

## Speak Up

In order for Absolute Total Care to ensure that our providers are receiving the best service from our plan, we work with The Myers Group to conduct a confidential Provider Satisfaction Survey.

The survey asks you, the provider, to rate us on areas like how well we process claims and answer questions. It also asks about specific items such as our medical review policies and communication with you.

Your feedback is reviewed closely and it helps us develop action plans. We want to ensure that we continue to meet your service expectations and improve where needed. We want you to know that when you talk, we listen.

The 2011 survey will be distributed via mail, phone and Internet during the third quarter of 2011. We will remind you that the survey is coming in another newsletter, along with a reminder on the provider portal. Please watch for the survey and let us know how we are doing.



## Making Your Plan

Let our guidelines be a foundation for treatment.

**A**bsolute Total Care's preventive care and clinical practice guidelines are based on the health needs of our members and opportunities for improvement identified as part of our Quality Improvement (QI) program.

When possible, Absolute Total Care adopts preventive and clinical practice guidelines that are published by nationally recognized organizations and government institutions. These guidelines have been reviewed by our QI Committee.

We encourage providers to use these guidelines as a basis for developing personalized treatment plans for our members and to aid members in making decisions about their healthcare. They should be applied for both preventive services as well as for management of chronic diseases. We measure compliance with these guidelines by monitoring related HEDIS measures and through random audits of ambulatory medical records.

The preventive and chronic disease guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- ADHD
- Adult preventive
- Asthma
- Breast cancer
- Depression
- Diabetes
- Immunizations
- Lead screening
- Perinatal care
- Sickle cell

Our preventive care and clinical practice guidelines are intended to augment, not replace, sound clinical judgment. Guidelines are reviewed and updated annually or upon significant change.

For the most up-to-date version of preventive and clinical practice guidelines, go to [www.absolutetotalcare.com](http://www.absolutetotalcare.com), click on the Provider Tab in the upper right corner of the screen, select "QAPI" in the sidebar menu and then click on the "Practice Guidelines" link. A copy may also be mailed to your office as part of disease management or other QI initiatives. Members also have access to these guidelines.



**FLU NEWS**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that everyone six months and older receives the flu vaccine. Get the latest information about the 2011-2012 influenza season at [cdc.gov/flu](http://cdc.gov/flu).



PLAN POINTERS

## Access to You Is The Key to Care

**Absolute Total Care maintains appointment access standards.**

We strive to ensure members have access to timely, appropriate care for all their health needs. We will work with you to establish clear standards for scheduling appointments and the length of wait times.

For scheduling appointments, members should be able to get an appointment with their primary care doctor as follows:

- Routine visits—within four to six weeks.
- Urgent visits—immediately upon arrival.
- Emergency visits—should be performed immediately upon arrival.

For office wait times, these standards should be followed:

- Scheduled appointment wait times should not exceed 45 minutes.
- Walk-in patients with nonurgent needs should be seen if possible or scheduled for an appointment.
- Emergency patients should be seen immediately.



## Focused on Quality

**Absolute Total Care's culture, systems and processes are structured around its mission to improve the health of all our members.**

**T**he scope of Absolute Total Care's Quality Improvement (QI) Program is comprehensive, addressing the quality and safety of clinical care and services provided to our members, including medical, behavioral health, dental and vision care.

The QI Program is run by Absolute Total Care's medical director, the quality improvement director and the Quality Improvement Committee. We incorporate all demographic groups, care settings and services in our QI activities, including preventive care, emergency care, primary care, specialty care, acute care, short-term care and ancillary services.

Absolute Total Care's primary quality improvement goal is to improve members' health through a variety of meaningful improvement activities implemented across all care settings, aimed at improving quality of care and services delivered.

The QI Program includes planning, implementing and monitoring of programs. It monitors several metrics and comprises components such as, but not limited to:

- Quality improvement studies.
- Investigation and tracking of risk management and potential quality of care complaints.
- Ongoing monitoring of key performance measures (well-child visits and immunizations, pregnant women receiving early and regular care, health tests such as chlamydia screenings, mammograms, lead screenings, etc.).
- Ensuring members with chronic conditions like diabetes and asthma are getting recommended tests and appropriate medications for their condition.
- Conducting member satisfaction surveys regarding the healthcare and services they are receiving.
- Provider feedback via surveys, structured committees and direct feedback.
- Monitoring utilization management effectiveness.
- HEDIS data reporting.

You and your staff may learn more about our Quality Improvement Program by calling 1-866-433-6041.

## Childhood Obesity

We're determined to help slow the rate of overweight children and adolescents. Working with providers like you, we can prevent the onset of serious diseases among our younger population.

Track your younger patients' BMI in their medical records, talk with parents about smart nutrition and activity and use the appropriate diagnoses and procedure codes on the claims you submit. Be sure to code the appropriate code for the BMI percentile for all patients screened.

