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- Wellcare National Medicare Provider Newsletter MMP and Medicare Advantage Clinical and Payment policies
- (SCDHEC, 4/12/23)



Absolute Total Care supports about 5,000 births each year. Like many of you on the front lines, we see the obstacles to And we see opportunity for transformation. What are we doing?

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. Among other strategies, these programs leverage community health workers, doulas, and telehealth to support pregnant mothers, their babies, and families throughout the birth journey, and into those first years of life with a child.

What are we seeing? These and other efforts are only part of the solution, promoting improvement as we continue our efforts, because we're

• Infant Mortality Rates Birth Weights

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

Prenatal and Post-Partum Care Rates

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 – all in an effort to get to better health.

communities, families – and birth parents – requires transformative thinking, transformational solutions. Thank you for helping us find those solutions. Here's to future better headlines.

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 venture. I was in line waiting for my order and I saw two energetic college students saying hello. I surmised they were friends from the good old days of high school. Their mutual respect was evident as they greeted each other warmly

and shared a hug. One friend mentioned that they had recently graduated, and the colleague's

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

Focusing on behavioral health to support those we serve

response was a heartwarming congratulations.

The constant grind and stress of life are showing clear manifestations of behavioral health conditions. This is especially relevant for teens. They have escalating rates of early symptoms such as anxiety and loneliness. And there is a rapidly escalating rate of more severe presentations such as self-harm, substance abuse, depression, and suicide. The rates of

yet only 43.2% are receiving treatment. Nearly 20% of those experiencing depression or an anxiety disorder also have a

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

To avoid advanced behavioral health conditions, we at Absolute Total Care aspire to identify definitive risk factors for our diverse communities. We are launching programs to address the hardships of mental illness. One program called HALO uses innovation to identify early substance use disorder risk factors so that our members can be directed to experts in the community. Another program called Choose Tomorrow uses advanced innovation to identify and manage those that may

visits continue throughout the treatment course. We provide information to enhance medication therapy. And we aspire to

We appreciate your dedication in helping patients with their behavioral health needs. We join you in this noble work, as we all want to see our patients meet their unlimited potential. That potential may include a future graduation and hug from

assist you in securing follow up visit after a hospitalization or emergency department visit (ideally within one week.)

substance use disorder. About 60% of adolescents with a major depressive episode did not get treatment.

understanding that different communities may require different strategies to achieve health outcomes.

Dr. Barry Lewis

be at risk for suicide. You can read more about both programs below. Behavioral health care can be identified as a continuum of prevention, identification, and management. We partner with the you, our provider community, to break the stigma of behavioral health care. We work with you to ensure physician

an old friend- a beautiful reminder of why we do what we do.

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

A focus on HEDIS®: Influenza Immunizations

• Recommend/ Offer the flu vaccination as soon as it is available

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

way to request an authorization is through the secure Provider Portal. To access the Absolute Total Care secure Provider Portal visit www.absolutetotalcare.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). To access the Wellcare secure Provider Portal visit www.wellcare.com/South-Carolina. Not registered on our secure Provider Portals yet? It only takes a few moments to sign up for an account online and start benefitting from the many useful features provided. If your provider office is not already a registered user and needs assistance or training on submitting prior authorizations, please contact Provider Relations.

Providers must obtain prior authorization for certain services and procedures. The fastest and most efficient

Quality

tracking codes for performance measurement will decrease the need for record abstraction and chart review, and thereby minimize administrative burdens on physicians and other health care professionals. Several HEDIS®, QRS and Stars measures care gaps can be closed with the use of category codes. Some examples include measures that rely on results such as:

blood pressure readings (CBP, BPD)

Eye exams and evidence or no evidence of retinopathy

Ensuring Access: Appointment Accessibility

Social Determinants of Health:

system nearly twice as much as members without SUD."

Like the HALO project, a forthcoming Absolute Total Care initiative beginning in August will use data and community partnerships for early identification

"The program is called Choose Tomorrow, which I think beautifully captures our hope for our members," says Beth Schumpert, senior manager of care management. "We want our members to have hope, and we can help give

and service delivery for another population: those at risk of suicide.

