

# THE Connection

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ANNUAL REPORT EDITION



## COVID-19 Pandemic Response

~Brad Johnson, MD (South Country Chief Medical Officer)

These are difficult times here in the U.S. because of the spread of the novel coronavirus that causes the disease COVID-19. We have all been told to follow this prevention advice:

- Use social distancing (stay six feet away) and stay at home
- Frequently wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your face
- Cover your cough with the inside of your elbow

At this time there is no vaccine or proven effective treatment for COVID-19, so prevention is key to controlling the pandemic. Researchers are testing several potential treatments and more information about them may soon be available. Frequent press conferences have stressed the importance of staying at home to attempt to limit the rate of spread of coronavirus, now most commonly spread person-to-person with others in all our communities.

Detection by testing for coronavirus is also rapidly developing. Not everyone needs to be tested and we do not have the ability to test everyone at this time. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) offers advice with a "Coronavirus self-checker" on the following website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/testing.html>.

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South Country Health Alliance is a county-owned health plan that provides health care coverage for Minnesota Health Care Program enrollees in 9 Minnesota counties.

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## Persistence of Coronaviruses on Surfaces



Source: *J. Hosp. Infect* DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhin.2020.01.022>

Note: Coronavirus activity may be impacted by temperatures higher than 86°F (30°C). Authors also confirm that coronavirus may be effectively wiped away by household disinfectants. COVID-19 was NOT included in this study.

### COVID-19 Pandemic Response continued

The COVID-19 symptoms range from mild to severe illness that may appear from 2 to 14 days after exposure. The 3 most common symptoms are:

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

Other symptoms have been reported such as sore throat, loss of sense of smell, or diarrhea. These symptoms are not thought to be reliable indicators of COVID-19. Most people will fully recover and will develop immunity to the novel coronavirus.

Finally, not everybody is at the same level of risk of developing severe COVID-19 symptoms, although nobody is risk-free. Adults over age 65 and individuals with other serious medical conditions may be at significantly higher risk of COVID-19 disease severity. They should closely follow the prevention advice above, and limit person-to-person contact with others as much as possible.

# Importance of Annual Dental visits

Seeing your dental provider at least once a year is as important as seeing your doctor. Dental cavities are one of the most common, preventable diseases. A dental visit is for more than just your teeth. Whether you wear dentures or not, your dentist will look inside your mouth and check the health of your gums, tongue, and cheeks. Your dental provider will clean your teeth to remove stains and plaque from your teeth. They will check for early signs of disease in your mouth, and to identify problems before they become serious.

Good dental care is an important part of overall general health. Regular dental visits help prevent, find, and correct problems with your teeth and gums before they become serious.

Reasons to see your dentist at least once a year:

- Cleaning to remove stains and plaque from your teeth
- Checks for early signs of cancer in your mouth
- Checks to make sure your dentures are fitting okay
- Identifies problems before they become serious and cause pain or infection
- Helps prevent tooth loss due to loose teeth, cavities, infection, or gum disease
- Helps to check for other medical problems, such as high blood pressure and diabetes
- Check for damage caused by bad habits such as chewing on ice, biting your nails, grinding your teeth and smoking



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SeniorCare Complete and AbilityCare are health plans that contract with both Medicare and the Minnesota Medical Assistance (Medicaid) program to provide benefits of both programs to enrollees. Enrollment in either plan depends on contract renewal.

## Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

South Country believes it is the responsibility of everyone to report suspected fraud, waste, and abuse. You can report anonymously through our Report it hotline by calling 1-877-778-5463. You can also make a report at [www.reportit.net](http://www.reportit.net). Username: SCHA, Password: Owatonna

General health information in The Connection is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider.

South Country Health Alliance makes authorization decisions using evidence-based standards of care, medical necessity criteria, and the member's benefit coverage. South Country Health Alliance does not reward providers or other individuals for denying services to members, nor does South Country Health Alliance reward decisions that result in under-utilization of services.



## 2019 Annual Report

In 2019, no one could have imagined how different our lives have become today. With COVID-19 dominating the news and affecting people and communities around across the state and nation, this is a difficult time for all of us. Our thoughts are with all those who have been impacted.

Our major initiatives last year included changing our claims processing system, implementing our utilization management program, and improving our financial footing. These changes would help position us for future challenges like the one we are in now. We achieved our goals and we finished 2019 more capable than before.

