

NOVEMBER 2005

2004 CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the MetroPlus 2004 Consumer Assessment of Health Plan Satisfaction (CAHPS) survey are now available. CAHPS is a standardized member satisfaction survey developed by the National Committee for Quality Assurance and is used by health plans nationwide. The survey includes child and adult Member rated overall satisfaction with the health plan, the health-care provided, the Member's personal doctor and specialist care.

MetroPlus scored significantly above average relative to a national Medicaid benchmark on the following measures:

Category	Measure
Child and Adult	Overall Rating of Health Plan
Child and Adult	(No) Delays in care while waiting for plan approval
Child and Adult	Getting a provider you are happy with
Adult	Got an interpreter

Congratulations go out to the participating providers and staff of Bellevue Medical Center (Bellevue) and Segundo Ruiz Belvis Diagnostic and Treatment Center (Belvis) for their distinction on the 2004 CAHPS. Bellevue is the only facility to score above the MetroPlus average on "Getting Care Quickly" and Belvis scored above both the MetroPlus average and Medicaid average on "Courteous and Helpful Office Staff" for the second year in a row.

In addition to identifying good performance, these survey results provide MetroPlus with valuable feedback to help direct quality improvements efforts. Once again, Members rated the health care provided by our participating providers as significantly below average with respect to the overall measures of "Getting Care

Quickly and "Courteous and Helpful Office Staff". Participating Providers and staff must strive to implement interventions that change how Members experience the health care services provided so that they respond more positively to the following CAHPS questions in the future:

Getting Care Quickly

- Did you get help when calling during regular office hours?
- Did you get urgent care as soon as you wanted?
- Did you get a regular/routine appointment as soon as you wanted?
- Were you taken to an exam room within 15 minutes of appointment?

Courteous and Helpful Office Staff

- Did the office staff treat you with respect and courtesy?
- Was the office staff as helpful as you thought they should be?

Improvement begins with meeting and then exceeding what is expected. Please remember:

- Access to services must be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This includes telephone access to participating providers during normal business hours, after hours, weekends, and during short and long term leaves of absence. A message instructing Members to go to the Emergency Room is not acceptable.
- Urgent care must be provided within 24 hours.
- Although a regular/routine appointment must be scheduled within 4 weeks, the sooner it can be scheduled, the better both for Member's perception and his/her health.

(cont'd)



A Message from the Medical Director

The 2004 Consumer Satisfaction Survey results have come in and once again MetroPlus has significantly exceeded the average of a national Medicaid benchmark relative to overall health plan experience. Also, based on performance on both QARR and CAHPS, the New York State Department of Health has awarded MetroPlus the maximum quality incentive available to Medicaid health plans. MetroPlus is the only health plan in New York City, and one of only four in the state to obtain the maximum incentive. Thank you for all your hard work in partnering with MetroPlus to keep Members delighted with their experience with MetroPlus and its provider network.

- Arnold Saperstein, MD

- It is important to bring the patient into the exam room within 15 minutes of the appointment and to remind the patient not to show up early for the appointment.
- Make sure office staff treat others with the same respect, courtesy and helpfulness that they would expect to receive as a patient.

*Debra Corbett
David Pike
Quality Management*

Hepatitis C Virus

In the United States, Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) infection is the leading cause of end-stage liver disease requiring liver transplantation. Providers are increasingly aware of the importance of screening for and appropriately managing this important infectious disease. Individuals most at risk for acquiring HCV include those:

- with a history of injection drug use,
- who received blood products prior to 1990,
- co-infected with HIV,
- children born to HCV-infected mothers,
- with multiple sexual partners,
- with a history of intranasal cocaine use.

A HCV antibody test (ELISA) is the gold standard to screen for this disease. In addition to those with risk factors above, persons with unexplained persistently elevated liver transaminases (ALT, AST) should also be screened.

HCV infection is usually chronic in greater than 80% of the cases. However, individuals may remain clinically asymptomatic for many years before manifesting evidence of liver disease. Untreated chronic infection can lead to cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma.

The course of HCV infection is exacerbated by alcohol intake, superinfection with Hepatitis A or B and in certain instances, use of hepatically metabolized medications. For these reasons, Hepatitis A and B vaccinations should be administered to non-immune HCV-infected individuals. Counseling on the risks of alcohol intake should also be provided.

Remission of HCV infection is achievable for many individuals with currently available treatment. The medical management of HCV infection should be conducted in consultation with an experienced HCV specialist since treatment decisions often involve the need for a liver biopsy and therapy can be complex.

*Sanjiv Shah, MD
Partnership In Care*

Making a Referral Out of Network

Although MetroPlus does not require a written referral form to be completed when referring a Member for services, the referral must be made to a Participating Provider. Participating Providers can be found in the MetroPlus Provider Directory or by logging on to the MetroPlus website at www.metroplus.org. Click on 'Find a Physician' or 'Find a Non-Physician'.

There are circumstances which may require you to refer a Member to a non-Participating Provider for services. When this occurs an authorization must be obtained from the Utilization Care Management Department before making the referral.

You may reach the Utilization Management Department at 1-800-303-9626.

Flu Shots

The Flu season is here and so is the need to vaccinate those at risk such as, people with HIV, Diabetes, Asthma, and those over 65 years old. Flu Shot reminder postcards were mailed to Members at risk in September. It is recommended that Primary Care Providers also reach out to at risk Members and schedule an appointment for vaccination. This significant preventative measure helps to protect Members from catching the Flu and may improve their quality of life.

Did you know?

Did you know that you can now find Participating Dentists and Pharmacies on the web site?

Log on to the website at www.metroplus.org and click on 'Find a Dentist' or 'Find a Pharmacy' found on the left hand side of the home page. You may search by borough, zip code, and /or specialty or simply click on 'Find' which will return the entire list of Participating Providers.

MetroPlus provides dental coverage for Child Health Plus and Family Health Plus Members only. MetroPlus provides prescription coverage for Child Health Plus, Family Health Plus and some MetroPlus Gold Members.

New Director for Utilization Care Management

Linda Cummings is the new Director of the Utilization Care Management Department. Linda is a Registered Nurse with diverse clinical experience in inpatient, outpatient and ambulatory care settings. For the past fifteen years, Linda's career has been in managed care, working for both commercial plans and government programs. She started as a concurrent review nurse and moved into managerial roles shortly thereafter. Linda's accomplishments include helping a health plan achieve NCQA accreditation and implementing utilization management redesign. She was also a guest speaker at a national managed care conference where she presented redesign strategies and tools developed to facilitate effective utilization management. Linda's team at MetroPlus includes 37 clinical and non-clinical staff members.