Choose Tomorrow promotes care options first by finding members in

African American

Native American

Native Hawaiian

Asian or Pacific Islander

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Unknown

-3 N/A

Other

Black

0

Hispanic

Caucasian

Not Provided

English

Spanish

Russian

American Sign Language

Vietnamese

Chinese (Mandarin)

Other

(Blank)

German

Portuguese

Grand Total

Spanish

Vietnamese

Arabic

Russian

Mandarin

Brazilian Portuguese

French

Hmong

Cantonese

Somali

Taishanese

Fukienese Tigrigna (Eritrea)

Bengali

Malay Sinhala

Thai

Ewe Twi

Nepali

Uzbek

Haitian Creole

Romanian

Tagalog **Grand Total**

2022

with spoken language request.

terminology and phraseology.

committed to the following:

Count of ASL

Language from

Membership Data

Accessing an Interpreter for Absolute Total Care Members in Your Office

includes documentation that the staff member's proficiency was assessed.

you can use them to make your relationship with your patients stronger and more effective.

Providing TTY access for members who are hearing impaired through 711.

Where are you from?

minor in criminal justice.

How did you get into healthcare?

Patients can never be required to bring their own interpreters.

not a qualified interpreter immediately available.

Interpreter/Translation Services Offered by Absolute Total Care

3

32

167

831

1,057

1,311

2,800

5,794

hemoglobin A1c results (HBD)

Pain Assessment

treatments quickly."

Suicide Prevention

them hope by providing care options."

A focus on HEDIS®: Category II Codes

availability and reduce the unnecessary use of emergency rooms. Please review the appointment availability standards in the Provider Manual. Appointment Type **Access Standard**

For more information on HEDIS, see the Quick Reference Guide: https://www.absolutetotalcare.com/content/dam/

Are your patients able to obtain services when they are needed? Absolute Total Care monitors the availability of our

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

Within 12 weeks Within 48 hours Immediately upon presentation at a service delivery site

New programs offer members support and services with life

Absolute Total Care is offering new resources to help members with

The HALO (Health Assistance, Linkage, and Outreach) integrated care

Substance Use Disorder (SUD), as well as support those at risk for suicide.

management program enhances current SUD treatment and recovery efforts. HALO enables Absolute Total Care care managers to identify members at risk or currently using substances excessively or inappropriately, then engage these members and connect them to resources to address their SUD-related care needs. "Almost ten percent of South Carolinians live with substance-use related problems," says Eve Williamson, RN, CCM, manager of clinical case management. "And of course we see this with our Absolute Total Care members as well. HALO represents another tool our team can use to help our affected or at-risk members early, connecting them to effective

Substance Use Disorder

need. Utilizing an innovative modeling tool, Choose Tomorrow targets and outreaches 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 Schumpert. "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. We want them to know they can make it to tomorrow. And we'll help them get there." **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.

Membership data, and the population grows more diverse each year. The data reveals that Absolute Total Care's most prevalent language is English, which is 97.12% of the total membership, followed by Spanish (2.75%), Russian (0.05%), American Sign Language (0.03%), Vietnamese (0.03%), Chinese-Mandarin (0.01%), Other (0.01%) and then by German and Portuguese (0.00%). **Table 1. Absolute Total Care 2022 Membership Data** 2022 Absolute Total Care's Membership **Membership Count** Percentage of Total Population Languages

244,098

6,920

118

74

65

36

35

8

2

1

251,357

Absolute Total Care evaluates state-level census data to determine the languages spoken in its service area and determine

52,529

50,000

line of business for calendar year 2022. The data represented are results of the 2022 LAP analysis.

68,962

To meet the needs of its ever growing and culturally diverse membership, Absolute Total Care offers a language assistance program (LAP) to its members. This report summarizes Absolute Total Care's language assistance programs for its Medicaid

The following table (Table 1) reveals Absolute Total Care members speak more than eight reported languages from

100,000

117,842

150,000

200,000

250,000

97.12%

2.75%

0.05%

0.03%

0.03%

0.01%

0.01%

0.00%

0.00% 0.00%

100.00%

89.50%

2.24%

1.67%

1.16%

1.05%

0.80%

0.11%

0.07%

0.07%

0.07%

0.04%

0.04%

0.04%

0.04%

0.04%

0.04%

0.04% 0.04%

0.04%

0.04%

0.04%

0.04%

0.04%

0.04%

100.00%

Percentage of Members

Identified with ASL/Total

Medicaid Membership

0.03%

300,000

Pashto (Afghanistan) 20 0.72% Ukrainian 11 0.40% Korean 10 0.36% 8 0.29% Burmese Albanian 7 0.25% Swahili 0.25% Portuguese 4 0.14% 3 0.11% Gujarati Karen 3 0.11% 3 Kurdish 0.11%

3

2

2

2

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

4,195,696

Sign Language Interpreter Requests

If you have patients who need ASL interpreters, please contact Absolute Total Care Language Assistance line as you would

Total Medicaid

Membership

251,357

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 interpreters. To increase success for members that require ASL services, please call three business days in advance to coordinate face-to-face interpretation.

