



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

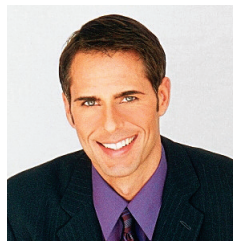
Keys to Provider/ Patient Relationships	1
Updated VidaCare Website Launched	1
ER/ED Use	2
Medicaid Fraud	2
Amanacer Recovery Center	3
Member Report Card	3
Medication Utilization Thresholds	4
Behavioral Health	4
New VidaCare Provider Numbers and NPI	5
Provider Reporting / Appendix N	5
VidaCare Reaches Out	6

For more information  
contact:

Provider Services  
1-800-556-0674

## KEYS TO PROVIDER/PATIENT RELATIONSHIPS

### DOUG WIRTH, PRESIDENT/CEO



The uncertainties of not only the HIV epidemic - but of peoples' lives - necessitate a flexible response from the **CARE TEAM**. To be effective, Primary Care Providers (PCPs) must individualize patient treatment plans. Use of well-phrased questions, reasoning, shared information, respect and patience best achieve mutually satisfying results. Staff can't rush patients to begin treatment or make care choices before they're ready to commit.

Patients that are comfortable with their providers, and with the attributes of the non-physician staff and the care setting, are more likely to follow-up on their care and adhere to their treatment regimen [*Effective Physician-Patient Communication and Health Outcomes*. M. Stewart. Canadian Medical Association. May 1995: 152 (9)].

The doctor-patient relationship correlates with adherence to medical care and treatment regimens, utilization of services, continuity of care and improved clinical outcomes. Three key dimensions of **patient satisfaction** are: 1) getting access to needed care, 2) interpersonal relations with provider/staff, and 3) overall experience that needs/expectations were met.

By asking following questions, providers can **increase customer satisfaction and retention in care and reduce no-shows**:

- **Am I comfortable discussing all issues, including drug use, gender identity conflicts, social isolation, depression, sexuality/sex or family conflicts?;**
- **Do I listen and respond without appearing to be rushed or judgmental?; and**
- **Do I ensure that my explanations/instructions are culturally understood and relevant?**

Sometimes despite all your hard work, patients miss a scheduled visit/s. When your efforts to get them in for care aren't successful, please call us. **Think of VidaCare as an extra set of hands that can reach out, call, canvass the community, make a home visit and even escort people to your office if necessary.** Call 917-637-3780 and ask to speak to a Member Services Representative or e-mail: [rjohnrson@vidacare.org](mailto:rjohnrson@vidacare.org) or [jgarcia@vidacare.org](mailto:jgarcia@vidacare.org).

## NEW PROVIDER HIGHLIGHT:

### Doshi Diagnostics

Providers can now  
refer members to any  
Doshi location.

For location listing,  
See Page 4.

## UPDATED VIDACARE WEBSITE LAUNCHED

### ROSEMARIE GATES, DIRECTOR OF PROVIDER SERVICES

We are pleased to announce that the updated VidaCare website which can be found at [www.vidacare.org](http://www.vidacare.org) launched on June 2, 2008. Providers and members will find important and timely information that is available any day, any time. This information will be key to you, your office staff and billers. Highlights for Providers are:

- ☑ Updated, downloadable HIV/AIDS clinical & treatment information;
- ☑ VidaCare Benefit Guide, providing information on which services require Preauthorization;
- ☑ Quick Reference Guide which will answer many administrative questions;
- ☑ Provider Directory;

*Continued on Page 5.*



## MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S UPDATE: ER/ED USE

DR. JERRY ERNST

I recently spent some time analyzing last year's emergency room utilization patterns for VidaCare members. While the quantity of visits was not troublesome, the reasons were.

Having briefly been the director of a busy city hospital Emergency Room/Department (ER/ED), I am well aware of the vital role these facilities have in our health care system. They are well positioned to provide life saving care to people presenting to them with life threatening illnesses. They do many things very well. Comprehensive care, however, is not one of them.

