Harvard Pilgrim’s Patient Education Materials

Harvard Pilgrim’s patient education materials were written by medical writers and reviewed by clinicians to ensure clinical accuracy and usefulness in a practice setting. You can print these information sheets and distribute them to your patients.

To order or get more information, please contact Clinical Programs at 800-287-9793.

Care and Disease Management Programs

Harvard Pilgrim identifies specific populations (i.e., members with asthma, diabetes, etc.) for enrollment in its Disease and Health Risk Management programs. These programs aim to improve the medical care and self-management of our members with these conditions.

Disease and Health Risk Management programs are population-based, evidence-based systematic approaches to improving care and are available to all members with relevant diagnoses. Members are identified through algorithms based on medical and/or pharmacy claims, and laboratory results, as well as health risk appraisal results, referrals by providers and self-referral.

Program components include:

- Clinical practice guidelines for effective care
- Patient identification and outreach
- Identification of high-risk patients for care management
- Patient education in managing their condition in order to reduce adverse outcomes and maximize quality of life

Clinical Guidelines

The clinical guidelines are designed to assist clinicians by providing an analytical framework for the evaluation and treatment of the more common problems of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care members. Most of these clinical guidelines have been developed by the Harvard Pilgrim Clinical Guidelines Program. Some have been developed through collaborative efforts (e.g., the Massachusetts Health Quality Partners and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health). For a copy of any of these guidelines, accompanying articles, or tools, please call the Medical Management department at 617-509-5739.

Harvard Pilgrim’s Clinical Guidelines Program

Harvard Pilgrim Health Care clinical guidelines are developed through an evidence-based process, which begins with either nationally promulgated guidelines or an extensive review of the published medical literature and utilizes both expert opinion and Harvard Pilgrim practitioner input to develop draft guidelines. The final phase of review consists of commentary and approval of the appropriate cross-regional Clinical Advisory Committee(s), such as Internal Medicine and Cardiology for approval of
Cholesterol Guidelines. Guidelines are then reviewed at least every two years and updated to reflect both scientific advances in treatment and practical experience gained from using the guideline. This review process is initiated sooner if emerging evidence warrants. As guidelines are developed or revised, they are communicated to all affiliated practitioners through the Harvard Pilgrim Provider Web site. Written notification is also sent to all affiliated practitioners of the availability of the guidelines.

These clinical guidelines are designed to assist practitioners by providing an analytical framework for the evaluation and treatment of the more common problems of HPHC members. They are not intended either to replace a practitioner's judgment or establish a protocol for all patients with a particular condition. It is understood that some patients will not fit the clinical conditions contemplated by a guideline and that a guideline will not always establish the only appropriate approach to a problem.

Selection of Guideline Topics

The criteria for selecting topics for guideline development includes: conditions that affect a high percentage of the membership population, unexplained variation in clinical practices and utilization, resource considerations in the context of relative efficacy of alternative treatments, risk management issues, introduction of new technology, and/or quality concerns on the part of practitioners and patients.

To date Harvard Pilgrim has adopted and implemented an array of guidelines in the outpatient setting which define best practices in key clinical areas. Harvard Pilgrim's screening and prevention guidelines, a collaborative document developed through the Massachusetts Health Quality Partners, cover the areas of adult medicine, pediatrics, and gynecology. Harvard Pilgrim also has other clinical practice guidelines on various topics related to the following systems: Cardiorespiratory, Endocrine, Gastrointestinal, Mental Health, Musculoskeletal, and Obstetrics/Gynecology.

Updating Guidelines

All clinical and preventive care guidelines are reviewed, at least every two years, by the Medical Director, Utilization Management and Clinical Policy (or designee's). Consequent to this review, guidelines may be "reinstated" (for another 2 years), "scheduled for revision" or "retired". In addition to communicating guideline updates to practitioners, Harvard Pilgrim's Preventive Care Recommendations are also communicated to members through the member newsletter, Your Health.