Request for

ASL

Services

 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.

Absolute Total Care medical advice line, nurse advice line, provider 24-hour access, seven days a week for

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

I was born and raised in Hartsville, in Darlington County. I live there still.

interpretation of Spanish or the coordination of non-English/Spanish needs via the Language Line.

Health Plan. I never looked back. I love this work, especially the operations piece. (Carolina Vice President Operations Crescent Health Plan was later acquired by Absolute Total Care.) 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 I 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!

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

I'm a graduate of the University of South Carolina. I received my major in psychology, with a

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

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.

Jennifer Helms

requested by the member or designee.

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.

How can you be sure we're making the right changes, that we're on the road to true progress?

Ambetter from Absolute Total Care Clinical & Payment Policies

"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 Yet the myriad issues related to the outcomes are so complex, so deep-rooted and generational in South Carolina. A holistic, systemic, long-term transformation in our approach to serving pregnant mothers and newborns is required.

Transforming Birth Outcomes A Message from John McClellan, Chief Executive Officer "Latest South Carolina infant, maternal, mortality reports reveal alarming trends"

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, if needed. The program also provides pregnancy and newborn health information, mental health services, dedicated care managers, breastfeeding support, assistance with substance use/abuse, and connections to community resources.

 C-Section Rates Gestational Age

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: Early Intervention for High-Risk Pregnancies Rates

Where are we going? The best way to a healthy life is a healthy start.

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. Engaging not only providers, but Just What The Doctor Ordered A Message From Dr. Barry Lewis, Chief Medical Director

reflection and hope. Of course the reality is that life's travails can challenge those hopes; hence, mental health prevalence warrants a state of preparation and action. Every day, every month. behavioral health conditions for adolescents were doubling and tripling even before the pandemic; and the pandemic has just added fuel to this universal health concern. Here are some statistics on behavioral health. Anxiety disorder affects 6.8 million adults or 3.1% of the U.S. population,

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

their health journey. So your feedback is very important to us. The Absolute Total Care Provider Satisfaction Survey will be coming out soon. Thank you for communicating to us through this important survey, and helping us continue and improve our efforts to care for those who depend on us.

 Make a strong influenza 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. The dangers of not being vaccinated, especially if at high risk How the flu can spread • There is no live flu virus in flu shots. They cannot cause the flu.

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. Here are some steps providers can take to promote influenza immunizations:

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

• https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/flu-vaccine-recommendation.htm

Other examples include measures that tell us a specific service as complete or the status of a service:

centene/absolute-total-care/pdfs/SC1PROGDE82099E 0000 Final QRG-508R.pdf

network practitioners. Availability is key to member care and treatment outcomes.

https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/professionals/acip/acip-2022-23-summary-of-recommendations.pdf

CPT Category II codes are supplemental tracking codes that can be used for performance measurement. The use of the

• https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/prepare-practice-tools.htm

Routine visits with a PCP Within four to six weeks Routine visits with a unique specialist Urgent or nonemergency visits Emergent or emergency visits Office wait time for scheduled routine appointments Not to exceed 45 minutes Walk-in nonurgent appointments Should be seen if possible or scheduled for an appointment Should be seen within 48 hours Walk-in urgent appointments

