you from? I was born and raised in Hartsville, in Darlington County. I live there still.
Where did you attend college and what did you study? I'm a graduate of the University of South Carolina. I received my major in psychology, with a minor in criminal justice.
How did you get into healthcare? Coincidence, happenstance – whatever you want to call it. After college, I started working at the South Carolina Alliance of Health Plans. I was there about ten years. Then, as managed care was just getting started in South Carolina, in 2007 I was approached to lead the Carolina Crescent Health Plan. I never looked back. I love this work, especially the operations piece.
How do you see your work at Absolute Total Care? It's all about change and progress. Change is always going to happen, but you have to do change right. We're constantly moving forward, but it's not progress if it's not better. And like improving things – picking a process apart, to make it better going forward – that's exciting to me. Maybe I'm a nerd that way!

How can you be sure we're making the right changes, that we're on the road to true progress? You can't be sure. There are no guarantees. But a great place to start – and this is very important to me – is with our own employees. They see everything. So I am constantly checking in with our associates, having meetings with all levels of my team, and I'm continuously asking them for ideas to improve.

What is South Carolina's greatest health-related challenge? Our shortage of doctors. Especially among specialists, and particularly in rural areas – that's our biggest challenge that I see. We have to have enough professionals to treat the patients.

Who is in your family? My husband Chad Helms and I recently celebrated our third anniversary! And I have a beautiful daughter, Vivian, who is 12.

What do you do for fun? I am on the water! Any water – the ocean, a lake, a creek, I would live on a houseboat, if I could. We have a jon boat, and that's what we do every Saturday. In Hartsville we have a creek called Black Creek, and that's where you can usually find me. Although there's a debate in my family whether it's a creek or a swamp.

Did You Know?

The Centene Center for Health Transformation – a unique partnership between Centene, the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis, and the Center for Advanced Hindsight at Duke University – is showing us new ways to effect positive change in the millions of individuals we serve.

The Centene Center for Health Transformation is an industry-academic partnership that improves the health of the underserved through real-world research. https://www.centenecenter.wustl.edu/

Stay in Touch!

Reaching Us ... Absolute Total Care wants to make it easy to do business with us, so you can focus on providing care. Need support? Have a question? We're here for you. Please contact your Provider Relations Representative anytime, or call Provider Services at 1-866-433-6041 to reach us.

Reaching You ... Absolute Total Care values everything you do to deliver quality care to our members. We want to make sure your practice receives timely information to help you do business with us.

Please keep Absolute Total Care informed of your most up to date demographic information for your practice. That means it's important for us to know if you plan to move, change phone numbers or leave the network. Call 1-866-433-6041 to update/verify your contact information or status. You can also check your information on our secure provider portal at www.absolute-total-care.com.

Please let us know at least 30 days before you expect a change to your information.