

Memorandum

To: Gold Coast Health Plan Primary Care Providers and Pediatricians

From: Kim Osajda, RN, MSN
Director of Quality Improvement

Re: **Appropriate Strep Testing for Children with Pharyngitis**

Date: September 29, 2016

The HEDIS® Measure that Assesses Antibiotic Use in Children

One of the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) measures Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) evaluates is the *Appropriate Testing for Children with Pharyngitis (CWP)*. This measure evaluates the percentage of children, ages 3 to 18, who were diagnosed with pharyngitis, received a group A streptococcus (strep) test in the outpatient, observation, and emergency department settings to confirm this diagnosis, and were dispensed antibiotics.

The goal of the CWP measure is to reduce inappropriate use of antibiotics by requesting providers to follow clinical practice guidelines that recommend children infected with group A strep be treated with antibiotics based on appropriate lab tests.

GCHP's CWP Rates

The table below shows that since GCHP's first measurement year in 2012, the annual rates for the CWP measure have been very low. According to the National Committee for Quality Assurance's (NCQA) national percentile ranking, these scores rank in the 10th percentile. Lower rates indicate lower utilization of appropriate strep testing in children diagnosed with pharyngitis.

Measurement Year	2012	2013	2014	2015
CWP Rate	42.97	43.92	41.49	51.46

Recommendations for Appropriate Strep Testing

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) have created a guide on the appropriate use of antibiotics in children called *Careful Antibiotic Use: Pediatric Appropriate Treatment Summary*. One of the recommendations is the use of strep tests in conjunction with clinical assessments to confirm a diagnosis of pharyngitis prior to prescribing antibiotics. As a primary care

physician, you are required to provide care according to these nationally-recognized standards.

[Click here](#) to download the CDC/AAP guide.

If you have any questions, please contact GCHP's Quality Improvement Department at 1-805-437-5592 or hedis@goldchp.org.

Thank you for your commitment to improving the health of GCHP's members.