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SC Healthy Connections Choices offers Medicaid members options

The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) has launched a campaign to inform Medicaid beneficiaries that they will soon have the option to choose their own health plans. Medicaid beneficiaries statewide will be eligible to participate in the agency's Healthy Connections Choices program, which will rollout over the next 18 months.

Healthy Connections Choices is part of the state's overall Medicaid reform plan and is designed to get a better return on South Carolina's health care investment. Through partnerships with managed care entities, medical home networks and special enrollment counselors, SCDHHS seeks to increase care coordination and disease prevention methods not found in traditional fee-for-service Medicaid. Those who choose to enroll in a health plan also will establish crucial relationships with a primary care doctor. Currently, many Medicaid beneficiaries are left to navigate the health care system on their own, leading many to seek only sporadic care or emergency services.

"By encouraging increased education and valuable one-on-one time with primary care physicians, we assist Medicaid patients to actively participate in their health management," said SC Department of Health and Human Services Director Emma Forkner. "Choosing the health plan that offers the right combination of delivery services for the individual or family is a significant step for the Medicaid population. We anticipate many of our beneficiaries will learn to manage chronic diseases and adopt healthy behaviors and lifestyles. Our goal is a healthier Medicaid population for South Carolina."

Under Healthy Connections Choices, participants will receive the same benefits as those in traditional Medicaid, and also extra services offered through the individual plans. These may include benefits such as unlimited doctor visits, eyeglasses and dental care for adults, smoking cessation classes and programs tailored for those with specific diseases.

Medicaid beneficiaries will receive enrollment information detailing various plan options. Enrollment in a plan is voluntary.

About 60 percent of Medicaid beneficiaries nationwide are now enrolled in some form of managed care. South Carolina's initiative is unique because it uses market-based principles, choice and competition, to encourage a high level of accountability and value from the plans. Medicaid managed care plans have been available in South Carolina since 1996, and currently about one third of beneficiaries are enrolled.

For more information visit the website at www.SCchoices.com or call toll free 1-877-552-4642.

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ARTICLE 2 of 6 SC Medicaid Plan Changes

How people get Medicaid health services is changing in South Carolina.

Medicaid members and newly eligible members can now choose a doctor or clinic through a health plan. SC Healthy Connections Choices is a program to help South Carolina Medicaid members enroll in health plans that suit their families' needs. SC Healthy Connections Choices will send Medicaid members information after they renew. Newly eligible members may select a health plan when they join Medicaid. This program started in the Midlands area on August 27. Enrollment in the Piedmont region will begin January 1, the Low Country March 1 and the Pee Dee May 1.

Each family member can choose a plan that best fits his or her needs. The primary health care provider will send patients to specialists and other health care providers as needed. Each health plan offers the same basic services as traditional fee-for-service Medicaid but may also offer extra services such as asthma or diabetes management. If members do not have a doctor now, or if their doctor is not in a health plan, they can search for providers on the website by location, type of practice, and health plan affiliation. They can search on www.SCchoices.com or call toll free 1-877-552-4642 for more information and assistance.

Enrollment in a health plan is not mandatory. Members may enroll through the website, over the phone with a free telephone call, by mail or fax or in person with an enrollment counselor. SC Healthy Connections Choices is working with community organizations throughout the state to help distribute materials and inform people about this new service.

For more information call toll free 1-877-552-4642 or go to the website www.SCchoices.com.

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ARTICLE 3 of 6

Enrolling in SC Healthy Connections Choices

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There are four ways to enroll: on the website, by telephone, by mail or fax or in person with an enrollment counselor.

The following information will be helpful to have available when you enroll:

- Your full name
- Medicaid ID
- Date of birth
- Address and telephone number
- Your doctor (or clinic) if you have chosen one
- Doctor's address

For more information call toll free 1-877-552-4642 or visit the website at www.SCchoices.com.

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ARTICLE 4 of 6

Health plan extras under SC Healthy Connections Choices

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Depending on what county you live in, you will have a choice of health plans including traditional fee-for-service Medicaid. Some of the health plans will offer additional services that you or your family may need.

Do you need glasses? Some plans will cover vision care.

Do you have diabetes or asthma? Other plans have services to help manage these particular conditions.

Maybe your family needs dental care. There are plans available that include dental care.

Information on all the plans, what they cover and other information is included on the website www.SCchoices.com. Information is available by county. For more information visit the website at www.SCchoices.com or call toll free 1-877-552-4642.

