

PrimePartners

for Case Managers

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PrimeWest Health's New Women & Children's Care Coordinator

PrimeWest Health is excited to introduce **Kris Hayes**, as our new Women & Children's Care Coordinator! Her background includes over 25 years as a registered nurse (RN), including 16 years as a maternal child health nurse. She is excited about her new role and looking forward to getting to know you in the coming months! Feel free to contact Kris with questions or concerns or just to introduce yourself.

Ann Challes, RN, BSN, PHN, CMCN, who previously held this position, is now our Behavioral Health Coordinator. Feel free to contact Ann if you have questions regarding behavioral health. 

HPV Vaccination: Be Ready to Answer Some Common Questions

Kris Hayes, RN, Women & Children's Care Coordinator

Parents and guardians may come to you with questions about the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine. Answers to some frequently asked questions are included below. And, remember, even if the question isn't asked, *you* can always start the conversation by encouraging vaccination!

Why is the HPV vaccine important?

The vaccine protects against HPV infection, a very common virus that causes many types of cancer. HPV affects both males and females and is so common that about one in four people in the United States (US) currently have it. What's more, over 33,000 people in the US are affected by a cancer caused by HPV every year. HPV infection can cause the following:

- Cancers of the cervix, vagina, and vulva
- Cancer of the penis
- Cancers of the anus and back of the throat, including the base of the tongue and tonsils (oropharynx)

HPV vaccination can prevent most of these cancers from ever developing. The vaccine has been proven safe, with the most common side effect being mild pain, redness, or swelling at the injection site.

What age should the vaccination be given?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the HPV vaccine for all preteens, male and female, preferably at age 11 or 12. The vaccine is given in a series of two to three shots, depending on the age when the first dose is given and the time between doses. Currently, the vaccine series can be started as early as age 9 and as late as age 26.

Why is the vaccine given at such an early age?

Because HPV is sexually transmitted, some people are uncomfortable with the young age at which the vaccine is typically given. But, it's important to know that HPV vaccination guidelines are based on age (**not** sexual experience). Giving the vaccine at a young age allows preteens and teens to develop an immune response **before** they become sexually active.

Where is more information available?

The CDC has a lot of good information about HPV and HPV vaccination. We encourage you to share these resources with parents/guardians—and read them yourself!

- [HPV Vaccines for Boys and Girls Fact Sheet](#)
- [3 Things Parents Need to Know about Preventing Cancers](#)
- [HPV: Reasons to Get Vaccinated](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions about HPV Vaccines](#)
- [HPV: For Parents](#)

Source: CDC, "Human Papillomavirus (HPV)," accessed June 6, 2019, www.cdc.gov/hpv/index.html. 

Protection against Ticks and Mosquitoes

Andra Anderson, RN, Care Coordinator

More than just nuisances, ticks and mosquitoes can be a dangerous part of spending time outdoors. Tick and mosquito bites can cause what are known as "vector-borne diseases," which can cause potentially life-threatening complications. Make sure members are aware of the dangers posed by these pesky pests and know how to protect themselves.

Ticks are most active during the spring, summer, and fall and are most commonly found in wooded areas and areas with high grass or leaf litter (NIOSH). A tick bite can cause Lyme disease, which, if left untreated, can affect the joints, heart, and nervous system (CDC June 2019). Although rare in Minnesota, a tick bite can also cause Rocky Mountain spotted fever, which can result in organ failure and death (MDH).

Mosquitoes are most active during hot summer months and are most commonly found near standing water or in weedy or wooded areas. The most common mosquito-borne disease is West Nile virus (WNV). Most people who are infected do not feel sick, but about one out of 150 develop a serious, sometimes fatal, illness (CDC 2018). Another disease carried by mosquitoes is Zika. Zika infection during pregnancy can cause birth defects (CDC May 2019).

