

THE

Connection

Vol. 9, Issue 1 | May 2018

SPECIAL ANNUAL REPORT EDITION



Taking Fight to the Opioid Crisis

South Country Health Alliance is offering a new case management program for members who are prescribed opioid medications.

Opioids are drugs used to treat moderate to severe pain. For most people, opioids are relatively safe and reduce pain when taken as prescribed for a short time. However, opioids are highly addictive, which has led to a nationwide epidemic of harmful misuse, many times ending in death.

To help combat opioid addiction in our rural Minnesota communities, South Country Health Alliance has developed an innovative case management program that helps members learn about their opioid prescriptions while connecting them to educational and pain management resources.

A South Country Health Alliance case manager talks to members by phone about their new prescription for opioid medication. The case manager offers information about using medications as prescribed, safely storing them in the home, and disposing of them when finished. The case manager also helps connect members to other resources available through the health plan or in the community that may help with their recovery.

Through the program, we want to help members understand the risk of using opioid medications for long periods of time while still managing their pain.

For more information about opioid case management, call 507-444-7770.

What's Inside

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Live tobacco-free with the new EX Program, free for members. Get a personalized plan that helps you quit at your own pace.

SOUTH COUNTRY
HEALTH ALLIANCE
Bringing Wellness Home

South Country Health Alliance is a county-owned health plan that provides health care coverage for Minnesota Health Care Program enrollees in 12 Minnesota counties.

Senior Management

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Chief Operations Officer

Dr. Brad Johnson

Chief Medical Officer

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Deterra® pouches are available to South Country Health Alliance members to safely dispose of unneeded drugs that can be misused or abused.

Safe Storage and Disposal

Storage

If you receive a prescription opioid for pain management, it is important to safely store your medications to help prevent drug misuse or theft.

When your medications aren't secured, others have easy access to take them. Up to 30% of opioids are used by someone other than the person who got the prescription, many times by a friend or family member.

To prevent misuse of your prescription drugs, find a safe and secure place in your home that is out of sight from children, visitors, and family. Return your medication to your secure location after every use. If possible, keep medications locked when you're home and when you're traveling.

Disposal

Many homes end up with unwanted or expired prescription opioids. Keeping old, unused medications in your home can increase the risk of accidental poisoning, theft, and abuse. When you are finished taking pain medication, you should promptly dispose of all remaining pills or tablets.

It is not safe for the environment to throw your medications in the garbage or flush them down the toilet. However, there are other easy options for you to properly dispose of your unused medications:

South Country Health Alliance offers Deterra® pouches that safely neutralize pills, liquids, and patches. Minnesota also has more than 240 medication collection boxes located at law enforcement facilities and pharmacies throughout the state. Visit www.doseofreality.mn.gov to find a disposal site near you.

For more information or questions about Deterra® pouches, call Member Services at 1-866-567-7242 (TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711).

Opioid Epidemic In Numbers

Increased prescription of opioid medications has led to devastating consequences, including widespread misuse and overdose of opioids. Here is a snapshot of how the epidemic has affected Americans and Minnesotans.

Many people have heard of the "opioid epidemic," but just how serious is it?

The opioid epidemic is the deadliest drug crisis in American history. It has affected millions of Americans from all backgrounds, and the death toll is rising faster than ever.

In 2016...

116

...people in the United States **died every day** from opioid-related drug overdoses. **At least 1** of those people were Minnesotan.

42,249

...people in the United States died from overdosing on opioids. **395** of those people were Minnesotans.

From 1999-2016, **more than 350,000 people** in the United States died from an overdose involving an opioid.

2,100,000

...people in the United States had an **opioid use disorder**, which includes addiction, dependence, and withdrawal. As many as **1 in 4** people receiving long-term prescription opioids in a primary care setting struggles with addiction.

11,500,000

...people in the United States **misused prescription opioids**. This means taking medications in a different way than it was prescribed, such as taking a higher dose or taking someone else's prescription.

Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Minnesota Department of Health

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Email: marketing@mnscha.org

Website: www.mnscha.org

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. 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.



A Fierce Advocate

Promoting health and access to health care in rural Minnesota

“Each of us has a voice when it comes to promoting our best possible health.”

- CEO Leota Lind

Vision Statement

"South Country Health Alliance will continue to be a fierce advocate for the health and well-being of people living in rural Minnesota."

