Clinicians, office managers pleased with Plan’s customer service

According to the results of a new survey of nearly 500 office managers and clinical providers, BMC HealthNet Plan is easier to work with, processes claims better, and is better at customer service than the other MassHealth (Medicaid) managed care organizations (MCOs) in Massachusetts.

The Plan commissioned an independent market research firm, Market Measurement, Inc., for the second year to conduct a market research study designed to monitor provider and office manager satisfaction with the Plan. The study measured providers’ experience with BMC HealthNet Plan’s MassHealth and Commonwealth Care products.

The study revealed:
• Ninety percent of providers and office managers are “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” on an overall basis with the Plan’s ability to meet their needs.
• Carl Hendrickson, president of Market Measurement, described this as being “well above average for a Medicaid MCO nationwide.”

Plan expands to Beverly, Gloucester areas

With the inclusion of the Beverly and Gloucester service areas, BMC HealthNet Plan’s MassHealth product is now being offered to members across 84% of the state.

(Continued on page 2)
Winter can be a harsh season for asthma sufferers. Cold, dry air irritates the lungs and limits breathing, causing wheezing, tightness in the chest, and coughing. By helping your patients to create an asthma action plan, they can effectively avoid unnecessary emergency visits to the hospital, and get more enjoyment from the winter season.

Here are a few suggestions for your asthma patients:

• Encourage them to get a flu vaccine.
• Urge them to be aggressive with asthma control and symptom prevention during very cold days. For example, wearing scarves around their mouths warms the air they breathe and helps prevent bronchospasm.
• Remind them to keep their inhalers close to their bodies. Warm medication is more easily distributed into the respiratory system.
• Make sure they have a written asthma action plan. It can provide details on anticipating indoor triggers such as dust mites, pet allergens, smoke and viruses that can worsen asthma symptoms.
• Asthma guidelines are posted on the Plan’s Web site. Click on “Clinical Guidelines” in the provider section for more helpful tips to share with your parents.

Help asthmatic patients enjoy the winter season

Plan expands to Beverly, Gloucester service areas

The Plan’s Commonwealth Care product is offered to 100% of the state’s population. “With this latest expansion, we are now serving MassHealth members in 32 of the state’s 38 service areas and more than 350 cities and towns,” said Jean Haynes, the Plan’s executive director. “This is in addition to our already statewide Commonwealth Care presence.”

During 2007, the Plan has added eight new service areas: Worcester, Lawrence, Athol, Gardner/Fitchburg, Somerville, Haverhill, Beverly and Gloucester.

Hospitals participating with BMC HealthNet Plan in these areas include: UMass Medical Center and St. Vincent in Worcester; Lawrence General in Lawrence; Athol Memorial in Athol; Haywood Hospital in Gardner; Health Alliance Hospital with two campuses in Fitchburg and Leominster; Clinton Hospital in Clinton; Mt. Auburn Hospital in Cambridge; Anna Jaques Hospital in Newburyport; Beverly Hospital in Beverly; and Addison Gilbert Hospital in Gloucester. The Plan has also contracted with many primary and specialty care providers in these areas.

Provider satisfaction survey

(Continued from page 1)

organizations in terms of “being easy to work with.”

• When comparing the 2006 survey to the 2007, the proportion of “excellent” ratings for the Plan’s provider account representatives increased significantly for virtually all evaluation criteria, including responsiveness and overall ability to meet provider needs.

The Plan utilizes the survey findings to develop action plans to support continual improvement and to strive to make greater advances in provider satisfaction.
Andrea Gelzer, MD, MS named Plan’s CMO

Andrea Gelzer, MD, has been appointed the new chief medical officer at BMC HealthNet Plan. Dr. Gelzer previously worked at CIGNA Corporation where she was senior vice president of clinical public affairs. At CIGNA, she led initiatives on health care disparities, disease and utilization management, health literacy, and health information network development.

Dr. Gelzer has been a national champion in developing performance metrics and data aggregation methodology as they relate to physician performance measurement. She holds numerous professional appointments including Commissioner for the Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology and member of the Citizen’s Advisory Task Force to the Centers for Disease Control. She is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians and a member of the American Medical Association.

Plan to convert member ID numbers

The Plan will issue new member ID numbers and cards to ensure a greater level of privacy for all new and existing members beginning in 2008. All members will be issued ID cards with a randomly generated number. The format is prefixed with the letter B and is followed by eight digits, e.g., B12345678.

Medical record documentation audits now in effect

Effective November 1, the Plan’s Quality Department staff now initiates medical record documentation audits at practice sites. This initiative ensures that medical record management and record keeping processes are in compliance with the Plan and NCQA standards for medical record documentation.

Audits consist of two parts:

- a review of the practice’s policies and procedures on confidentiality, storage, access and availability of medical records
- an audit of a sample of medical records for documentation that supports communication, coordination and continuity of care to promote efficient and effective treatment

The Plan sends medical records request lists to practice managers approximately two weeks prior to the on-site reviews, which are scheduled at mutually agreeable times.

Plan’s Web tools make credentialing easier

The Plan has added new tools to its Web site that will make the time-consuming task of credentialing easier. We’re collaborating with the Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH) to better serve you. Visit the provider pages of the Plan’s Web site and click on the credentialing Web site. You will then be able to create a password and user name, and complete your application online. You or your designated administrator may also enter information common to a number of providers in your practice, or send updates.

Provider news in brief
Seven-day initiative helps ensure continuity of behavioral health care

The Plan urges you to follow this clinical best practice: after your behavioral health members are discharged from the hospital, schedule a follow-up appointment with them within seven days. This is a proven and effective method that helps them avoid a relapse and stay healthy.

BMC HealthNet Plan offers behavioral health supports for members, including:

• Community service workers who can help arrange transportation if that’s a barrier to patients keeping their seven-day appointment.

• A behavioral health line for members to help them choose a new therapist or ask questions relating to their follow-up care. That number is 1-888-217-3501.

• A $25.00 CVS gift card is available for members who work with their hospital discharge planner and behavioral health provider to plan and keep follow-up appointments. This form can be requested by calling the Plan’s behavioral health number listed above.

• Handy reminder slips, available in pad format, will be supplied to providers upon request. These note pads have a space for entering the appointment date and time. They also list the Plan’s behavioral health line members can call for questions and assistance.