Symptoms of vector-borne diseases may include those listed below. Members who notice these symptoms in themselves or their children, especially after being outside, should see a health care provider:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| • Body/muscle aches | • Joint pain |
| • Fever | • Rash |
| • Headache | • Stiff neck |
| • Fatigue | • Paralysis |

When spending time outdoors, encourage members to do the following (NIOSH):

- Wear a hat and light-colored clothing (so ticks can be easily spotted), including long-sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into boots or socks.
 - Use insect repellents.
 - Use repellents containing 20–50% DEET on exposed skin and clothing.
 - Reapply repellents as needed. (Always follow products labels).
- Use insecticides such as permethrin for greater protection.
 - Permethrin can be used on clothing, but not on skin.
 - One application to pants, socks, and shoes may be effective through several washings.

- Check skin and clothing for ticks daily. Check hair, underarms, and groin.
- Immediately remove ticks using fine-tipped tweezers.
 - Grasp the tick firmly, as close to your skin as possible.
 - Pull the tick's body away from your skin with a steady motion.
 - Clean the area with soap and water.
- Wash and dry work clothes using the "hot" settings to kill any ticks present.

Members can also make their outside areas safer by removing leaf litter, tall grass, and brush to get rid of ticks and by filling in areas or getting rid of items that can collect standing water to get rid of mosquitoes.

Sources: CDC, "About Zika," reviewed May 20, 2019, www.cdc.gov/zika/about/index.html.

CDC, "Lyme Disease," reviewed June 3, 2019, www.cdc.gov/lyme/index.html.

CDC, "West Nile Virus," reviewed December 10, 2018, www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html.

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), "Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF)," accessed June 10, 2019, www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/rockymtnfever/index.html.

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), "NIOSH Fast Facts: Protecting Yourself from Ticks and Mosquitoes," accessed June 10, 2019, www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2010-119/pdfs/2010-119.pdf. 

Focus on Vision Health

Kelly Anderson, RN, Care Coordinator

There are many components of "health," including physical health, mental health, and dental health. Keeping track can be difficult, and one component that is sometimes overlooked is vision health. It's essential to stress the importance of vision health and the role it plays in overall health. Let members know, too, that PrimeWest Health provides coverage for vision services.

The following are some tips to share with members about keeping their eyes healthy:

- **Get regular eye exams** – Many serious eye diseases have no warning signs, making regular eye exams the best way to check eye health.
- **Know your family eye health history** – Many eye diseases are hereditary. Knowing what issues family members have experienced and talking about them with a vision care provider can help determine the risk for developing an eye disease.
- **Wear sunglasses** – Wear sunglasses to protect against ultraviolet (UV) rays, even when it's cloudy! To be effective, the label on the sunglasses should say they block out 99 – 100 percent of both UVA and UVB rays.
- **Don't smoke** – Smoking harms just about every part of the body, including the eyes. It can lead to a higher risk of developing cataracts, optic nerve damage, and age-related macular degeneration. All of these diseases can lead to blindness.
- **Eat foods that are eye-healthy** – A diet that includes fruits, vegetables (especially dark leafy greens), and fish high in omega-3 fatty acids like tuna or salmon can help protect vision.
- **Maintain a healthy weight** – Being overweight or obese increases the risk of developing diabetes or other conditions that can lead to vision loss.
- **Follow the 20-20-20 rule** – Focusing intensely on a project or a computer screen can cause eye fatigue. Looking 20 feet away from the object of focus every 20 minutes for 20 seconds at a time can help ease eyestrain.

PrimeWest Health members are able to receive a new pair of eyeglasses every 24 months or sooner if they meet certain criteria. Examples of when a new pair of eyeglasses could be covered sooner than 24 months include the following:

- The member has a change in vision meeting medical necessity criteria
- The member has a change in head size
- The member's eyeglasses have been lost, stolen, or irreparably damaged (replacement with an identical pair)
- The eyeglasses are dispensed for occupational, educational, industrial, or sports needs but these eyeglasses are the member's only pair and they are needed for vision correction

Before providing a member with more than two pairs of eyeglasses in a two-year dispensing period, a Service Authorization (**Medical Service Authorization Request Form**) request must be submitted to PrimeWest Health. This applies to all members, including Prime Health Complete (HMO SNP) and Special Needs BasicCare (SNBC) members. You can find more information in the **Optical Services – Eyeglasses** section of the PrimeWest Health *Provider Manual*.

