From the Desk of the Medical Directors

We are continuing to roll out programs designed to help you provide the best care to your patients! Keep reading to see what important updates we have to share with you this month.

Network Updates
At Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans, we emphasize preventive care and want members to take advantage of this benefit. When billing the health plan for a preventive service, please remember to add Modifier 33 to the CPT code. This will ensure your patients don’t incur charges in error. For more information and additional network reminders, check out the network updates section below.

Tips from your Clinical Pharmacists
Allergy season is upon us! Check out the pharmacy section below for allergy medications available and proven to help your patients get and stay healthy this season.

Risk Adjustment Factor
A critical component to the success of our population health model is a clear understanding of the health status of our members, especially patients exhibiting more complex and serious conditions. In order to ensure we are providing you with the resources necessary, we are asking you to help us appropriately document and code for these patients. We have begun introducing our Risk Adjustment Factor (RAF) initiative to practices and plan to continue reaching out in the coming months. Below, you will find information about RAF and its relevance to you.

Accessing the Brief
Each month, we will post our provider brief to the Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans provider website at pwplans.org/providers. Click on “Helpful Resources and Forms” and check under “Education & Reminders” for past editions.

Please remember, if you have any questions about the content of this brief or are looking for clarification on claims processing inquires, don’t hesitate to contact provider services at 855.869.7225. You can also log on to your secure provider portal, Provider OnLine, to access current claims processing information.

Best,
Dr. Kristyn Greifer and Dr. James Sams
Co-Medical Directors, Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans
**Network Operations**

**Modifier 33 - Billing Reminder for Services with Preventive and Diagnostic Functions**
When billing for a service that has both a preventive and diagnostic function, remember to bill the appropriate diagnostic code along with a 33 modifier. The modifier allows Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans to pay the entire claim as a preventive encounter, resulting in NO cost to the member. You should bill these services as preventive even if the screening detects a condition that requires further examination.

For example, if your patient is seen for a preventive mammogram it should be treated as preventive and billed with a corresponding CPT code, including the modifier. If the member’s mammogram indicates the presence of an abnormality and the doctor requests a follow up mammogram, the second screening should exclude the modifier because it was used for diagnostic purposes.

*Please remember, if you do not include the modifier 33 when billing the initial screening, Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans will treat it as a diagnostic service, which is subject to patient copayments, coinsurance and deductibles.*

**In-Network Lab**
We want to remind you that the following labs are in-network for all four products offered by Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans: Piedmont Lab, WellStar Laboratory Services, and Labcorp.

*Please remember, Quest Diagnostics is NOT in-network. If you send lab work to Quest, Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans will not cover these services.*

**Claims Form 1500**
In preparation for ICD-10 coding, the National Uniform Claim Committee (NUCC) recently revised the CMS 1500 claim form 02/12. The revised form has a number of changes. The most notable are: (1) new indicators to differentiate between ICD-9 and ICD-10 codes on a claim and (2) qualifiers to identify whether a provider performs an ordering, referring, or supervising role in the furnishing of the service. This revised form uses letters, instead of numbers, as diagnosis code pointers and expands the number of possible diagnosis codes on a claim to 12.

Please make sure all office billing staff are aware of these instructions for the revised form version 02/12 and use the new form to replace the CMS 1500 claim form 08/05. This change is relevant to all providers contracted within the Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans network (all four plans).

**Clearinghouse & EFT Reminder**
The list of clearinghouses that recognize and receive claims on our behalf has increased greatly. Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans is now receiving claims with the following clearinghouses: Emdeon, Relay Health, Gateway EDI, Navicure, Capario, GE Centricity, Care Cloud, Availity, NuSoft, Office Ally, and Practice Insight.

Our payer ID is 251PD. If you use Payer Path (Allscripts) or Zirmed as a clearinghouse or revenue cycle management service, they may require a separate payer ID for Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans transactions. Please consult the technical support team at Payer Path (Allscripts) or Zirmed for help in determining what payer ID should be used for your transactions.

Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans is processing electronic claims (837) and remittances (835). *As a reminder, to submit claims to, or receive electronic remittances from, Piedmont*
**WellStar HealthPlans, you MUST request a connection through your clearinghouse of choice.** Until this interface is set up, you will receive paper remittances approximately five business days after funds are disbursed (if funds are being disbursed by EFT). Paper checks and paper remittances advices are released at the same time.

The Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) form is available on our website at pwplans.org/providers. Search under the forms tab to download and complete. Remember, by utilizing this complimentary EFT process, you will receive payments faster and avoid waiting for paper checks.

As always, if you have any questions about the updates in this section, please contact Provider Services at 855.869.7225.

**Contact Numbers**
Please reference the table below for contact information.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Contact Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provider Services</td>
<td>Eligibility &amp; claims inquiries</td>
<td>855.869.7225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Management</td>
<td>Prior authorization</td>
<td>855.514.3680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider OnLine</td>
<td>Technical concerns</td>
<td>855.222.1043</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HIA/HRA Balances Available on Provider OnLine**

**HIA/HRA Balance Available on Provider OnLine**
Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans is happy to announce that as of March 31st, the Healthy Incentive Account (HIA) balance for Piedmont’s MyHealth360 employee plan members and the Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) for WellStar Employee Medical Plan members are visible on the provider portal, Provider OnLine. The member’s co-insurance and deductible balance remain visible on Provider OnLine as well.

*When caring for a patient with an HIA or HRA account, we recommend providers submit patient claims directly to Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans and wait until receipt of the Explanation of Payment or Remittance Advice before billing the patient.*

Please remember, to calculate potential member responsibility, providers can visit Provider OnLine to check the member HIA/HRA, co-insurance and deductible balance.

**Health Plan Marketing**

**Reaching out to Boomers: We’re letting them know about Piedmont WellStar Medicare Choice**
It’s likely that some of your patients are turning 65 this year. If eligible, this important milestone comes with their ability to join Piedmont WellStar Medicare Choice. We want to make sure that these individuals know about Piedmont WellStar Medicare Choice, a health plan that has been designed with today’s active boomers in mind.

To help get the word out in our community, Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans mailed information to these individuals, sharing materials and resources about Piedmont WellStar Medicare
Choice. In the coming months, seniors will begin to see television commercials and radio ads as well.

Your patients, current and prospective, may begin to ask questions about Piedmont WellStar Medicare Choice. As a valued member of our provider community, we ask that you showcase your enthusiasm about the health plan and the type of resources we offer to you and your patients.

You can remind patients that you are in the network for Piedmont WellStar Medicare Choice.

Here’s a bit more information you can share with them:

- Piedmont WellStar Medicare Choice has a contract with Medicare to provide Medicare Advantage (Part C) and Part D prescription coverage to you and your eligible neighbors in Cherokee, Cobb, Coweta, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Henry, Paulding, Pickens, Rockdale, and Spalding counties
- You are allowed to enroll in Medicare as early as 4 months before the month of your 65th birthday
- For more information, you can visit pwplans.org/medicare or call 855.756.1557

As providers, you can definitely answer your patients’ questions. Just keep in mind, it is important that you don’t attempt to persuade a beneficiary to enroll in a specific plan, even ours.

Last year, during the fall of 2013, more than 6,000 members joined Piedmont WellStar Medicare Choice. With your help, we hope to continue our growth and bring patient-centered care to more beneficiaries in the greater Atlanta community.

**Pharmacy Update**

**Guide to Allergy Treatment**

It’s allergy season! Help your patients stay comfortable this spring by keeping these allergy medication reminders at the top of your mind…*

**Nasal Irrigation and Saline Sprays**

**Use:** Nasal irrigation (lavage) is useful for treating drainage down the back of the throat (post nasal drip), sneezing, nasal dryness, and congestion. This helps by rinsing out allergens and irritants from the nose.

**Access to Patients:** Available over-the-counter through products like bulb syringes, Neti pots, and bottle sprayers.

**Nasal Glucocorticoids**

**Use:** Nasal steroids delivered by a nasal spray are the first-line recommended treatment for the symptoms of allergic rhinitis. These drugs have minimal side effects and effectively relieve symptoms in most people. Studies have shown that nasal steroids are more effective than oral antihistamines for symptom relief.