One of the main missions of VidaCare is to assure comprehensive care to that segment of the HIV infected population that too often has no access to it. Comprehensive care is essential in the management of any chronic disease, including HIV. Comprehensive care implies continuity of care; continuity of care suffers when patients use the ER for non-emergency matters rather than seeing their primary care provider.

A negative characteristic of most ERs is the lack of communication between the ER and the patient's primary care provider, even when they both reside in the same institution. The ER doctor's care suffers from a lack of knowledge of the multiple medical conditions the HIV infected patient before him may have. The patient suffers from long waits, often unnecessary duplicative tests and being cared for by a provider with whom he has no ongoing relationship. The PCP suffers from an unawareness of what transpired in the ER if s/he even knew that their patient was in the ER.

No one expects the patient to know before hand that the acute problem troubling him does not warrant an ER visit. And no one expects the PCP to manage an acutely ill patient over the telephone. Our data showed that our members had approximately 160 ER visits during the first half of 2007. Prescription renewals were the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common reason given for the ER visit-about 3%. Visits for bronchitis, sore throats and cough combined accounted for 5% of the visits.

The issue is not monetary cost, at least not the direct cost of the ER visit. The cost is the break in continuity of care. The cost is also in time wasted by the patient waiting in the ER, the tests done that do not become a part of the patient's primary care record, the lost opportunities for preventive medicine that could have occurred had the patient been seen by the PCP instead of in the ER (reminder-it's flu vaccination time), and the weakening of the bond between patient and provider.

We as covering providers need to address this issue of inappropriate ER utilization by our VidaCare patients. Perhaps frequent reminders that we are available after hours by phone are needed. Even a call from and/or the patient while they are in the ER would be helpful in solidifying the patient-provider bond, a bond that often produces positive results in other aspects of HIV care such as adherence and prevention.

I will be sending providers notification of ER visits by their patients together with whatever information we have concerning that visit. I ask that you discuss this with your patients. Please review with them why they went to the ER, how they can reach you after hours and provide an explanation of the negative effects ER visits can have on continuity of care. Lastly, please remind your

## MEDICAID FRAUD

ROSEMARIE GATES, DIRECTOR OF PROVIDER SERVICES

Medicaid Fraud hurts us all. It affects patient care and has an adverse affect on the Medicaid payor system. It occurs when a member, physician, or vendor attempts to gain additional funding through fraudulent claims submissions. Some examples include:

- ◆ Billing for medical expenses not actually performed;
- ◆ Billing for more expensive services;
- ◆ Billing more than once for the same medical service; and
- ◆ Dispensing generic drugs but billing for brand-name drugs.

Effective January, 2007; the federal *Deficit Reduction Act* requires all entities that receive or makes payments of \$5,000,000 or more in Medicaid funds to educate employees, contractors and agents about false claims recoveries. ***VidaCare takes Medicaid Fraud very seriously.***

If you know of someone that has engaged in Medicaid Fraud, report this to our Compliance Officer, Rosemarie Gates. We will assist you in filing a report to the proper authorities. For more information, contact the NYS Office of the Medicaid Inspector General at 1-(877) 87-FRAUD (877-873-7283): [www.omig.state.ny.us](http://www.omig.state.ny.us).



## NEW: AMANECER RECOVERY CENTER

### ROSEMARIE GATES, DIRECTOR OF PROVIDER SERVICES

The Amanecer Recovery Center is an expansion of the Behavioral Health Services offered at Promesa Systems, Inc. The unit consists of a detoxification unit and a rehabilitation unit dedicated to the care of individuals struggling with drug or alcohol addiction. "The Amanecer Recovery Center is the first critical step in a treatment continuum that can result in improved health for the individual. We are extremely pleased to provide this service and are committed to helping individuals towards their path of recovery with the utmost compassion, professionalism and respect", said Lisa Garay, Promesa's COO. All services are supervised by a team of healthcare professionals who strive to engage the whole person.