Built on strong local roots, South Country Health Alliance has shown an unwavering commitment to support our members and communities for almost two decades — and today is no different. We are committed to helping you stay informed about COVID-19 and access the care and coverage you need. We are focused on helping each other stay healthy and assisting our members and providers during this time of crisis.

Though the coronavirus has altered how we do our work and our team is working remotely, we do not expect any disruption in service and are ready to provide members and providers the quality service and security they've come to expect from us. Member Services and Provider Services are both fully staffed and taking calls. We've also used our website and Facebook to deliver information for both our members and our providers.

I am extremely grateful for all of the healthcare and other essential workers. They are continuing to work in very stressful and difficult situations to ensure that we all continue to have the services available to meet our basic needs and keep us safe.

I see and hear daily how hard everyone is working together for our members. It's a challenging time, but I am inspired by the countless examples of communities coming together, businesses and organizations providing support to those in need, and neighbors caring for each other across our communities. This gives me great hope that we will get through this situation together – just as we always have. Let us continue to keep each other, our loved ones, friends and neighbors in our thoughts.



**“ We are focused on helping each other stay healthy and assisting our members and providers... ”**

- CEO Leota Lind

# Financial Statement Summary

South Country Health Alliance's (SCHA's) revenue decreased by about 3% to \$293 million in 2019, largely due to a 6% decline in membership year-over-year. Health care claim costs decreased 7% overall, however, more than off-setting the decrease in revenue. This contributed to an overall net surplus of \$1.7 million for the year. SCHA's capital and surplus increased by \$9.8 million in 2019, in part due to SCHA's positive results.

SCHA receives its revenue from the MN Department of Human Services and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services based on membership. This revenue pays for our members medical expenses. In 2019, SCHA was charged \$268 million for members' health care expenses. This was 92% of total expenses. The remainder was spread between claim adjustment, cost containment expense, and general administrative expenses.

SCHA had \$30.5 million set aside in claim liability reserves on its balance sheet at December 31, 2019, for future medical benefit payments. In addition to these reserves, SCHA had capital and surplus of \$29.1 million. This capital and surplus exceeds the statutory net worth requirements of the State of Minnesota in 2019. This was in large part due to SCHA's member counties making additional capital and surplus payments which were completed by May 31, 2019.

South Country Health Alliance's financial position as of 12/31/2019 is strong, reflecting a Risk-Based Capital (RBC) level of 262%, the regulatory requirement is 200% RBC.

## 2019 Summary of Financial Statements January - December 2019

### Balance Sheet

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Assets              | \$ 64,387,476 |
| Liabilities         | \$ 35,222,653 |
| Capital and Surplus | \$ 29,164,823 |

### Statement of Revenues and Expenses

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Capitation Revenues                      | \$ 293,299,492 |
| Health Care Expenses                     |                |
| Physician, Hospital, and Dental Expenses | \$ 231,482,333 |
| Pharmacy Expenses                        | \$ 36,640,173  |
| Total Health Care Expenses               | \$ 268,122,506 |
| Net Reinsurance Expense (Recovery)       | \$ 1,772,914   |
| Other Expenses                           |                |
| Claim Adjustment and Cost Containment    | \$ 7,323,207   |
| General Administrative Expenses          | \$ 15,151,643  |
| Total Other Expenses                     | \$ 22,474,850  |
| Operating Income (Loss)                  | \$ 929,222     |
| Investment Income                        | \$ 859,154     |
| Net Income (Loss)                        | \$ 1,788,376   |

Complete audited financial statements are available upon request.

# Child & Teen Checkups/ Well Child Checks during COVID-19

We all have many questions these days on what we should and should not go to the clinic for. Below you will find some general guidance but keep in mind each clinic or provider location might be a bit different. We recommend you contact your clinic to see what options are available.

**Should I still take my child in for their immunization and well child checks during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

**Yes.** Call your clinic to see what they can provide. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is sharing that “If a practice can provide only limited well child visits, healthcare providers are encouraged to prioritize newborn care and vaccination of infants and young children (through 24 months of age) when possible.” Maintaining immunization schedules is important to ensure children are protected from preventable disease.

**Should I take my baby in for their weight check?**

**Yes.** Call your clinic to see what they can provide. The American Academy of Pediatrics is recommending newborn visits and infant weight checks continue.