As a reminder, here's how to manually calculate BMI using an accurate weight and height:

**STEP 1:** Weight (in pounds) divided by height (in inches) = Result 1

**STEP 2:** Result 1 divided by height (in inches) = Result 2

**STEP 3:** Result 2 X 703 = BMI



## 'Tis the Season

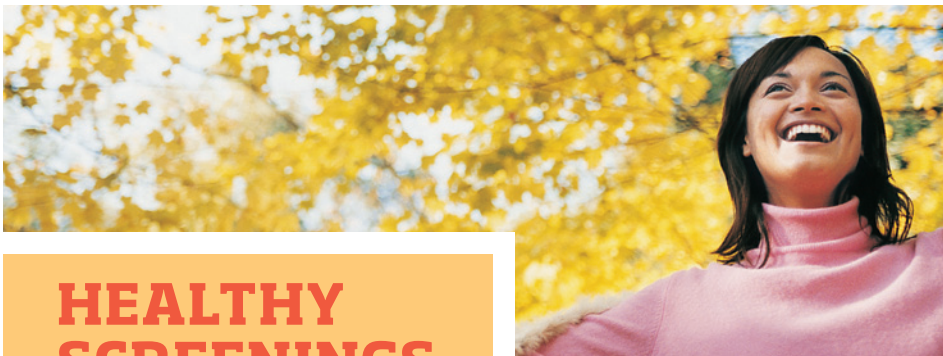
**W**e're nearing the time of year when more and more patients arrive seeking treatment for sore throats and cold-like symptoms. There are numerous causes of inflammation of the pharynx, including colds, flu, sinus drainage and environmental irritants. With infectious pharyngitis, however, the mucosa of the pharynx becomes inflamed after invasion by either a virus (as with mononucleosis) or a bacterium (as with strep throat).

You can help stave off unnecessary office visits by initiating an educational effort. In the coming weeks, distribute a checklist of causes, symptoms and treatments for sore throat that also explains when it's time to call for medical help. Include a reminder that antibiotics are reserved for cases such as strep throat, which is detected by testing.

Encourage patients—particularly parents of younger patients—to call your office promptly if they observe this cluster of symptoms indicative of strep throat:

- ➔ Sore throat but no cough
- ➔ Fever
- ➔ Red tonsils streaked with white (pus)
- ➔ Swollen neck glands (lymph nodes)

Display the information in your waiting room and post it on your practice's website.



## HEALTHY SCREENINGS

As a part of the patient interview and check of vital signs, consider adding a routine question to determine how recently women have received cancer screenings. Checkups provide a good opportunity to discuss the importance of these tests and explore the correct schedule for screening.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that women have a Pap test every two years starting at age 21. Women over 30 who have had three normal results in a row may have a Pap every three years. And women over 65 may be able to stop having the tests. However, women with weakened immune systems or HIV should be tested more frequently.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force and the National Cancer Institute agree that women of average breast cancer risk should speak with their doctors about mammograms beginning at age 40, and have the test as their doctor recommends. Starting at 50, women should have mammograms every one or two years, as recommended by their doctor.



ONLINE RESOURCES

## How Members Search Our Network

Absolute Total Care's website is a resource for members who wish to locate primary care providers, specialists, hospitals, community health centers, pharmacies and other medical facilities close to home.

From our site, [www.absolutetotalcare.com](http://www.absolutetotalcare.com), select "Find a Provider." Members may also call Absolute Total Care Member Services at 1-866-433-6041, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., for help finding a provider.

If any of your contact information has changed or is not listed accurately in our Provider Directory, call 1-866-433-6041, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## The Whole Picture

The condition of a medical office can play a role in members' perception of care.

**A**s part of our commitment to delivering quality service to our members, we ask network providers to maintain a professional practice environment. Absolute Total Care reserves the right to conduct provider site visits. Site visit audits are usually conducted as a result of member dissatisfaction or as part of a chart audit. The site visit auditor reviews the quality of the location where care is provided. The review assesses the accessibility and adequacy of the treatment and waiting areas.

### Below are general expectations for a practitioner's office:

→ Office must be clean and free of clutter, with unobstructed passageways.

- Office must be professional and secular.
- Signs identifying office must be visible.
- Office must have a separate waiting area with adequate seating.
- Clean restrooms must be available.
- Office environment must be physically safe.
- Network providers must have a professional and fully confidential telephone line and 24 hour availability.
- Member records and other confidential information must be locked up out of sight during the workday, and medication prescription pads and sample medications must be locked up and inaccessible to members.



**ONLINE:** Visit [www.absolutetotalcare.com](http://www.absolutetotalcare.com) for additional resources, including training documents, electronic transactions details and our provider manual.

ABSOLUTE TOTAL CARE



**1-866-433-6041**

[WWW.ABSOLUTETOTALCARE.COM](http://WWW.ABSOLUTETOTALCARE.COM)

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