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ARTICLE 5 of 6

SC Healthy Connections Choices FAQ's (one of two)

How people get Medicaid health services is changing in South Carolina.

Medicaid members and newly eligible members can now choose a doctor or clinic through a health plan. SC Healthy Connections Choices is a program to help South Carolina Medicaid members enroll in health plans that suit their families' needs. SC Healthy Connections Choices will send Medicaid members information after they renew. Newly eligible members may select a health plan when they join Medicaid.

Here are some of the most frequently asked questions about SC Healthy Connections Choices.

What is South Carolina Healthy Connections Choices?

Healthy Connections Choices is a program that helps Medicaid members enroll in health plans. When members enroll, they choose a health plan and a doctor (or clinic). Healthy Connections Choices will help members choose a health plan that is best for them.

What is a health plan?

A health plan is a group of doctors (or clinics) and may also include hospitals and other providers. Your health plan will make sure you can see the right

doctor when you need to. All plans provide the same medical services as traditional fee-for-service Medicaid. Health plans may offer extra health services and benefits such as vision and dental care for adults and help with diabetes management. They have a help line, often staffed by a nurse, and you can call any time with health care questions.

When can members enroll in Healthy Connections Choices?

Each region in the state will have a start date after which members may enroll. On the start date for each region, we will send enrollment packets to those who are newly eligible for Medicaid and members who have renewed their Medicaid that month.

What is the enrollment start date for each region?

August 27, 2007 for Midlands: Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Clarendon, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lee, Lexington, Marion, Newberry, Orangeburg, Richland, Sumter and York

January 1, 2008 for Piedmont: Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Chester, Edgefield, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Oconee, Pickens, Saluda, Spartanburg and Union

March 1, 2008 for Low Country: Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Georgetown, Hampton and Jasper

May 1, 2008 for Pee Dee: Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Horry, Marlboro and Williamsburg

Where can I get more information?

Call Healthy Connections Choices:

- About plans or doctors that serve children.
- About enrolling or choosing a health plan.
- To enroll by phone.
- To meet in person with a community enrollment counselor near your home.
- To get a brochure printed in English or Spanish, in Braille or on tape, or to speak to someone in another language.

An enrollment counselor will help you. Some of our counselors speak Spanish, and we have free interpreter services for other languages. All calls are free and private. Call toll free 1-877-552-4642. Call Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., TTY: 1-877-552-4670.

For more frequently asked questions and other information about SC Healthy Connections Choices, visit the website at www.SCchoices.com or call toll free 1-877-552-4642.

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ARTICLE 6 of 6

SC Healthy Connections Choices FAQ's (two of two)

How people get Medicaid health services is changing in South Carolina.

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Here are some of the most frequently asked questions about SC Healthy Connections Choices.

Can Medicaid members enroll in a health plan before they get their Healthy Connections Choices enrollment packets?

Yes. Enrollment is voluntary and current members (with traditional fee-for-service Medicaid) can enroll anytime.

What are the time limits and deadlines for health plan enrollment?

Initial Enrollment Period: The first 30 days

All members have at least 30 days (from the day we mail the enrollment packet) to choose a health plan or choose to stay in traditional fee-for-service Medicaid. If they don't choose a plan or tell us that they want to stay in traditional fee-for-service Medicaid, we will assign them to a plan.

Choice Period: The first 90 days

Members have 90 days after enrolling in a health plan to transfer to another plan or return to traditional fee-for-service Medicaid.

Continuous Enrollment Period: One year

After the 90-day Choice Period has expired, members stay in their health plan until their one year anniversary date unless they have a special reason to make a change.

How do members enroll?

There are four easy ways for members to enroll:

1. Enroll by mail or fax, by completing the form in the enrollment packet and sending it to us.
2. Enroll over the phone, by calling the South Carolina Healthy Connections Choices toll-free number.
3. Enroll online, at the South Carolina Healthy Connections Choices website.
4. Enroll in person, by meeting with a community enrollment counselor.

Will members have a choice of health plans?

Yes. Members will have a choice between at least two different health plans. Healthy Connections Choices can help members choose the health plan that is best for them.

Do members have to choose the same health plan for all members of the family?

No. Each member of the family can choose the plan that is best for them.

Does every member have to enroll in a plan?

No. Enrolling in a health plan is not mandatory. A member can tell us they want to stay in traditional fee-for-service Medicaid during the Initial Enrollment Period or during the 90-day Choice Period. After the Choice Period, members must get approval from the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to go back to traditional fee-for-service Medicaid.

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