

# STAYING HEALTHY. THAT'S THE PLAN.



DECEMBER 2017  
HIV PCP NEWSLETTER

## SPECIAL NEEDS PLAN (SNP)

### PARTNERSHIP IN CARE EXPANDS TO INCLUDE TRANSGENDER MEMBERS



On November 1, 2017, all three NYC Medicaid Special Needs Plans expanded their eligibility criteria to include members receiving care transgender issues or gender dysphoria, regardless of HIV status. This change will enable these members to receive care coordination and other supportive services offered by the Special Needs Plans. This expansion is the result of successful litigation by transgender advocates against New York State. The courts ruled that gender affirming surgery was not cosmetic, as the state had previously ruled, but medically necessary. Since the ruling in late 2016, MetroPlus has been approving gender affirming surgery for members who meet criteria. MetroPlus had been approving hormone therapy for transgendered members prior to the court ruling. Partnership In Care welcomes the opportunity to further serve the transgender community.

### AGE LIMIT RECOMMENDATION NO LONGER IN EFFECT FOR HIV TESTING

In May 2017, New York State Public Health law was amended to remove the age limit of 64 in its regulations for HIV antibody testing. New York City is still an epicenter for HIV infection in the United States. Because it may take two decades or more for asymptomatic HIV infection to manifest symptoms, an upper age limit is no longer considered clinically appropriate in a high incidence area. Please continue to offer HIV testing to all patients, 13 years of age and older on an annual basis.

### HEPATITIS A VACCINATION STILL IMPORTANT FOR MSMS

According to the NYC department of health and mental Hygiene, there has been a recent outbreak of hepatitis A among men who have sex with men (MSMs). Hepatitis A is preventable but acute infection can have severe complications in adults. Providers should offer Hepatitis A vaccine to all MSM who have not been vaccinated or do not know their vaccination status or who have documented lack of immunity. Serologic immunity can be checked but vaccination should not be delayed – an extra dose of vaccine is safe to administer. Please click [here](#) for more information.

### HIV PCPS MUST COMPLETE 10 HIV-RELATED CME CREDITS ANNUALLY

In order to be considered an HIV PCP that accepts Partnership In Care members, you, as a provider, must complete and submit documentation of 10 HIV-related CME credits annually to your facility credentialing office (if they are a delegated credentialing entity) or to MetroPlus directly. You have until the end of the year. If we do not have the necessary documentation, MetroPlus may reach out to you, but ultimately it is your responsibility. Failure to comply will result in the reassignment of PIC members assigned to you – which will cause disruption for everyone involved. Please submit your documentation as soon as possible. Free HIV-related CMEs can be obtained through websites such as [Medscape.com](#) or [ClinicalCareOptions.com](#).

### NYS RELEASES 2016 QUALITY OF CARE AUDIT RESULTS FOR SPECIAL NEED PLANS

A review of medical records of 3,000 Special Needs Plan members for calendar year 2016 shows that 97% of the 2,912 qualifying members were receiving antiretroviral therapy and 76% were virally suppressed at their last measurement. MetroPlus contributed records of 923 members to the audit, 898 of which were considered qualifying. Of those, 97% were receiving antiretroviral therapy and 79% were virally suppressed at their last measurement. We want to thank all the providers who submitted records for the audit. We acknowledge that it is a labor-intensive exercise and we appreciate the timeliness of the submissions we received. We also want to acknowledge the excellent quality of care our members receive. While our common goal is viral suppression for all our HIV+ members, many obstacles exist that continue to be addressed. Together, we will continue to address these obstacles every day.

### WORLD AIDS DAY REMEMBRANCES



MetroPlus wishes to take time to pause and reflect on all those members with HIV and AIDS that have passed away over the years. We stand with their families and friends in remembrance and strive to serve those still living with HIV and AIDS with dignity and respect. We appreciate the opportunity to partner with our providers in sponsoring World AIDS Day activities throughout New York City.

### HAPPY HOLIDAYS

December includes within it the shortest day of the year. This fact is the inspiration behind many religious observances as the days begin to lengthen again and human beings look forward to the spring with its promise of new life and new opportunities. Many religions celebrate important holidays in December. Secular New Year's Day is also fast approaching. The staff of MetroPlus Partnership In Care wishes our members and providers and their families and friends happy and joyous holiday celebrations and a prosperous 2018!