Last year, South Country Health Alliance created a new vision statement to make sure we never lose sight of what matters most.

Our communities and members are the center of everything we do. We are not only committed to the communities we serve, but we promise to advocate for the health and well-being of the people living in them.

To us, advocacy includes everyone. Each of us has a voice when it comes to promoting our best possible health.

South Country Health Alliance

We work closely with other Minnesota county-based purchasing health plans to advocate for improving access to health care services in rural communities.

Rural Minnesotans face unique challenges when it comes to getting the health care they need. We spend time with state and federal legislators to raise awareness about rural health issues and build stronger policy supporting better access to care for all Minnesotans.

Communities

Our county partners, Community Care Connectors, and providers carry out the important role of working directly with our members every day. We rely on them to help us understand the particular needs in their communities so we can create programs and services that address gaps in health care.

These collaborative partnerships have helped us develop several effective programs for members:

- DiamondView health information exchange for improved patient care transitions
- RideConnect transportation to get members to and from their health care appointments

- Healthy Pathways for early mental health intervention
- Case management to combat opioid addiction and overdose

Together we continue to find ways to advocate for improving health care in rural communities.

You, Our Members

Our mission is to empower and engage members to be as healthy as they can be. We believe you too have a meaningful role to play in advocating for your own health.

Take an active role in your health care, ask questions, and be prepared. At South Country Health Alliance, we want to hear from you about your wishes and concerns. We are here to help you and support you so you can achieve your best possible health.

As we look forward to another year, I want to thank you for being a member of South Country Health Alliance. Together, we will continue to advocate for the communities that we all share.



Financial Statement Summary

January - December 2017

South Country Health Alliance's (SCHA's) capital and surplus grew by \$5.4 million in 2017. Increased revenues more than offset increased costs for health care claims, contributing to an overall net surplus for the year. This result enhanced SCHA's financial position, which remains strong—an important factor for the ongoing protection of our members.

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 2017, SCHA was charged \$252.9 million for members' health care expenses. This was 91% of total expenses. The remainder was spread between claim adjustment and cost containment expense, and general administrative expenses.

SCHA had nearly \$31.2 million set aside in claim liability reserves on our balance sheet at December 31, 2017, for future member medical benefit payments. In addition to these reserves, SCHA had capital and surplus of \$25.8 million, which exceeds the statutory net worth requirements of the State of Minnesota.

2017 Summary of Financial Statements

Balance Sheet

Assets	\$	78,437,846
Liabilities	\$	52,643,281
Capital and Surplus	\$	25,794,565

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

Capitation Revenues	\$	275,067,269
Health Care Expenses		
Physician, Hospital, and Dental Expenses	\$	220,644,225
Pharmacy Expenses	\$	32,242,750
Total Health Care Expenses	\$	252,886,975
Net Reinsurance Expense (Recovery)	\$	(1,007,384)
Other Expenses		
Claim Adjustment and Cost Containment	\$	10,529,611
General Administrative Expenses	\$	14,596,626
Reserve for Health Contracts	\$	(7,000,000)
Total Other Expenses	\$	18,126,237
Operating Income	\$	5,061,441
Investment Income	\$	417,031
Net Income	\$	5,478,472

Complete audited financial statements are available upon request.

How to Redeem Your Voucher

Vouchers for each of our reward programs are available at your county public health department and on our website at www.mnscha.org

(Members > Wellness Programs). You can also call Member Services at 1-866-567-7242 (TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711) to request a voucher or voucher booklet.

Receiving your gift card is easy. Simply bring the correct voucher to your medical appointment, have your doctor fill it out, and then mail it back to South Country Health Alliance within 60 days of the appointment.

All gift card rewards are good for Walmart. More details about these reward programs and other Take Charge!™ wellness programs are on our website at www.mnscha.org (Members > Wellness Programs).

