

Dear PrimeWest Health Provider,

As a reminder, PrimeWest Health is conducting a Performance Improvement Project (PIP) related to blood pressure control in patients with diabetes. The goal of the project is to educate patients with diabetes about the importance of controlling their blood pressure.

According to Johns Hopkins Publications, experts are now calling for people to do more monitoring of their blood pressure at home. Research reported in the journal *Hypertension* shows that home measurements, compared with those taken at a doctor's office, provide a more complete picture of average blood pressure levels and better predict the risk of a heart attack or stroke. They also offer instant feedback as to whether or not efforts to lower blood pressure are working. For these reasons, experts recommend that all people with known or suspected high blood pressure purchase a home blood pressure monitor and also receive instruction on its use from a health care professional.

As part of their benefits, PrimeWest Health members can get a home blood pressure monitor with a prescription from their provider when filled at a contracted pharmacy or Durable Medical Equipment (DME) provider.

Encouraging self-monitoring of blood pressure at home or in the community with appropriate patients is one of three key messages that are included in patient and provider education for this project. The other two key messages are as follows:

- Develop an appropriate blood pressure management plan
- Establish an appropriate blood pressure goal

We are asking providers to help their patients meet their respective goals. We will continue to send information on this topic to providers as well as quarterly educational messages to our members.

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

Source: Johns Hopkins Health Alerts, March 9, 2010