**Should I schedule my middle childhood, over 6 years old, for their well child check?**

**Yes,** if your provider is able. Call your clinic to see what is available. There is some guidance about delaying older children’s well child checks to a later date but if your clinic is able to see you and keep your child on their same schedule that would be ideal. The American Academy of Pediatrics identifies rescheduling those in adolescence to a later date and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



## Benefits of a Primary Care Provider

Everyone should have primary care provider who can step back and look at the big picture of their health. Some clinic systems have a primary care team instead of one specific provider but having a set provider or providers helps you stay as healthy as you can.

Even if you feel healthy, it’s still important to visit a primary care provider. A primary care provider gets to know you and your health goals and helps you manage your overall progress.

**A primary care provider helps prevent future illness.** Seeing your provider for regular annual physicals is valuable to your long-term health. Your primary care provider can educate you about your unique health needs and goals.

**A primary care physician watches over you.** They learn your health history and habits and can more easily recognize signs of potential changes in your health. Additionally, your primary care provider can track problems over time, which increases the likelihood that you’ll receive a correct diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

**A primary care provider can save time down the line.** Building a relationship with one consistent provider can help you get care more quickly if you get sick in the future. Because your primary care provider is familiar with you and your health, he or she may even be able to help you resolve issues over the phone or email in some cases.



## 7 Tips to Help Cope During COVID-19

Many of us are worried about COVID-19, known as the “Coronavirus.” We may feel we have lost control over our lives. Some people have lost their jobs and are worried about their finances. Some people are working from home but also trying to teach their children who are no longer going to school. We may be scared that we will get sick. We are limited on where we can go, and we are encouraged to “social distance,” to not see family and friends outside our home.

We don’t know what will happen next. We don’t know when the threat of this virus will end. We may feel helpless. This uncertainty might remind us of past times when we also didn’t feel safe. During times like these, our mental health may suffer. We may feel more sad, worried, or angry. We might get frustrated more easily. For people who struggle with their mental health, the isolation that we are experiencing with social distancing may be overwhelming.

**Although we have limitations because of COVID-19, there are things we can do to help us to cope with the uncertainty of this time and to manage our fears:**

- 1 Make a schedule.** Order your day. Have a plan for what you will do. Try to keep regular times to get up in the morning and to go to bed at night. Eat meals at a regular time. Schedule regular times to talk with family members and friends. Include something in your schedule that you look forward to, such as preparing a special meal with your family or calling a friend you haven’t talked to in a while.
- 2 Get up and move.** When we feel stressed, our body releases stress hormones. These stress hormones prompt us to action. If a bear is chasing us, our stress hormones will give us energy to run. When we feel a lot of stress or anxiety, and we don’t move, our emotions can be overwhelming. During this time, it is important to move. Get outside in the fresh air and go for a walk. Clean your living space. Organize your cupboards or closets. Build or create something. Find a way to exercise.
- 3 Relax your body.** There are Apps and on-line classes that can help people to meditate and learn how to relax their body during this time of stress. Yoga and Tai Chi are very helpful for many people. Creating art by coloring or painting can be a helpful distraction and help take your mind off things that are worrying you. If you are connected to a faith community, prayer can be very helpful when feeling anxious.

*Continued on next page*

## Mental Health Crisis Services

Are available 24/7

You can access mental health support by contacting the Minnesota Crisis Text Line by texting "MN" to 741741, or by calling \*\*274747 from a cell phone to talk to a professional who can help.

Crisis Text Line is Minnesota's suicide prevention and mental health crisis texting service. People can text "MN" to 741741 and get quickly connected to a counselor who will help defuse the crisis and connect the texter to local resources.

Crisis Text Line services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Crisis Text Line has been offering crisis response services since 2013 and has since received more than 20 million messages from across the U.S..

**If you or a loved one is in crisis, don't wait. Help is available now!**

**Crisis Text Line:  
Text "MN" to  
741741**

**or by calling:  
\*\*741741**

from a cell phone

**The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a toll-free number at 1-800-273-8255.**

## 7 Tips to Help Cope During COVID-19 continued

Meditate. When we are stressed, many of us take quick breaths. This simple exercise can help to take deep relaxing breaths which can help relax your body.

- a. Exhale completely through your mouth.
- b. Close your mouth and take in a breath through your nose to a count of four
- c. Hold your breath for a count of seven
- d. Exhale the air through your mouth to a count of eight
- e. Repeat 3 times

**4 Separate what is in your control from what is not.** There are things you can control today. What you eat. What you do. What you watch on television. These are all things you control. Be mindful of how much news you watch or how much you read about COVID-19. Spending too much time on information about COVID-19 may add to your anxiety. You can't control what is going on in other parts of the country or even elsewhere in your community. Two accurate sources of information are the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH).