**Detoxification Unit** : Thirty (30) beds for adult men and women, with an average stay of five days. To allow for an uninterrupted course of treatment, clients have the option of then entering the Rehabilitation Program, or they are referred to outpatient services.

**Rehabilitation Unit**: Twenty-three (23) beds for adult men and women. The unit provides a safe, supportive environment for individuals who wish to stop using alcohol or drugs. Patients, at the end of their stay, can utilize the various outpatient services for continued treatment.

For additional information, please contact: Amanecer Recovery Center, 1776 Clay Avenue, Bronx, NY 10457. Telephone: (718) 960-7501, x7502 or see the website: [www.promesa.org](http://www.promesa.org).

## PROMOTING MEMBER HEALTH: PROGRAM REPORT CARD

### RUPERTO JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF MEMBER SERVICES



In 2007, VidaCare announced four new health promotion/maintenance-in-care initiatives. Each program offers a direct financial incentive to members who complete any or all of the following basic health maintenance measures. Here's a brief summary of these member incentives:

1. **Healthy Starts**: New VidaCare members will receive a **\$10 gift card** for completing their initial primary care visit within 30 days of VidaCare membership (one time only);
2. **Health Promotion**: Every VidaCare member can earn a **\$10 gift card** each quarter for completing a basic primary care visit and HIV monitoring (Viral load and CD4 count);
3. **Getting Reconnected**: VidaCare members who drop out of care and are deemed lost-to-follow up by the Plan become eligible for a **\$10 gift card** when they get reconnected to primary care and see their HIV PCP;
4. **Rose Program**: Once a year, female members of VidaCare may earn a **\$25 gift card** for completing comprehensive women's health measures.

When filling out the **Promoting Member Health Program Report Card** for any incentive; it's important that the current member contact information be included to ensure that gift cards can be mailed to the proper address. **Copies of actual lab results must accompany each submitted report card to qualify.** The form may be filled out by a Medical Assistant, Case Manager or other office staff, but it must be signed by the PCP. Please fax the form and labs to **VidaCare Health Services at (917) 637-3799**.

Each VidaCare member is eligible to receive up to \$50 in direct financial incentives per year. These initiatives are designed to:

- ☒ Promote meaningful member/provider relationships and help new/unconnected individuals to establish a medical home;
- ☒ Promote regular primary care visits by all members;
- ☒ Provide additional resources to help meet the basic needs of members;
- ☒ Assist members in knowing their health status and lab results;
- ☒ Re-engage individuals who've dropped out of care; and
- ☒ Reduce appointment no-shows.

For copies of this Report Card, go the Vidacare website: [www.vidacare.org](http://www.vidacare.org) and click on HealthStarts/Health Promotion Program. For other forms, additional information or clarification, please call Care Coordination Director Noemi Olivo or Member Services Director Ruperto Johnson at (917) 637-3780. Thank you for your continued service on behalf of VidaCare members!

## MEDICAID UTILIZATION THRESHOLDS - HIV DRUGS

NOEMI OLIVO, RN/MSN, DIRECTOR OF CARE COORDINATION

Have your VidaCare members come to you saying that they are having difficulty in getting their HIV drugs or other prescriptions re-filled because the pharmacist tells them that they have met their Medicaid Utilization Threshold? Medicaid Utilization Thresholds (MUTS) is a requirement which New York State has set up to cut Medicaid costs. MUTS is a system that puts yearly limits on the number of services Medicaid will pay for a recipient. Patients in a Medicaid Managed Care plan are exempt from MUTS. However, because pharmacy is a carve out from the VidaCare managed care benefit package, our members are subject to MUTS for pharmacy.