Source: National Eye Institute, "Eye Health Tips," accessed June 7, 2019, www.nei.nih.gov/healthyeyes/eyehealthtips. 

Dental Care for Older Adults: A Guide for County Case Managers

Leah Anderson, Dental Services Coordinator

Addressing the oral health needs of members who live in nursing homes and those who are unable to take care of their own daily oral health care needs can be challenging. These members are often older adults, and, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), oral health problems in this population include untreated tooth decay, gum disease, tooth loss, and oral cancer. Chronic disease is another concern as it increases the likelihood that a member will need daily medications, many of which cause dry mouth. Dry mouth increases tooth decay, tooth loss, and gum disease (CDC).

This article offers information you can use—and tips you can pass on—when working with older adults and their caregivers. We hope you find it useful.

Keeping an eye on oral health

Oral health and overall health are related, and the first signs of disease sometimes show up as problems in the mouth. PrimeWest Health encourages county case managers to talk with members' caregivers about the importance of paying attention to the oral health of the person for whom they care. For more information about oral health and its connection to overall health, see our **Oral Health for Adults** brochure.

Tips and techniques for helping with oral health care

Brushing with fluoride toothpaste two times per day is important. Flossing two times a day is also important. However, this can present challenges for older adults with various levels of functionality.

- Some members may be able to take care of most of their daily oral health needs on their own and may only require minimal help and supervision. Encourage caregivers to support the member by helping apply toothpaste or adapting the toothbrush for specific needs (for example, making it easier to hold).
- If the member is unable to take care of his/her own daily oral health needs, let caregivers know they'll need to step in. You can pass along the following tips:
 - Assisting with oral health needs can be challenging, but try and be as patient as possible
 - Establishing and following a dental care routine and choosing a familiar location can help the member feel more comfortable
 - Playing the member's favorite music or putting familiar objects where the member can see them may be helpful
 - Seeking the advice of a dental professional for additional help when needed is important (NIDCR)

Oral Health & Aging: Information for Caregivers, a handout produced by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR), is an excellent resource for more information.

Importance of regular dental visits

Most dental disease can be prevented through regular dental visits and good oral hygiene. Members, even those with dentures, should be seen by a dentist at least once a year. Some nursing homes host dental outreach clinics in the facility, and PrimeWest Health encourages members to take advantage of this service. Dental services available at these outreach clinics may include oral exams, dental cleanings, diagnostic X-rays, fluoride treatments, referrals, and denture adjustments.

PrimeWest Health denture coverage and replacement policies

PrimeWest Health members are allowed to have one dental appliance, either a partial denture or full denture, per arch every six years. Partial dentures always require a Service Authorization. If a denture is lost, stolen, or damaged and irreparable, the appliance will only be replaced if replacement is needed due to circumstances beyond the member's control. Service Authorization is always required for a replacement appliance. Because replacement coverage is limited, nursing homes should have policies and processes in place to help members care for their dentures and minimize the risk of damage or loss. In addition, per Title 42 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 483.55, Dental Services, nursing homes are required to have a policy identifying the circumstances in which loss of or damage to dentures is the facility's responsibility. County case managers should be aware of these guidelines in order to help members navigate the denture replacement process.

Dental resources on PrimeWest Health's website

PrimeWest Health has educational handouts on our website specifically for members age 65 and over.

- **Summary of Dental Benefits for PrimeWest Health Minnesota Senior Care Plus (MSC+) and PrimeWest Senior Health Complete (HMO SNP) Members**
- **Tips for Good Oral Health**
- **Dental Care Coordination Information Guide** (provides guidance on considerations when scheduling dental appointments, including the importance of providing the dentist with a complete medical history and medications)

Questions

For more information, please contact **Leah Anderson**.