**5 Maintain Connections.** Humans are meant to socialize. It is very important to continue to connect with people during this period of isolation. Schedule phone calls with friends and family. Even better if you have access to the internet, use sites like Zoom, FaceTime, and Skype to talk to and see people. A lot of our communication is through our expressions so if you can talk with people virtually, that can be more helpful. Play games with your family and eat meals together.

**6 Mindfulness.** Try to stay in the present. It is natural to worry about what might happen next week, next month or six months down the road with all the recent changes. There is a lot unknown. When you find yourself worrying about something that hasn't happened, gently bring yourself back to the present moment. Take note and name things that you can see, hear, feel and smell around you as a way to help you to return to the present moment. Mindfulness activities can help you stay grounded when things feel out of your control.

**7 Avoid using drugs and alcohol.** It may be tempting to numb yourself with drugs and alcohol to cope with emotions, but there is danger in doing so. Misusing alcohol and drugs often leads to more problems, including increasing unpredictable behavior for those around you.

If you are struggling with your mental health or abusing alcohol or drugs, South Country is here to help. Treatment for mental illness and drug and alcohol problems are covered by South Country Health Alliance. Currently many of our Behavioral Health providers are providing services either virtually or telephonically through Telehealth. South Country has a Behavioral Health Department that can help members connect with resources to treat mental illness or substance use disorder. If you need help, please contact **South Country Member Services** at 1-866-567-7242, TTY users call 1-800-627-3529 or 711, to be connected to someone in our Behavioral Health Department.



# Are Your Kids Ready?

## Minnesota's Immunization Law

Use this chart as a guide to determine which vaccines are required to enroll in child care, early childhood programs, and school (public or private).

Find the child's age/grade level and look to see if your child had the number of shots shown by the checkmarks under each vaccine. The table on the back shows the ages when doses are due.

### Immunization Requirements

| Birth through 4 years<br>Early childhood programs & Child care | Age: 5 through 6 years <sup>③</sup><br>For Kindergarten | Age: 7 through 11 years<br>For 1 <sup>st</sup> through 6 <sup>th</sup> grade | Age: 12 years and older<br>For 7 <sup>th</sup> through 12 <sup>th</sup> grade |
|--|---|--|---|
| Hepatitis A (Hep A)<br>✓                                       |   |  |   |
| Hepatitis B (Hep B)<br>✓✓✓                                     | Hepatitis B<br>✓✓✓                                      | Hepatitis B<br>✓✓✓   | Hepatitis B <sup>⑦</sup><br>✓✓✓   |
| DTaP/DT<br>✓✓✓✓  | DTaP/DT <sup>④</sup><br>✓✓✓✓✓                           | ✓✓✓ tetanus and diphtheria containing doses <sup>⑥</sup>                     | ✓Tdap <sup>⑧</sup><br>& at least 2 tetanus and diphtheria containing doses    |
| Polio<br>✓✓✓   | Polio <sup>⑤</sup><br>✓✓✓✓                              | Polio<br>✓✓✓   | Polio<br>✓✓✓  |
| MMR<br>✓   | MMR<br>✓✓   | MMR<br>✓✓  | MMR<br>✓✓   |
| Hib<br>✓   |   |  | Meningococcal <sup>⑨</sup><br>✓ & booster                                     |
| Pneumococcal <sup>①</sup><br>✓✓✓✓                              |   |  |   |
| Varicella <sup>②</sup><br>✓                                    | Varicella <sup>②</sup><br>✓✓                            | Varicella <sup>②</sup><br>✓✓   | Varicella <sup>②</sup><br>✓✓  |

### Immunizations recommended but not required:

#### Influenza

Annually for all children age 6 months and older

**Rotavirus**  
For infants

**Human papillomavirus**  
At age 11-12 years

- ① Not required after 24 months.
- ② If the child has already had chickenpox disease, varicella shots are not required. If the disease occurred after 2010, the child's doctor must sign a form confirming disease.
- ③ First graders who are 6 years old and younger must follow the polio and DTaP/DT schedules for kindergarten.
- ④ Fifth shot of DTaP not needed if fourth shot was after age 4. Final dose of DTaP on or after age 4.
- ⑤ Fourth shot of polio not needed if third shot was after age 4. Final dose of polio on or after age 4.
- ⑥ Need proof of at least three tetanus and diphtheria containing doses. If up to date on DTaP/DT series, no additional doses needed.
- ⑦ An alternate two-shot schedule of hepatitis B may also be used for kids age 11 through 15 years.
- ⑧ One dose of Tdap is required beginning at 7th grade. Also need proof of at least two tetanus and diphtheria containing doses (DTaP/DT/Td). If a child received Tdap prior to 7th grade, another dose of Tdap is not needed.
- ⑨ One dose is required beginning at 7th grade. The booster dose is usually given at 16 years.

