

NetworkNotes

United Behavioral Health-Albany Care Advocacy Center News for The Empire Plan Clinicians and Facilities

Fall 2009

How the OptumHealth NYS Empire Plan Individualized Care Management Program for Depression Benefits our Members

In January 2009, OptumHealthSM Behavioral Solutions (OptumHealth) launched an innovative Disease Management Program to improve the care of NYS Empire Plan members experiencing depression. This is an important program because depression impacts 18.8 million adults in the United States (or nearly 9.5% of the adult population), according to the National Institutes of Mental Health (2000).¹

The estimated economic cost of depression among adults per year is \$30-\$44 billion in services and lost productivity, according to the National Institutes of Mental Health (1999).² Major Depression is also the leading cause of disability in the U.S. for ages 15-44.³ And, depression carries a significant mortality risk, as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1999) estimates Major Depressive Disorder accounts for 20%-35% of all deaths by suicide.⁴

OptumHealth and the NYS Empire Plan are offering voluntary Individualized Case Management (ICM) which is designed to help members who experience depression to achieve optimal health by providing information and care management support. Members who are referred to the ICM Program and who agree to participate are partnered with a licensed mental health case manager working to support treatment through disease awareness education while



addressing and improving treatment adherence. Case Managers assist members in finding and accessing community-based resources that may help them to increase coping skills. Additional Case Manager interventions include encouraging family support and assisting with coordination of care among health care providers.

The eligibility criteria for the Depression ICM Program include:

- Adult 18 years of age or older
- A diagnosis of depression or bipolar disorder with depressed symptoms
- Difficulty accessing mental health resources
- A demonstrated failure to engage in outpatient aftercare as defined by either appointment non-attendance or medication non-adherence
- High frequency of visits with evidence of non-improvement and case complexity

Program participants receive educational mailings on depression and treatment options and have access to educational articles and screening tools for depression on the web at www.liveandworkwell.com (access code: Empire).

Lastly, while enrollees are getting the care they need, OptumHealth will provide them with ongoing education, support and resources. Members may speak with one of our licensed clinicians for a referral to a behavioral health network provider in their area 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-877-7NYSHIP (877-769-7447), option 3.

You are encouraged to refer Empire Plan members who meet the eligibility criteria and who you think would benefit clinically from our ICM program. If you have someone in your care who you would like to refer, please refer them to the above phone number. Or, you may contact us directly to make a referral to the Individualized Case Management Program.

References

1. National Institute of Mental Health. (2000). Depression. Retrieved December 29, 2003 from <http://www.nimh.gov/publicat/depression.cfm>
2. National Institute of Mental Health. (1999). The Effects of Depression in the Workplace. Retrieved December 29, 2003 from <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/workplace.cfm>.
3. The World Health Organization. The World Health Report 2004: Changing History, Annex Table 3: Burden of disease in DALYs by cause, sex, and mortality stratum in WHO regions, estimates for 2002. Geneva: WHO, 2004.
4. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1999). *Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General-Executive Summary*. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Mental Health Services, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Mental Health.

ADHD and Eating Disorder Programs also available for NYS Empire Plan members

For more information on the programs visit www.liveandworkwell.com (access code: Empire)