

## TODAY'S MESSAGE

### UPDATE: THE AIS HOME VISIT PROGRAM

#### HOME-BASED PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES FOR HIGHMARK MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PATIENTS

On July 1, 2015, Highmark introduced an enhancement to the Advanced Illness Services (AIS) Program currently available to our Medicare Advantage members. Through a partnership with Aspire Health, the new Highmark AIS Home Visit Program provides home-based palliative care and physician support services to enhance the quality of life for our Medicare Advantage members. The program is offered for Security Blue HMO, Freedom Blue PPO and Community Blue Medicare HMO members who are facing a serious or chronic, life-limiting illness.

The AIS Home Visit Program's team of physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers and chaplains supports patients primarily in their homes. The team helps with symptom management, goals of care discussions and care coordination and can also help ensure the patient gets the right care at the right time and in the most appropriate setting. The AIS Home Visit Program can provide unlimited services based on clinical need and it replaces the 10 lifetime visits offered through the current program.

#### PROGRAM SERVICE AREA EXPANDING OCT. 1, 2015

Highmark is in the process of transitioning from the Advanced Illness Services Program to the AIS Home Visit Program. This transition began July 1, 2015, in Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Washington and Westmoreland counties. This transition will expand to Armstrong, Blair, Cambria, Crawford, Erie, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Mercer, Somerset and Venango counties on Oct. 1, 2015. The AIS Home Visit Program initially will be limited to a select number of counties and will be offered in additional counties over time. In counties where the new program is not yet operating, the Advanced Illness Services Program will remain in place through the end of 2015.

#### SERVICES

- The AIS Home Visit Program provides support for patients, their families and caregivers with:
  - advanced cancer
  - advanced dementia
  - congestive heart failure
  - chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
  - end-stage renal disease
  - end-stage liver disease
  - advanced frailty
- This home-based support has been shown to have very high patient and family satisfaction.
- Patients are not required to be homebound or meet a skilled level of care to be eligible for the AIS Home Visit Program.
- AIS Home Visit Program physicians, nurse practitioners and social workers are available 24/7 to support patients.

#### CARE COORDINATION

- The AIS Home Visit Program does not replace the care of PCPs and specialists. Members enrolled in this program keep their PCP and other specialists and may continue to seek curative treatment.
- The program's physicians co-manage care with a patient's current PCP and specialists, serving as their "eyes and ears" in the home for this vulnerable population who may have a hard time getting in and out of the office.
- The program is focused on continual communication and provides PCPs and specialists with a one-page clinical update after each visit.
- Upon request of the member's treating physician, the program can even handle routine needs such as medication refills, orders for durable medical equipment, and more, reducing the administrative burden for PCP and specialist practices.

#### VISIT THE AIS HOME VISIT PROGRAM PAGE TODAY!

To learn more, please visit the [AIS Home Visit Program](#) page found on the left navigation panel under *Advanced Illness Services*. You can refer a patient by faxing the AIS Home Visit Program referral form to 1-888-878-3824. This form is available on the AIS Home Visit Program page on the Highmark Provider Resource Center. You can also discuss referrals by calling 1-877-317-0216 between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. daily. TTY/TDD users may call 711.