



Memorandum

To: Gold Coast Health Plan Primary Care Providers

From: Nancy Wharfield, M.D., Chief Medical Officer
Kim Timmerman, MHA, CPHQ, Director of Quality Improvement

Re: **Managing Diabetes During COVID-19**

Date: June 8, 2020

People with diabetes who are infected with COVID-19 are at an increased risk of experiencing severe symptoms and complications from the virus. The state Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) recently released considerations for provider visit re-engineering and patient support resources, reminding providers of the importance of continued management of patients with diabetes during this time.

Provider Re-Engineering

Telemedicine

- Video Visits:
 - Provide an iPad to the patient while they are in their car outside the clinic.
 - Sanitize the iPad in between visits.
- Telemedicine Applications:
 - [Tidepool](#): Use this free technology, supported by grants from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, to streamline workflow and enable patients to upload their diabetes data to the clinic from multiple types of devices.
 - [Continuous Glucose Monitoring \(CGM\)](#): The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) offers comprehensive information about CGM and the role it can play in provider and patient management of diabetes. Information from CGM can be downloaded to a computer or smart device for TeleVisits. Please note that prior authorization is required for CGM.

Provider Project

- Project Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) Diabetes Program:
 - [A hub team](#) of experts virtually trains primary care providers (PCP) on how to deliver subspecialty care in primary care settings regarding diabetes amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - ECHO sessions enable PCPs to treat patients with complex diabetes in their practices and communities using technology.

Support for Patients

Medication Availability

- In addition to a supply of insulin for the current and following week, ensure that a minimum of a 90-day supply of maintenance medications (generic and brand name) is given to the patient.
- Encourage patients to call on time for medications.
- Promote home delivery and curbside pick-up of medications.

Use of a Quick Reference Guide

- Develop a one-page guide with important local phone numbers, website links to pharmacies and community support, and personal emergency contacts.

Diabetes Self Care Tips

- Provide education on diabetes care:
 - [Make a plan](#) by gathering supplies and other important information in case patients get sick.
 - [Meal planning](#) and [fitness](#): Staying healthy to prevent other illnesses.
 - [Physical activity](#) recommendations for different age groups.
- [COVID-19: If You Do Get Sick, Know What to Do](#): Information from the American Diabetes Association for those who may be experiencing symptoms.

Thank you for continuing to serve our communities and protecting our members with diabetes during this difficult time. For more information, contact the Quality Improvement Department at QualityImprovement@goldchp.org.