Rewards for Good Health

Through Be Rewarded™, South Country Health Alliance offers gift card rewards for the following preventive care services:

Activity	Requirement	Reward
NEW! Cervical Cancer Screening	Women ages 21-64	\$25 gift card
NEW! Dental Visit	AbilityCare, SharedCare, SingleCare, SeniorCare Complete, and MSC+	\$25 gift card
Prenatal Care	First trimester, or within 42 days of enrollment	\$50 gift card
Postpartum Care	21-56 days after delivery	\$50 gift card
Infant Well-Care Visit*	6 checkups before age 15 months	\$75 gift card
Lead Test	Age 1 & again by age 2	\$25 gift card
Child Well-Care Visit*	Ages 3, 4, 5, and 6	\$25 gift card
Adolescent Well-Care Visit*	Ages 11-17	\$25 gift card
Adolescent HPV Immunization	Vaccine series before age 13	\$25 gift card
Young Adult Well-Care Visit*	Ages 18-21	\$25 gift card**
Mammogram	Ages 50+	\$25 gift card

*Well-care visits are also known as Child & Teen Checkups (C&TC exams)

**Additional \$25 bonus for completing a chlamydia screening during exam

Why Preventive Health Care Matters

Preventive health care can help you stay healthier throughout your life. Learn about preventive care and the important role it plays in keeping you and your loved ones healthy.

Your health matters to us. That's why we offer gift card rewards to encourage members to get timely preventive health care services. But what is "preventive care," and why is it so important?

Preventive care helps prevent illnesses, disease, and other health problems. It also helps detect illness at an early stage when treatment is likely to work best.

Preventive care includes health services like screenings, tests, regular check-ups, vaccinations, and patient counseling. Making healthy lifestyle choices is also a key component of preventive care. This includes things like quitting smoking, eating healthy, reducing alcohol use, and getting exercise.

For South Country Health Alliance members, many preventive health care services are covered benefits in your health plan. Call Member Services at 1-866-567-7242 (TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711) to learn more about covered preventive care services or refer to your *Member Handbook* or *Evidence of Coverage*.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017



Chlamydia Screenings

Young people are at greater risk for getting chlamydia. South Country Health Alliance rewards members for getting tested.

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) that usually does not show any symptoms. This can make it difficult for people to tell if they are infected or not. If left undetected, chlamydia can lead to serious health problems, especially for women.

Women can develop pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), which may cause permanent damage to their reproductive systems, making it difficult or impossible for them to get pregnant later on. Men can get prolonged testicular pain and fever. For both men and women, untreated chlamydia can also increase the chance of getting HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

That is why it is important for young, sexually-active people to get tested for chlamydia even if they don't have symptoms.

South Country Health Alliance members ages 18-21 can get a **bonus \$25 gift card** when they complete a chlamydia screening during their annual young adult well-care visit (C&TC exam). This is in addition to the \$25 gift card they get for completing the well-care visit, so up to \$50 total. The well-care visits and chlamydia screenings are both covered benefits.

During the well-care visit, ask your health care provider about chlamydia screenings. Typically, a simple laboratory test can diagnose chlamydia. Your doctor may ask you to provide a urine sample or use a cotton swab to get a sample for testing.

For more information about chlamydia screenings or well-care visits, call Member Services at **1-866-567-7242** (TTY **1-800-627-3529** or **711**).

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017

FAQ: Chlamydia

Frequently asked questions about this common STD

What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted disease (STD) that can infect both men and women.

Who is at risk?

Anyone who has sex can get chlamydia through unprotected vaginal, anal, or oral sex. However, sexually-active young people are at a higher risk.

What are the symptoms?

Most people who have chlamydia have no symptoms. Some symptoms may not appear until several weeks after having sex with an infected partner. These can include abnormal vaginal discharge and burning for women or discharge, burning, and swelling for men.

Can chlamydia be cured?

Yes, chlamydia can be cured with the right treatment as directed by a doctor.

What happens if chlamydia is not treated?

See information in *Chlamydia Screenings* to the left.

How can chlamydia be prevented?

Latex male condoms used consistently and correctly can reduce the risk of getting or giving chlamydia. Abstaining from sex or being in a long-term, monogamous relationship with a partner who is not infected is the surest way to avoid chlamydia and other STDs or STIs.

Crisis Text Line: Text "MN" to 741741

Free support at your fingertips, 24/7

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.

As of April 1, Crisis Text Line services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Crisis Text Line has been offering crisis response services since 2013 and has since received more than 20 million messages.

If you or a loved one is in crisis, don't wait. Help is available now! Text "MN" to 741741 or call your local crisis phone number.

Source: MN Department of Human Services, 2018

Quit Smoking with **ex** program

Thinking about quitting smoking? Join the EX Program. It's free!

