



## Who should get a **flu shot**?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), almost everyone ages 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine. However, members with severe, life-threatening allergies to ingredients in the vaccine—such as certain antibiotics and gelatin—and members under 6 months of age cannot get a flu shot. Providers should also discuss risks with members who have egg allergies, are sick, have weakened immune systems or have had Guillain-Barré syndrome.

If there is a shortage of flu shots, the CDC recommends providers prioritize getting the vaccine to people in the following groups:

- Children ages 6 months to 4 years
- People age 50 and older
- People with chronic pulmonary or cardiovascular disorders
- People who are immunosuppressed
- Women who will be pregnant during flu season
- Children ages 6 months to 18 years who receive long-term aspirin therapy
- American Indians and Native Alaskans
- Residents of nursing homes and chronic care facilities
- People with a BMI greater than 40
- Healthcare personnel
- Household contacts and caregivers for: children younger than 5 (but especially children under 6 months); adults age 50 and older; and people who are at higher risk for influenza complications

You can learn more about flu shot guidelines at [cdc.gov/flu/protect/whoshouldvax.htm#flu-shot](https://cdc.gov/flu/protect/whoshouldvax.htm#flu-shot).

### HEDIS: Flu vaccinations

For Medicaid members, HEDIS measures evaluate how many adults ages 18-64 receive the flu vaccine. Read more at [ncqa.org/hedis/measures/flu-vaccinations](https://ncqa.org/hedis/measures/flu-vaccinations).

### Appropriate use of antibiotics

When members are sick, they may request antibiotics. But prescribing antibiotics to members who do not need them can lead to antibiotic resistance. In addition, reactions to antibiotics cause 1 out of 5 medication-related visits to emergency rooms.

Several HEDIS (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set) measures assess whether plans are prescribing antibiotics appropriately:

- **Avoidance of Antibiotic Treatment in Adults with Acute Bronchitis:** Guidelines recommend against the use of antibiotics to treat acute bronchitis in otherwise healthy adults.
- **Appropriate Treatment for Children with Upper Respiratory Infection:** Most upper respiratory infections in children are caused by viruses and do not require antibiotic treatment.
- **Appropriate Testing for Children with Pharyngitis:** Testing before prescribing an antibiotic assures that children with a viral infection are not inappropriately treated.

## HEDIS: Colorectal cancer screening

The HEDIS measure for colorectal cancer screening continues to assess the number of adults ages 50-75 who are screened. According to the HEDIS measure, screening options include:

- Annual fecal occult blood test
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years
- Colonoscopy every 10 years
- Computed tomography colonography every five years
- Stool DNA test every three years

Read more at [ncqa.org/hedis/measures/colorectal-cancer-screening](https://ncqa.org/hedis/measures/colorectal-cancer-screening).

## Screening for colon cancer

The American Cancer Society (ACS) recently updated its colon cancer guidelines to recommend that adults at average risk start getting screened at age 45. Previous guidelines recommended screening begin at age 50.

The ACS said the changes were made after it reviewed data on colon cancer cases.

“The numbers showed that new cases of colorectal cancer are occurring at an increasing rate among younger adults,” the ACS wrote in a news release. “Experts on the ACS Guideline Development Committee concluded that a beginning screening age of 45 for adults of average risk will result in more lives saved from colorectal cancer.”

However, the ACS changes were not adopted by other entities, such as the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, which still recommends that screening begin at age 50.



## Cancer care for women

**Cancer screenings are an important part of healthcare for both men and women**, but there are a few tests specific to women alone. Absolute Total Care providers can help members find cancer early by reminding women to be screened regularly for breast and cervical cancer.

### HEDIS for women's cancer care

Measure	Details
<b>Breast Cancer Screening</b> One in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends women begin biennial mammograms at age 50 but says women can begin screening at age 40, especially if they are at higher risk.	This measure assesses women ages 50-74 who had at least one mammogram to screen for breast cancer in the last two years. For 2018, NCQA added digital breast tomosynthesis to the list of acceptable tests for breast cancer screening. Read more at <a href="https://ncqa.org/hedis/measures/breast-cancer-screening">ncqa.org/hedis/measures/breast-cancer-screening</a> .
<b>Cervical Cancer Screening</b> The American Cancer Society estimates that more than 13,000 women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer in 2018. Both the ACS and the USPSTF recommend regular Pap screenings to detect abnormal cells.	This measure assesses women ages 21-64 who had either a cervical cytology (Pap screening) performed every three years or women ages 30-64 who had cervical cytology and human papillomavirus co-testing every five years. Read more at <a href="https://ncqa.org/hedis/measures/cervical-cancer-screening">ncqa.org/hedis/measures/cervical-cancer-screening</a> .

## HEDIS supports member health

Absolute Total Care strives to provide quality healthcare to our members as measured through HEDIS quality metrics.

HEDIS is a set of standardized performance measures developed by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) that allows direct, objective comparison of quality across health plans. NCQA develops the HEDIS measures through a committee of purchasers, consumers, health plans, healthcare providers and policymakers.

HEDIS provides a standardized method for managed care organizations to collect, calculate and report information about their performance. This allows employers, purchasers and consumers to compare plans. Health plans themselves use HEDIS results to see where to focus their improvement efforts.