But wait! There is a solution and you can avoid this from happening to your VidaCare members. Just complete a Threshold Override Application form for each member as a component of the member's initial treatment plan. **Filling out this form overrides MUTS.** The Threshold Override applications have to be ordered (no downloading from the Web). You can order the forms by calling (800) 522-5518 or (518) 447-9860. Once you complete the form it has to be mailed (cannot be Faxed) to the following address: Computer Sciences Corporation, PO Box 4602, Rensselaer, NY 12144-4601

Questions: [http://onlineresources.wnylc.net/healthcare/docs/INFORMATION\\_ABOUT\\_MUTS.pdf](http://onlineresources.wnylc.net/healthcare/docs/INFORMATION_ABOUT_MUTS.pdf)

## GETTING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE NOW

MARVA DEAN, LPN, CARE COORDINATOR



Members struggle with mental health, chemical dependency, stress, anxiety, depression, family or relationship problems, addictions and other concerns. Many of the demands from the Managed Care Organizations (MCO) and pressures of daily life can feel overwhelming when it comes to behavioral specialty referrals. Fortunately, VidaCare can help! We offer assistance and support for mental health and/or substance abuse concerns. VidaCare contracted with ValueOptions to provide access to behavioral providers that will assist you in accessing quality providers!

All information is confidential. And you have access to inpatient and outpatient care, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When you need assistance, all you need to do is call the toll-free **VidaCare Clinical Referral Line** at **1-866-752-5443**.

To ensure that the ValueOptions Care Manager can efficiently provide timely and appropriate referrals for your patients/clients, please be sure to have the following information readily available when you call:

- Member's name and ID number;
- Level of care and/or type of services requested (i.e. Inpatient Detox, Inpatient Rehab, Inpatient Mental Health, Outpatient Mental Health);
- Specific treatment needs, if applicable (i.e. transgender friendly facility needed);
- Medical information, including diagnoses to ensure that the receiving facility can appropriately address the member's medical issues and need for specific medications (medical and/or psychiatric);
- Primary Language of member and/or need for interpreter; and
- If possible, please have member sign a consent form so that the treating provider can speak to the referring staff member.

Our behavioral health professionals continuously assess our member's need to ensure that each individual receives the most effective and appropriate treatment. Adherence to the above will ensure a smooth transition for VidaCare members.

### NEW PROVIDER HIGHLIGHT:

#### Doshi Diagnostics Locations:

##### Bronx

410 East 189th St., 718-220-2500  
3250 Westchester Ave., 718-892-2230

##### Manhattan

132 Bowery, 212-925-9788  
1825 Madison Ave., 212-860-3500  
130 West 79th St., 212-362-5300  
4120 Broadway, 212-543-1800

##### Brooklyn

6740 Third Ave., 718-491-5822  
2215 79th St., 718-331-7000  
1783 Stillwell Ave., 718-837-1427  
1014 Brooklyn Ave., 718-282-7000  
9 Bond St., 718-222-3000  
1230 Avenue R, 718-376-6300  
2475 Ralph Ave., 718-444-3777  
6301 Mill Lane, 718-444-2621  
6309 Mill Lane, 718-444-2502

(Continued from Page 1)



## NEW! VIDACARE PROVIDER NUMBERS & NPI NUMBERS

KEITH SPATES, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PROVIDER SERVICES



**VidaCare Provider Numbers:** Last year, VidaCare converted their old provider numbers (i.e. 14V0001) to each provider's personal license numbers - followed by a 2-digit suffix number. For example, say your license number is: **123456**; then, your VidaCare Provider ID will be 12345601 (*the 01 is the added suffix without the hyphen*). This change was intended to make it easier to submit claims and expedite claim processing. Questions? Please contact Keith Spates at 917-637-3789 or email: [kspates@vidacare.org](mailto:kspates@vidacare.org).

**NPI Numbers:** As you know, as of May 23, 2008, the NPI number has replaced other health care provider identifiers in use today. To comply with this requirement, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) developed the *National Plan and Provider Enumeration System* (NPPES) to assign these unique identifiers. All health care providers (e.g. physicians, suppliers, hospitals, etc.) should now have their NPI numbers. If you don't have one yet, here is how you apply. You can:

- ☒ Submit applications online at <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/StaticForward.do?forward=static.npistart>
- ☒ Submit by mail to: NPI Enumerator, P.O. Box 6059, Fargo, ND 58108-6059;
- ☒ Call the toll free number: 1-800-465-3203.