### Exemptions

To enroll in child care, early childhood programs, and school in Minnesota, children must show they've had these immunizations or file a legal exemption.

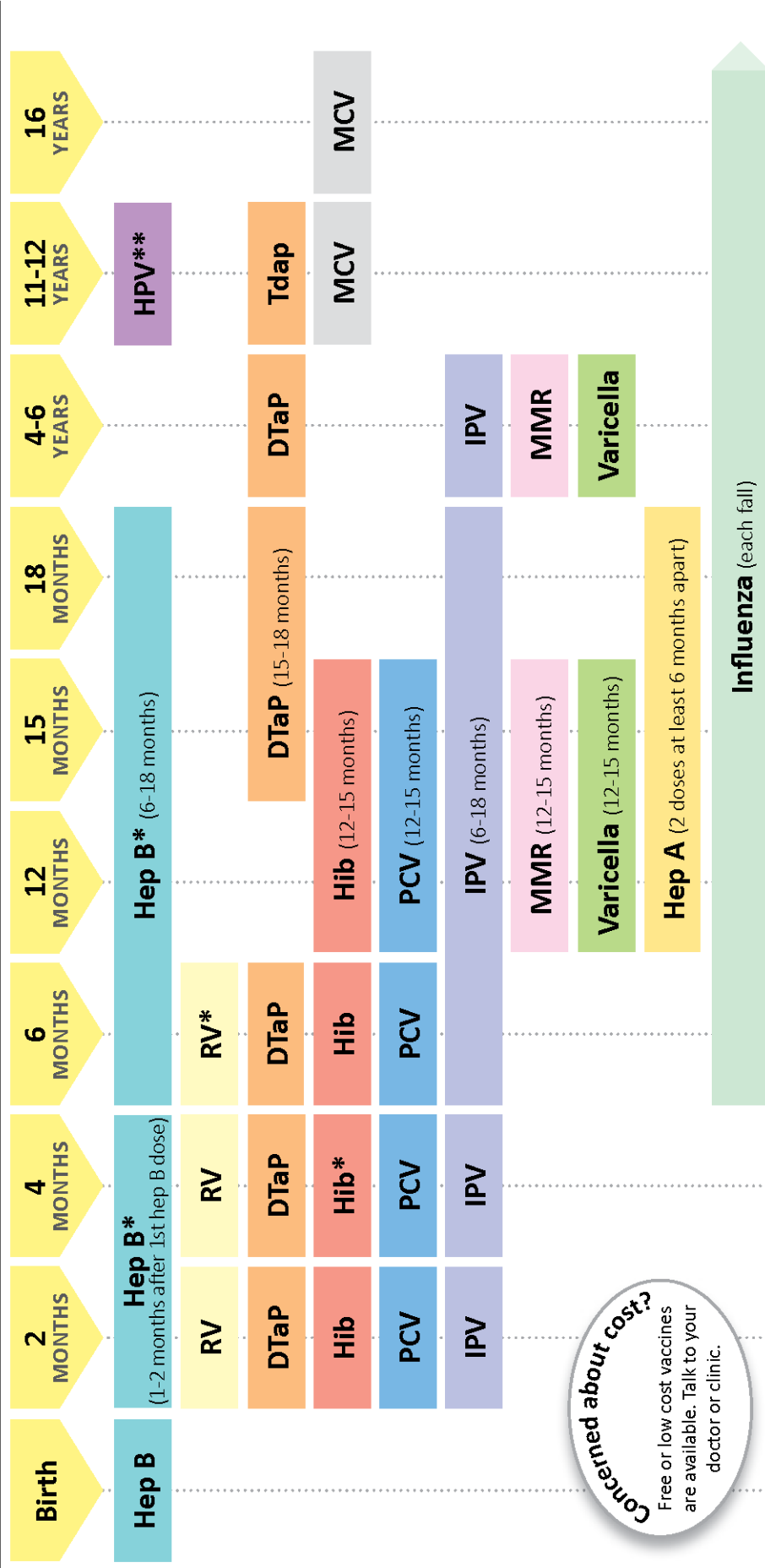
Parents may file a medical exemption signed by a health care provider or a non-medical exemption signed by a parent/guardian and notarized.

