

Dear PrimeWest Health Provider,

PrimeWest Health is doing a Performance Improvement Project (PIP) related to blood pressure control in patients with diabetes. The goal of the project is to educate members with diabetes about the importance of controlling their blood pressure. The updated (May 2009) Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement (ICSI) guideline for diabetes includes a recommended blood pressure of less than 130/80. The complete guideline can be accessed on the ICSI website at www.icsi.org. PrimeWest Health supports ICSI's position on blood pressure management, yet encourages you to consider all pertinent information as well as the unique health conditions of your patients to determine a blood pressure goal that is most appropriate for them.

The 2010 PIP includes three key messages that will be included in education to members and providers. The key messages focus on the importance of the following:

- Developing an appropriate blood pressure management plan
- Establishing an appropriate blood pressure goal
- Discussing self monitoring of blood pressure at home or in the community with appropriate patients

We are encouraging providers to work with their patients to meet their blood pressure goals. To this end, we will be sending quarterly reminders and information to providers and quarterly educational messages to our members. A survey will be sent to members to gather information about their current practices related to blood pressure.

As part of their benefits, PrimeWest Health members can get a home blood pressure monitor with a prescription from their provider. Most pharmacies or other contracted durable medical equipment (DME) suppliers can dispense any brand or model that is certified for accuracy. Suppliers can work with individual patients to provide the best model for the particular patient, although wrist models are not recommended. As part of the PIP initiative, members will be encouraged to check with their pharmacies or local DME supplier to see if they can provide a monitor with a prescription.

PrimeWest Health is willing to assist you if you are interested in developing a similar quality improvement initiative in your clinic. Please contact Bethany Krafthefer, PrimeWest Health's PIP Coordinator, at **1-320-335-5392** or bethany.krafthefer@primewest.org for more information. Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,



Charles McKinzie, MD
PrimeWest Health Chief Medical Director