

Rights and Responsibilities

Member Rights and Responsibilities

Members have the right to:

- Receive information about Harvard Pilgrim, its services, its practitioners and providers, and members' rights and responsibilities.
- Be treated with respect and recognition of their dignity and right to privacy.
- Participate with practitioners in decision-making regarding their health care.
- Have a candid discussion of appropriate or medically necessary treatment options for their conditions, regardless of cost or benefit coverage.
- Voice complaints or appeals about Harvard Pilgrim or the care provided.
- Make recommendations regarding the organization's members' rights and responsibilities policies.

Members have the responsibility to:

- Provide, to the extent possible, information that Harvard Pilgrim and its practitioners and providers need in order to care for them.
- Follow the plans and instructions for care that they have agreed on with their practitioners.
- Understand their health problems and participate in developing mutually agreed upon treatment goals to the degree possible.
- Additional rights and responsibilities may apply by state.

Participation in Treatment Decisions

Providers must include members in the planning and implementation of their care by:

- Educating patients regarding their health needs.
- Sharing the findings of history and physical examinations.
- Sharing results of all lab and clinical findings in an understandable manner that allows the patient to grasp the treatment options.
- Discussing potential treatment options (without regard to plan coverage), side effects of treatment and management of symptoms.
- Recognizing the patient has the final course of action among clinically acceptable choices.

If the member is unable to fully participate in his/her treatment decisions, he or she has the right to be represented by parents, guardians, family members, or other conservators.

Mental Health Parity

Federal and state laws require that we provide behavioral health (mental health and/or substance abuse) services to our members in the same way we provide physical health services. We refer to these laws as "parity." It means that:

- We will give members the same level of benefits and charge the same co-payments, co-insurance and deductibles for mental health and substance abuse needs as for physical needs.

- We have similar prior authorization (permission) requirements and treatment limitations for mental health and substance abuse services and physical health services.
- We will provide you or your member with the medical necessity criteria that we use for prior authorization upon you or your member's request.
- We will give the member the reason for any denial of authorization for mental health or substance abuse services within a reasonable time frame.

Communication Resources

Language Interpretation Services

Harvard Pilgrim offers free language interpretation services in more than 160 languages, through Pacific Interpreters at 800-264-1548.

- For more information, call Member Services at 888-333-4742.

TTY/TDD Teletypewriter/Telecommunication Device for the Deaf

TTY is the telephone technology used for communicating with deaf and hearing-impaired people. Harvard Pilgrim uses the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), a public service, for TTY communications. To access TRS, please call 711. TTY devices are located in Member Services and in the Sales Department.

For more information about TRS, call:

Massachusetts	800-439-2370
Maine	800-457-1220
New Hampshire	800-735-2964

PUBLICATION HISTORY

01/01/12	removed First Seniority Freedom information
01/15/13	reviewed; no changes
01/28/15	updated TTY information
01/01/23	reviewed; no changes
10/01/23	updated with mental health parity information