### Looking for Records?

For copies of your child's vaccination records, talk to your doctor or call the Minnesota Immunization Information Connection (MIIC) at 651-201-3980.

# When to Get Vaccines

## Birth to 16 Years



**Concerned about cost?**  
Free or low cost vaccines are available. Talk to your doctor or clinic.

It's not too late! If your child has fallen behind on their vaccinations, talk to your doctor or clinic to catch them up.

Minnesota law requires written proof of certain vaccinations for children in child care, early childhood programs, and school. However, if a child has a medical reason or if his/her parents are conscientiously opposed to any or all of the vaccinations, a legal exemption is available.

**Children with certain medical conditions may need additional vaccines** (e.g., pneumococcal or meningococcal). Talk to your doctor or clinic.

**Pregnant?** Protect yourself and your baby from whooping cough, get a Tdap vaccination between 27 and 36 weeks gestation. Talk to your doctor.

\*The number of doses depends on the product your doctor uses.

\*\*Two doses for 9 to 14 year olds; three doses for 15 to 26 year olds.

For copies of your child's **immunization records**, talk to your doctor or call the Minnesota Immunization Information Connection (MIIC) at 651-201-3980.

Key to vaccine abbreviations

|         |                                  |     |                                 |
|---------|----------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------|
| DTaP/Td | = diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus | Hib | = Haemophilus influenzae type b |
| Hep B   | = hepatitis B                    | IPV | = polio                         |
| MMR     | = measles, mumps, rubella        | PCV | = pneumococcal                  |
|         |                                  | RV  | = rotavirus                     |

Immunization Program  
651-201-5503 or 1-800-657-3970  
[www.health.state.mn.us/immunize](http://www.health.state.mn.us/immunize)



**SCHA Member Services 1-866-567-7242, TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711**

Attention. If you need free help interpreting this document, call the above number.

ያስተውሉ፡ ካለምንም ክፍያ ይህንን ዶኩመንት የሚተረጎምሎ አስተርጓሚ ከፈለጉ ከላይ ወደተጻፈው የስልክ ቁጥር ይደውሉ።

ملاحظة: إذا أردت مساعدة مجانية لترجمة هذه الوثيقة، اتصل على الرقم أعلاه.

သတိ။ ဤစာရွက်စာတမ်းအားအခမဲ့ဘာသာပြန်ပေးခြင်း အကူအညီလိုအပ်ပါက၊ အထက်ပါဖုန်းနံပါတ်ကိုခေါ်ဆိုပါ။

កំណត់សំគាល់ ។ បើអ្នកត្រូវការជំនួយក្នុងការបកប្រែឯកសារនេះដោយឥតគិតថ្លៃ សូមហៅទូរសព្ទតាមលេខខាងលើ ។

請注意，如果您需要免費協助傳譯這份文件，請撥打上面的電話號碼。

Attention. Si vous avez besoin d'une aide gratuite pour interpréter le présent document, veuillez appeler au numéro ci-dessus.

Thov ua twb zoo nyeem. Yog hais tias koj xav tau kev pab txhais lus rau tsab ntaub ntawv no pub dawb, ces hu rau tus najnpawb xov tooj saum toj no.

ဟ်သုဉ်ဟ်သးဘဉ်တက့ၢ်. ဖဲန့ၢ်လိဉ်ဘဉ်တၢ်မၤစၢၤကလိလၢတၢ်ကကျိးထံဝဲဒၣ်လံာ် တိလံာ်မိတခါအံၤန့ၢ်, ကိးဘဉ်လိတဲစိနီၢ်ဂံၢ်လၢထးအံၤန့ၢ်တက့ၢ်.

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ໂປຣດຊາບ ຖ້າຫາກ ທ່ານຕ້ອງການການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອໃນການແປເອກະສານນີ້ພຣີ, ຈົ່ງໂທໄປທີ່ໝາຍເລກຂ້າງເທິງນີ້.

Hubachiisa. Dokumentiin kun tola akka siif hiikamu gargaarsa hoo feete, lakkoobsa gubbatti kenname bilbili.