For more information, please call Provider Services at 917-637-3789.

## PROVIDER REPORTING/APPENDIX N

KEITH SPATES, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PROVIDER SERVICES

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH) conducts epidemiologic investigations with information by the providers. To be in compliance with NYCDOHMH **Universal Reporting Form (URF)**, it is essential that all providers promptly report all communicable diseases and conditions of their patients - it is the law!

For questions, or to report cases immediately, call the CDOH Provider Access Line at 1-866-NYC-DOH1, or after hours, the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222. Or, download the URF at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/hcp/urf-0803.pdf>.

As a provider, you have a key role in disease prevention, diagnosis and management of conditions that affect public health. The City of New York Department of Health and Mental Hygiene publishes a *Compendium of Public Health Requirements and Recommendations* that serves as a valuable tool for providers. The *Compendium* consolidates information on a wide range of public health concerns and, in Appendix N, has instructions on conditions that providers are legally required to report. We hope that you take time and look through this valuable resource available on the web: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/hca/compendium-index.shtml>. VidaCare developed its **Umoja Program**, a prevention for positives initiative, as a collaborative effort with the NYCDOHMH *Compendium* guidelines and the Take Care New York health initiative. For more information on VidaCare's Umoja Program, contact: [vranta@vidacare.org](mailto:vranta@vidacare.org).

### Updated VidaCare Website Launched

(Continued from Page 1)

- ☒ Provider FAQs;
- ☒ Provider Application; and
- ☒ Claims submission information.

In addition, member information—much of it downloadable—is available to assist front office staff with member questions. For example, a member may be unsure whether specific services are covered under the Plan. VidaCare's full Benefit Guide is available on the website to answer member and provider questions about coverage. These are only a few of the resources you will find on the website and we are adding information all the time. Enjoy this resource and let us know what you think.

Please send suggestions or comments to: [rgates@vidacare.org](mailto:rgates@vidacare.org).



**VidaCare**

**120 Wall Street, 14th Floor  
New York, NY 10005**

**Provider Services: 800-556-0674**

**Administration: 917-637-3780**

**Fax: 917-637-3790**

**Staff:**

Doug Wirth, President/CEO

Dr. Jerry Ernst, Medical Director

Rosemarie Gates, Director of  
Provider Services/Network Mgmt

Keith Spates, Asst. Director of  
Provider Services/Credentialing

Virpi Ranta, Director of CQI

Noemi Olivo, Director of Care  
Coordination

Alexandra Shuss, Director of  
Information Systems

Ruperto Johnson, Director of  
Member Services

Maria Gonzalez, Director of  
Marketing & Enrollment

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Albany NY  
Permit #370



Live your **Life**

## **VIDACARE REACHES OUT MARIA GONZALEZ, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND ENROLLMENT**



VidaCare Marketing Department is out there. Our staff are in the community and the HASA Centers in Brooklyn, Bronx and Manhattan with the primary goal to give individuals information and to help unconnected individuals select a new medical home. Our Plan serves those individuals with multiple needs! With the support of our provider teams, we hope to make a positive difference in someone's life.

Marketing Representatives describe the benefits of joining VidaCare and having an HIV Specialist as a Primary Care Provider (PCP) and an experienced case manager who can assist clients with life issues. Representatives can come to your site/office to discuss these benefits with some of your existing patients. If interested, please give Maria Gonzalez, Marketing/Enrollment Director, a call at (917) 637-3788 to set up dates and times that would be convenient for you and your office.

We are looking forward to working with you in providing the best care possible.

In order for our Marketing Department to better promote your services, we are asking that updated brochures for your site/services be sent to our main office at: VidaCare, 120 Wall Street 14<sup>th</sup> Fl, New York, NY 10005, to attention of Maria Gonzalez, Director of Marketing & Enrollment. This will help us to get the word out about the excellent services that you provide!

**1-800-556-0674**