

# Special Bulletin

For professional and facility providers

March 31, 2023

## April is Alcohol Awareness Month

Highmark is encouraging all of our providers to use Alcohol Awareness Month, this April, to educate their patients about the downfalls of alcohol use and abuse. Alcohol has many negative effects on an individual's mental and physical health, including depression, liver disease, and cardiovascular disease.

Out of the 133.1 million people who drink alcohol in the United States, 60 million are considered binge drinkers and 16.3 million binge drinkers are also heavy drinkers<sup>1</sup>. Meanwhile, alcohol use has been attributed to 30 percent of suicides, 40 percent of fatal burn injuries, 50 percent of drownings and homicides, and 65 percent of fatal falls<sup>2</sup>. About 33 percent of injuries seen at trauma centers and 29 percent of all motor vehicle accident fatalities involve alcohol use.

To help providers who see patients struggling with their mental health due to alcohol use, we have created the Behavioral Health Toolkit for Primary Care Physicians. This toolkit includes screening tools, guidelines, and various resources to assist in treating patients who misuse alcohol or have an alcohol use disorder.

To access the Behavioral Health Toolkit:

- Go to the **Provider Resource Center**
- Select **EDUCATION/MANUALS** in the left-hand menu
- Click **Behavioral Health Toolkit For Primary Care Physicians**

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1. ["Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2021 National Survey on Drug Use and Health"](#) - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
  2. ["Rethinking Drinking: Alcohol and Your Health"](#) – National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and the National Institutes of Health

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