Sources: CDC, "Oral Health for Older Americans," May 2, 2018, www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/adult-oral-health/adult_older.htm.

NIDCR, "Oral Health & Aging: Information for Caregivers," accessed February 6, 2019, www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2018-08/Brushing-508_0.pdf. 

Aphasia Awareness and PrimeWest Health Requirements

Kelly Anderson, RN, Care Coordinator

About aphasia

Aphasia, as defined by the National Aphasia Association, (NAA), is "an acquired communication disorder that impairs a person's ability to process language, but does not affect intelligence. Aphasia impairs the ability to speak and understand others." Working with people with aphasia can be challenging as they are often hard to understand and may speak in a way that seems disjointed or jumbled. In turn, people who suffer from aphasia may become frustrated or confused by the decline in their speech and comprehension skills. There are three kinds of aphasia: Global, Broca's, and Wernicke's, and each comes with its own set of challenges (ASA 2015). You can learn more from the **American Stroke Association**.

The American Stroke Association offers the following tips for communicating with someone who has aphasia:

- Speak in short, simple sentences.
- Don't make the person feel rushed. Be patient.
- Focus on the person and limit distractions. Mute or shut off the television or the radio.
- Write words down or use pictures or gestures. You can also try using a computer or tablet that has communication tools.

Another good idea is to repeat back what the person has said to make sure you have understood correctly. It's also important to remember people with aphasia are not hard of hearing—speaking loudly won't help (ASA 2014)! Make sure to include the person in the conversation and in the decision-making process. As always, respect is key (ASA 2015).

PrimeWest Health requirements

For the initial evaluation of the need for occupational therapy, physical therapy, or speech-language pathology (SLP), PrimeWest Health requires documentation that matches the requested services and demonstrates why they are needed. A list of the required documentation can be found in the *Rehabilitation Services – Rehabilitation Authorization* section of our *Provider Manual*. PrimeWest Health retains copies of the initial evaluation for future Service Authorization requests.

PrimeWest Health covers SLP and related services, including augmentative communication (AC) devices and related accessories. AC devices include, but are not limited to, communication picture books, communication charts and boards, mechanical devices, electronic devices, electronic tablets, and computer software applications. (Refer to the *Augmentative Communication Devices* section of the Minnesota Department of Human Services [DHS] *Provider Manual* for more information on AC devices.) PrimeWest Health covers only one speech-generating device approved and purchased through PrimeWest Health. AC devices must be dedicated for speech communication use. Tablets must be locked to prevent use not related to communication, with the exception of certain waiver-covered services as defined in the *Specialized Equipment and Supplies* section of the *DHS Community-Based Services Manual (CBSM)*.

More information

If you have questions about aphasia or related PrimeWest Health coverage and requirements, email caremanagement@primewest.org.

Sources: ASA, "Aphasia: Communicating through the Barriers," 2014, www.strokeassociation.org/-/media/stroke-files/stroke-resource-center/recovery/patient-focused/aphasia-communicating-through-barriers-females-ucm_464430.pdf.

ASA, "Let's Talk about Stroke and Aphasia," 2015, www.strokeassociation.org/-/media/stroke-files/stroke-resource-center/recovery/patient-focused/let-stroke-and-aphasia-2015-ucm_309703.pdf.

NAA, "Learn about Aphasia," accessed June 6, 2019, www.aphasia.org. 

Important Dates

✓ County supervisor meetings

Meetings are held the third Thursday of the month, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at PrimeWest Health in Alexandria, unless otherwise noted.

July 18

August 15

September 19

October 17

November 21

December 19

✓ New county case manager orientation

August 14, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., PrimeWest Health, Alexandria

✓ Summer Lunch & Learn

June 25, 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m., Broadway Ballroom, Alexandria

✓ Fall Providers & Partners Conference

October 16, Arrowwood Resort, Alexandria

Contact Information

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