Quitting tobacco means taking control of your life and making the change you want to make. We're with you all the way.

South Country Health Alliance members have access to the EX Program, a free tobacco cessation program that helps you develop the skills and confidence you need to live tobacco-free.

Here's what makes quitting with EX different from other programs:

- **Personalized quit plan.** You gain an interactive, self-paced, guided quit plan that provides support to quit. For good.
- **A thriving social community.** Join thousands of current and former tobacco users who provide in-the-moment peer support—a critical piece in the quit process.
- **Available anywhere, anytime.** The EX Program's mobile platform gives you access on any screen, wherever you need support.
- **Live chat coaching.** Anytime, anywhere through live chat, EX Coaches can answer questions on quit medications, how to overcome cravings, and more.

The EX Program has helped more than 800,000 smokers live tobacco-free. The program includes Mayo Clinic expertise and EX Community support to guide you on your own journey that you control. *Learn more below about what the EX Program can offer to you.*

Visit BecomeAnEX.org or call
1-833-EXCOACH to get started!



An active, supportive **EX Community** of real tobacco users who have been through it all.



A **customized quit plan** that learns and grows with you.



Smart, **interactive guides and tools** for you to navigate your tobacco-free journey.



Expert advice and tips from Mayo Clinic.



Coaching through **1:1 live chat.**



Nicotine patches, gum, or lozenges **delivered to you.**

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.

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

သတိ။ ဤစာရွက်စာတမ်းအားအခမဲ့ဘာသာပြန်ပေးခြင်း အကူအညီလိုအပ်ပါက၊ အထက်ပါဖုန်းနံပါတ်ကိုခေါ်ဆိုပါ။

កំណត់សំគាល់ ។ បើអ្នកត្រូវការជំនួយក្នុងការបកប្រែឯកសារនេះដោយឥតគិតថ្លៃ សូមហៅទូរស័ព្ទតាមលេខខាងលើ ។

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.

ဟ်သ့ဟ်သးဘဉ်တက့ၢ်. ဝဲန့ၢ်လိဉ်ဘဉ်တၢ်မၤစၢၤကလီၤလၢတၢ်ကကျိးထံဝဲဒၣ်လံာ် တီလံာ်မိတခါအံၤန့ၣ်, ကိးဘဉ်လိတဲစိနီၢ်ဂံၢ်လၢထးအံၤန့ၣ်တက့ၢ်.

알려드립니다. 이 문서에 대한 이해를 돕기 위해 무료로 제공되는 도움을 받으시려면 위의 전화번호로 연락하십시오.

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.

Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para interpretar este documento, llame al número indicado arriba.

Chú ý. Nếu quý vị cần được giúp đỡ dịch tài liệu này miễn phí, xin gọi số bên trên.

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, call 1-866-567-7242 (toll free), or use your preferred relay service.

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 information and services. **Contact** SCHA Member Services at members@mnscha.org or call 1-866-567-7242 (toll free).

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.

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)
- marital status
- sex (including sex stereotypes and gender identity)
- political beliefs
- medical condition
- health status
- receipt of health care services
- claims experience
- medical history
- genetic information

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 (including sex stereotypes and gender identity)

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

Director
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services'
Office for Civil Rights
200 Independence Avenue SW, Room 509F
HHH Building
Washington, DC 20201
800-368-1019 (voice), 800-537-7697 (TDD)
Complaint Portal – <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>

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
Freeman Building, 625 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-539-1100 (voice) or 800-657-3704 (toll free)
711 or 800-627-3529 (MN Relay)
651-296-9042 (Fax)
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)
- marital status
- sex (including sex stereotypes and gender identity)
- 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, 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 period. Be brief and state why you disagree with the decision. Include additional information you think is important.

If you file a complaint 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:

ATTN: 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

South Country Health Alliance (SCHA)

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

ATTN: Civil Rights Coordinator
South Country Health Alliance
2300 Park Drive, Suite 100
Owatonna, MN 55060
866-567-7242 (voice, toll free), 507-444-7774 (fax)
800-627-3529 or 711 (TTY users)

SOUTH COUNTRY
HEALTH ALLIANCE
Bringing Wellness Home

2300 Park Drive, Suite 100
Owatonna, MN 55060

Health, Wellness, or
Prevention Information

Follow along for...

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

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