Внимание: если вам нужна бесплатная помощь в устном переводе данного документа, позвоните по указанному выше телефону.

Digniin. Haddii aad u baahantahay caawimaad lacag-la'aan ah ee tarjumaadda qoraalkan, lambarka kore wac.

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## Civil Rights Notice

**Discrimination is against the law.** South Country Health Alliance (SCHA) does not discriminate on the basis of any of the following:

- race
- color
- national origin
- creed
- religion
- sexual orientation
- public assistance status
- age
- disability (including physical or mental impairment)
- sex (including sex stereotypes and gender identity)
- marital status
- political beliefs
- medical condition
- health status
- receipt of health care services
- claims experience
- medical history
- genetic information

**Auxiliary Aids and Services:** SCHA provides auxiliary aids and services, like qualified interpreters or information in accessible formats, free of charge and in a timely manner to ensure an equal opportunity to participate in our health care programs.

**Contact** SCHA Member Services at [members@mnscha.org](mailto:members@mnscha.org) or call 1-866-567-7242 (toll free), TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711.

**Language Assistance Services:** SCHA provides translated documents and spoken language interpreting, free of charge and in a timely manner, when language assistance services are necessary to ensure limited English speakers have meaningful access to our information and services. **Contact** SCHA Member Services at [members@mnscha.org](mailto:members@mnscha.org) or call 1-866-567-7242 (toll free), TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711.

## Civil Rights Complaints

You have the right to file a discrimination complaint if you believe you were treated in a discriminatory way by SCHA. You may contact any of the following four agencies directly to file a discrimination complaint.

### U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

You have the right to file a complaint with the OCR, a federal agency, if you believe you have been discriminated against because of any of the following:

- race
- color
- national origin
- age
- disability
- sex
- religion (in some cases)

Contact the **OCR** directly to file a complaint:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights  
 200 Independence Avenue SW  
 Room 515F  
 HHH Building  
 Washington, DC 20201  
 Customer Response Center: Toll-free: 800-368-1019  
 TDD 800-537-7697  
 Email: [ocrmail@hhs.gov](mailto:ocrmail@hhs.gov)

## Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR)

In Minnesota, you have the right to file a complaint with the MDHR if you believe you have been discriminated against because of any of the following:

- race
- color
- national origin
- religion
- creed
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marital status
- public assistance status
- disability

Contact the **MDHR** directly to file a complaint:

Minnesota Department of Human Rights  
540 Fairview Avenue North, Suite 201  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
651-539-1100 (voice)  
800-657-3704 (toll free)  
711 or 800-627-3529 (MN Relay)  
651-296-9042 (fax)  
[Info.MDHR@state.mn.us](mailto:Info.MDHR@state.mn.us) (email)

## Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)

You have the right to file a complaint with DHS if you believe you have been discriminated against in our health care programs because of any of the following:

- race
- color
- national origin
- creed
- religion
- sexual orientation
- public assistance status
- age
- disability (including physical or mental impairment)
- sex (including sex stereotypes and gender identity)
- marital status
- political beliefs
- medical condition
- health status
- receipt of health care services
- claims experience
- medical history
- genetic information

Complaints must be in writing and filed within 180 days of the date you discovered the alleged discrimination. The complaint must contain your name and address and describe the discrimination you are complaining about. After we get your complaint, we will review it and notify you in writing about whether we have authority to investigate. If we do, we will investigate the complaint.

DHS will notify you in writing of the investigation's outcome. You have the right to appeal the outcome if you disagree with the decision. To appeal, you must send a written request to have DHS review the investigation outcome. Be brief and state why you disagree with the decision. Include additional information you think is important.

If you file a complaint in this way, the people who work for the agency named in the complaint cannot retaliate against you. This means they cannot punish you in any way for filing a complaint. Filing a complaint in this way does not stop you from seeking out other legal or administrative actions.