## Supporting members with disease management

Absolute Total Care's disease management programs help members with chronic conditions, such as diabetes, self-manage their health. The programs do this by ensuring that referrals are made to the proper providers, providing health education, promoting coordination among providers and encouraging adherence. We educate patients and provide support and tools needed to help them understand and control their condition, all with the goal of fewer complications.

In addition to disease management programs for members with chronic illnesses, we offer case management for members with complex medical needs. If you have a member you think would benefit from these services, call us at **1-866-433-6041**.

## Stay connected with Absolute Total Care's **provider portal**

**Absolute Total Care's online provider portal is a convenient and secure tool to help manage your members.** By creating an account, you can:

- Verify member eligibility
- Check and submit claims
- Submit and confirm authorizations
- View detailed patient list

If you are a contracted provider, you can register now on the Absolute Total Care provider portal. If you are a non-contracted provider, you can register after you submit your first claim.





# What our members are saying

## The Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) surveys

ask consumers and patients to report on and evaluate their experiences with healthcare. Survey results are submitted to the National Committee for Quality Assurance to meet accreditation

requirements. These surveys are completed annually and reflect how our members feel about the care they receive from our providers, as well as the service they receive from the health plan. Absolute Total Care will be using the results to guide our improvement efforts.

We also want to share the results with you, since you and your staff are vital components of our members' satisfaction.

Here are some key findings from the survey:

## 2017 results compared with 2018 results

MEASURE	2017 CHILD CAHPS	2018 CHILD CAHPS	2017 ADULT CAHPS	2018 ADULT CAHPS
Getting needed care	91.79%	88.04% ↓	82.30%	83.50% ↑
Getting care quickly	90.68%	94.77% ↑	86.11%	83.20% ↓
Rating of health plan	86.46%	89.09% ↑	76.64%	78.95% ↑
Rating of personal doctor	90.91%	92.43% ↑	82.37%	85.34% ↑
Rating of healthcare	91.22%	87.80% ↓	75.77%	76.12% ↑
How well doctors communicate	95.27%	96.16% ↑	91.87%	93.59% ↑
Customer service	88.58%	92.04% ↑	89.58%	85.75% ↓

The survey results taken by caregivers on behalf of their children increased in the following categories:

- Getting care quickly
- Rating of health plan
- Rating of personal doctor
- Customer service
- How well doctors communicate

The categories in which the rates slightly decreased from the previous year were “Getting needed care” and “Rating of healthcare.”

The surveys taken by our adult members showed increases in the following categories:

- Getting needed care
- Rating of health plan
- Rating of personal doctor

- Rating of healthcare
- How well doctors communicate

The results in two categories—“Customer service” and “Getting care quickly”—showed a decrease from the previous year.

We take our members' feedback seriously and want to work with you to improve satisfaction in the future.



# Women's Empowerment of South Carolina Expo

**The fourth annual Women's Empowerment of South Carolina Expo, presented by the city of Columbia and The Big DM 101, and sponsored by Absolute Total Care, took place on Saturday, Sept. 29, at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center in Columbia, South Carolina.**

Women from all over South Carolina came to the event and left inspired, educated, entertained and empowered. More than 3,000 women attended the event, along with dozens of vendors and small businesses. In addition to the available vendors, there were seminars and live musical performances.

The event opened with a blessing from the Rev. Chris Leevy Johnson, campus pastor of Brookland Baptist Church, and a performance from the Jeffrey Lampkin Community Choir.

Among the other live performances were The Mississippi Mass Choir, Peabo Bryson, Ro James and Andy Stokes. City of Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin also attended to show his support of the event.

Employees from all three Absolute Total Care lines of business attended the event to provide information and promotional items. Medicaid, Medicare-Medicaid Plan and the Medicare Advantage line of business, Allwell from Absolute Total Care, were all represented at the event with reps available to answer questions and provide information on services and benefits.

Additional sponsors included: Office of Business Opportunities, Dominion Energy, WACH FOX 57, HOT 103.9, Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Breakthru Beverage, Council's Mattress & Furniture, Dick Smith Automotive and BlueChoice.

Absolute Total Care is grateful for this partnership and looks forward to supporting Women's Empowerment of South Carolina Expo for years to come!

## Helping teens transition to adult care

Absolute Total Care can help members or providers find an adult provider (e.g., a primary care provider, specialist or other provider) for members reaching adulthood.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends a transition to an adult care provider between ages 18 and 21, considering each case individually and including discussion with the patient and his or her caregivers.

The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health (NAAAH) says the process can begin as early as age 12, when patients and their families can be informed of the transition policy. Transition planning can begin at age 14 and can continue with readiness assessments until the transition takes place between ages 18 and 21.

We encourage your staff to contact Absolute Total Care for help shifting a patient to a new physician, if needed. You can also find tip sheets and clinical resources at [gottransition.org](http://gottransition.org), an NAAAH program.

## Your role

Providers play a central role in promoting the health of our members.

To help Absolute Total Care process authorization requests accurately and efficiently, please submit sufficient medical information. Submitting insufficient medical records can cause processing delays and increase the risk for denials.

You and your staff can also help facilitate HEDIS process improvement. Be sure to provide appropriate care within designated time frames, document all care in patient medical records, accurately code all claims and respond to our requests for medical records within five to seven days.

Questions? Contact Absolute Total Care Provider Services at **1-866-433-6041**.



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