**Access to Patients:** Covered medications for all Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans patients include: fluticasone, flunisolide, and Veramyst. Commercial plans include coverage for triamcinolone, Nasacort AQ, Nasonex, Rhinocort Aqua, Omnaris, QNASL, Beconase AQ,
Zetonna. Branded medications and triamcinolone may require step therapy. Over-the-Counter Nasacort Allergy 24HR is available without a prescription.

Antihistamines

**Use:** Antihistamines relieve the itching, sneezing, and runny nose of allergic rhinitis, but do not relieve nasal congestion.

**Access to Patients:** Oral medications covered on the formulary include loratadine (Commercial plans only) and levocetirizine. Nasal sprays such as azelastine and Patanase (Commercial Plans only) are covered prescription nasal antihistamine sprays that can be used daily or when needed to relieve symptoms of postnasal drip, congestion, and sneezing. Over-the-Counter Claritin (loratadine), Zyrtec (cetirizine), and Allegra (fexofenadine) are available without a prescription.

Combination of Nasal Glucocorticoid and Antihistamine

**Use:** A prescription combination of the nasal steroid fluticasone and the nasal antihistamine azelastine, (Dymista) appears to improve symptoms of allergic rhinitis better than either drug alone in three clinical trials.

**Access to Patients:** Dymista is covered on the commercial formulary after failure of individual agents of a nasal steroid and a nasal antihistamine.

Mast Cell Stabilizer

**Use:** Cromolyn sodium prevents the symptoms of allergic rhinitis by interfering with the ability of allergy cells to release natural chemicals that cause inflammation.

**Access to Patients:** This drug is available over-the-counter as a nasal spray (Nasalcrom and generic equivalents) and must be used prior to the initiation of symptoms.

Leukotriene Modifiers

**Use:** Montelukast and Zafirlukast are covered on the formulary and can be very useful in patients with asthma and allergic rhinitis. However, nasal steroids are more effective than leukotriene modifiers for treating allergic rhinitis.

*Sources Cited Below*


**RAF Tip of the Month**

**Defining RAF**

Risk Adjustment Factor (RAF) is a Medicare-based program that assesses and predicts the burden of illness for individuals and patient populations. Medicare uses the Hierarchical Condition Categories (HCC) model, which is based on the identification, assessment, and billing of certain acute and chronic medical conditions during a patient encounter. RAF uses specific ICD-9-CM diagnosis codes as the means of assessing the disease burden of the Medicare
Advantage population. There are approximately 3,000 diagnosis codes that impact RAF, many of which are chronic in nature. Submission of these specific ICD-9-CM codes on a claim is the only way to impact the RAF scoring of your patient panel.

**Why RAF?**
Our RAF program is designed to help us accurately assess the health status of your patient population, especially those with more complex conditions. RAF allows for an accurate account of your patients’ clinical profile, including conditions treated by specialists, complications and comorbidities. The goal of our RAF program is to ensure that all conditions affecting the care delivered to your patients is documented appropriately. This helps us direct resources to your practice. It also will help prepare you for coming changes CMS will be implementing in 2016 to modify Medicare payment rates according to the health status of patients.

**Bringing RAF to our Providers**
Beginning next month, Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans is excited to bring you monthly tips on appropriate medical record documentation and accurate diagnosis coding. Each month we will focus on a different topic and discuss how physician documentation, specificity, and diagnosis coding play an important role in patient care.

We have begun to meet with some of your practices in person to discuss implementing RAF in your office. If you have not yet met with us, stay tuned for a meeting coming up in the future. We look forward to working with you!

**Look Who’s Joined Our Network**
Piedmont WellStar HealthPlans continues to grow. Please remember to visit our online directory for a list of in-network providers.

To access the Directory, please visit pwplans.org/providers.
- Click on “Find a Doctor” on the left
- Choose the appropriate plan from the list in the middle of the page
- Search for provider

**Policy and Guideline Changes**
Periodic updates to our medical and pay policies are posted online at pwplans.org/providers, under “policy and guidelines.” As they become available, we will also post them here.

**Fraud, Waste and Abuse**
Quality and safety are our number one priorities. If you suspect the quality of care has been compromised or have a question, please contact Fraud, Waste and Abuse at 855.222.1046.