Contact **DHS** directly to file a discrimination complaint:

Civil Rights Coordinator  
Minnesota Department of Human Services  
Equal Opportunity and Access Division  
P.O. Box 64997  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0997  
651-431-3040 (voice) or use your preferred relay service

## SCHA Complaint Notice

You have the right to file a complaint with SCHA if you believe you have been discriminated against because of any of the following:

- medical condition
- health status
- receipt of health care services
- claims experience
- medical history
- genetic information
- disability (including mental or physical impairment)
- marital status
- age
- sex (including sex stereotypes and gender identity)
- sexual orientation
- national origin
- race
- color
- religion
- creed
- public assistance status
- political beliefs

You can file a complaint and ask for help in filing a complaint in person or by mail, phone, fax, or email at:

Attn: Civil Rights Coordinator  
South Country Health Alliance  
2300 Park Drive, Suite 100  
Owatonna, MN 55060  
Toll Free: 866-567-7242  
TTY: 800-627-3529 or 711  
Fax: 507-444-7774  
Email: [grievances-appeals@mnscha.org](mailto:grievances-appeals@mnscha.org)

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American Indians can continue or begin to use tribal and Indian Health Services (IHS) clinics. We will not require prior approval or impose any conditions for you to get services at these clinics. For elders age 65 years and older this includes Elderly Waiver (EW) services accessed through the tribe. If a doctor or other provider in a tribal or IHS clinic refers you to a provider in our network, we will not require you to see your primary care provider prior to the referral.

SCHA LB/CB-5287  
DHS Approved 06/25/2020

# Quick Reference Resources

Listed below are references to resources you have available.

| Resource        | What they do   | Contact   |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Member Services | Call with benefit questions, get a new ID card, order plan materials, and more | Phone: 1-866-567-7242<br>TTY: 1-800-627-3529 or 711<br>Hours: 8 a.m - 8 p.m. M-F ( <i>April - September</i> )<br>7 days a week ( <i>October - March</i> ) |
| EX Program      | Tobacco Cessation help   | Phone: 1-833-EXCOACH<br>www.becomeanEX.org  |
| Nurse24         | 24 hour Nurse Advice Line  | Check your Member ID card for the number  |
| RideConnect     | Schedule a ride to a medical or dental appointment                             | Phone: 1-866-567-7242<br>TTY: 1-800-627-3529 or 711   |
| Delta Dental    | Help find a dentist or answer dental questions.                                | Phone: 1-800-774-9049   |

## Community Care Connectors

Connectors are local South Country experts. Working either in the county public health or human service department, a Connector bridges the gap between medical services, public health, human services, and other community resources. They work together with South Country staff to provide support locally.

| County          | Contact                 | Phone Number      |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Brown County    | Melissa Dallenbach      | 507-233-6816      |
| Dodge County    | Deb Harlow              | 507-635-6150      |
| Freeborn County | Contact Member Services | See contact above |
| Goodhue County  | Dana Syverson           | 651-385-6118      |
| Kanabec County  | Nikki O'Bert            | 320-679-6443      |
|                 | Kelly Zaiser            | 320-679-6478      |
|                 | Kelli Bergstadt         | 320-679-6336      |
| Sibley County   | Erin Pauly              | 507-237-4326      |
| Steele County   | Ruth Lumley             | 507-431-5766      |
| Wabasha County  | Jennifer Schurhammer    | 651-565-5200      |
| Waseca County   | Sarah Sletten           | 507-837-6699      |

TTY users can call 1-800-627-3529 or 711 for all the Community Care Connectors above.

## Truth Initiative's Quit E-Cigarette Text Line

3 million+ young people use e-cigarettes, like JUUL, which means they're all at risk for nicotine addiction — but there are ways to help. Youth and young adults can **text DITCHJUUL to 88709** to join This is Quitting, a free text-to-quit program from @truthinitiative.



# SOUTH COUNTRY HEALTH ALLIANCE

2300 Park Drive, Suite 100  
Owatonna, MN 55060

Health, Wellness, or  
Prevention Information

## SeniorCare Complete is a 4.5 out of 5 Stars!

SeniorCare Complete received an overall 4.5-Star Rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for calendar year 2020. The overall rating is a combination of SeniorCare Complete's Part C 4.5-Star Rating and Part D 5-Star Rating.

Every year, CMS rates health plans on a 1 to 5 star scale, with 5 stars representing the highest quality. CMS uses Star Ratings to score and rank Medicare Advantage health plans according to quality of services offered to people receiving Medicare benefits. Star Ratings focus on areas such as helping members stay healthy, providing better care, member experiences and satisfaction with the health plan, customer service, and drug safety.

The overall Star Rating score provides individuals a way to compare performance among several plans. South Country is pleased that the services we offer are satisfactory to our members. We are dedicated to providing quality care and services and will continue to strive for improvement as a health plan.

### Follow South Country Health Alliance for...

- Changes to your health plan
- Health and wellness tips
- Community events

