

# Memorandum

To: Gold Coast Health Plan Primary Care Providers

From: Kim Timmerman, Director of Quality Improvement

Re: **Asthma Medication Ratio (AMR) – OptumRx Provider Outreach Campaign**

Date: May 15, 2019

Over the last decade, the prevalence and cost of asthma have increased, affecting more than 25 million people in the U.S., according to the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). Clinical practice guidelines and field research have both illustrated the significance of adherence to appropriate medication management in controlling asthma. It has shown that patients who use both controllers and relievers in their regimens, instead of relievers alone, experience fewer exacerbations and thus fewer visits to the Emergency Room.

## **Retrospective Drug Utilization Review**

*Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) and OptumRx Provider Outreach Campaign*

In October, Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) collaborated with its Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM), OptumRx, to launch a yearlong asthma medication provider outreach campaign. The campaign aims to positively impact clinical outcomes for patients with persistent asthma and improve the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS<sup>®</sup>) Asthma Medication Ratio (AMR) performance measure. The AMR measure looks at the percentage of members ages 5 to 64 who were identified as having persistent asthma and had a ratio of controller medications to total asthma medications of 50% or greater during the measurement year.

As a provider who serves GCHP members, you may already be familiar with this intervention. The campaign is a Retrospective Drug Utilization Review (RDUR) of asthma medication regimens. It involves a faxed letter to notify providers of patients who have suboptimal asthma control and may need a review of their asthma therapy medications. The letter includes an introduction of the intervention and a summary of the patient's pharmaceutical history that is causing concern.

If the provider agrees that the patient would benefit from the addition of a controller medication or there is an absence of a reliever prescription, the letter advises that the provider take the appropriate steps to complete this action. GCHP encourages scheduling the member for a follow-up appointment to discuss their medication regimen and provide education on how best to control their asthma. The letter also includes instructions in case the provider did not prescribe the listed medications or the patient is not under their care.

## **Resources**

For more information on the RDUR intervention, please contact GCHP's Quality Improvement Department at [hedis@goldchp.org](mailto:hedis@goldchp.org). You can also find information about the AMR measure [here](#).