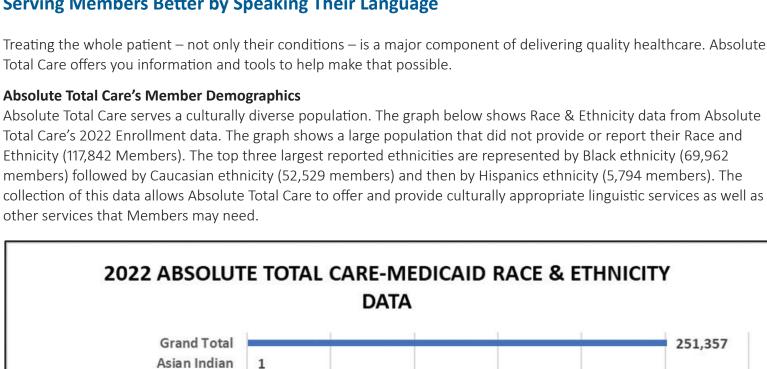
Based on the SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) model, HALO uses Peer Recovery Specialists (PRS) who leverage their personal experiences with substance use disorder, combined with clinical knowledge and skills to meaningfully engage Absolute Total Care members in their own recovery. "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. "Obviously, our most important goal is improved quality of life, and the reduction or elimination of substance use," says Williamson.

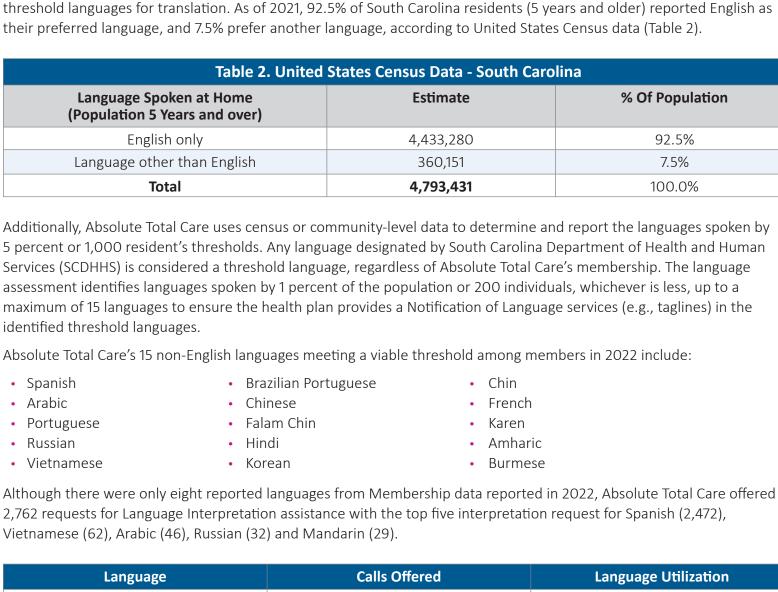
"Plus, we know these members have greater ED and inpatient utilization, and average length of stays, all of which costs the

delivering that effective combination of early intervention and proven treatment. For more information about HALO read here: https://www.centene.com/news/whole-health-interventions-for-substance-use-drive-positive-change.html?utm

Built on the platform of member and provider engagement, plus key community partnerships for services, HALO is

content=sf267541010&utm medium=spredfast&utm source=twitter&utm campaign=CNC&sf267541010=1





2,472

62

46

32

29

22

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. Not sure of your patient's language? Go to our website at www.absolutetotalcare.com, click on "Language Assistance" in the footer at the bottom of the page, and have the member point to their language. If it is not listed, you can work with the interpreter service to identify the right language. You may also find out a patient's language by logging on to our provider portal and downloading your Patient List, or by contacting our Member Services department at the toll-free number located on the back of the member's ID card. 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

• Minors may not interpret, even if their parent or other relative consents, unless there is an emergency and there is

Providers that use bilingual staff to communicate with patients must ensure that bilingual staff can interpret effectively,

Providers are strongly encouraged to document in the medical record the use of family, friends and minors as interpreters.

Reach out to your Provider Relations Specialist with Absolute Total Care to learn more about these requirements, and how

accurately, and to and from the language of the patient and English, using any necessary specialized vocabulary

If an interpreter is offered and the patient declines, the provider should also document this in the medical record.

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. To meet this need, Absolute Total Care is

• An accompanying adult may interpret if the patient agrees and if it is appropriate to the situation.

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 did you attend college and what did you study?

Stay in Touch! Reaching Us ... 1-866-433-6041 to reach us. Reaching You ... receives timely information to help you do business with us. update/verify your contact information or status. You can also check your information on our secure provider portal at www.absolutetotalcare.com. Please let us know at least 30 days before you expect a change to your information.

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/

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 Absolute Total Care values everything you do to deliver quality care to our members. We want to make sure your practice 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