

BAYOU HEALTH REPORTING

REPORT INFORMATION

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- **Reporting quarter**

3rd Quarter, September 2021

- **Agenda topics**

- Introductions
- Health plan updates
- Open Enrollment
- Hurricane Ida update
- Group discussion – takeaways

- **Introductions**

- All attendees gave their name, title, and organization they were representing.
- Peter Lambousy, Director of Marketing, stated that we were on the fence about having the meeting due to the aftermath of the hurricane, but also because of Tropical Storm Nicholas.
- Peter also stated that the State closed its offices for September 15th. The Governor made that decision on Monday evening, September 13th.
- Peter thanked the citizens in the Northern part of Louisiana for sheltering a lot of us.
- He also mentioned that he hoped the Lake Charles area that's still recovering from the two hurricanes last year, fared out good with the first wave of Tropical Storm Nicholas that came across the state line Tuesday, September 14th.

- **Health plan updates**

- Current total membership: 345,598 (per the State report issued in mid-August).
- This increase is due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and more people are losing jobs.
- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services suspended renewals and reverifications during the pandemic.
- No member has lost coverage due to the inability to renew or recertify.

- This will continue for the foreseeable future, especially with the Delta variant rage through the country.
 - Healthy Blue will notify members of the suspension lift once the federal government has lifted the public health emergency.
 - Membership increases are not only due to the pandemic and unemployment, but also the suspension of renewals and reverifications.
 - When the pandemic began in March of 2020, we had about 270,000 members.
 - We picked up close to 70,000 members, and we are just one of five plans that have very similar numbers.
 - Member communications have been limited to disaster relief, COVID-19 pandemic materials, and well-visit reminders.
 - We want to make sure our members are safe and comfortable during their provider visits, or when using telehealth. We continue to encourage well-visits—whether that’s child or adult visits, diabetic screenings, colorectal screenings, or cancer screenings.
- **Open Enrollment**
 - Members have not had to renew or recertify during the pandemic. They have not had a chance to make a change if they’re unhappy or unsatisfied with their plan — whether it’s Healthy Blue or one of the other four.
 - The only chance they had to make change was during the Open Enrollment period last year (October 15–November 30, 2020, with an effective date of January 1, 2021).
 - This Open Enrollment is important. It gives members the chance to change plans; otherwise, they are locked in during the year. Provisions within the contract state that if a member is dissatisfied with the service, or has a major issue with one of the companies, they can apply for an off-cycle transfer.
 - Open Enrollment begins October 15, 2021, and runs through November 30, 2021. During this time, enrollees will have the option of choosing a health plan.
 - Letters with information about the plans, and instructions on how to change plans during Open Enrollment, will be mailed at the beginning of September. These will include enrollees for this Open Enrollment period.
 - Enrollees who have opted in to emails or text messages will receive this information electronically. Enrollees can sign up for emails and/or text messages at myplan.healthy.la.gov.
 - Enrollees can make changes to their healthcare coverage on the Healthy Louisiana mobile app, online at myplan.healthy.la.gov, or by calling toll free **855-229-6848**. The Healthy Louisiana mobile app is free and available for download on Apple and Android devices.
 - Open Enrollment is the only time Medicaid enrollees can change health plans without a qualifying reason outside of their initial enrollment period.
 - If enrollees want to keep their current health plan, no action is needed. They will stay with their health plan for another year, as long as they are still eligible for Medicaid.
 - All health plan assignments will be made by November 30, 2021. Confirmation letters will be mailed to enrollees on or around December 1, 2021.
- **Hurricane Ida update**
 - There was a profound impact across multiple parishes.
 - Immediately, on August 26th, the State declared a state of emergency.
 - This policy change, effective August 26, 2021, shall only apply to the following parishes: **Ascension, Assumption, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson, Lafourche, Livingston, Orleans, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Helena, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Martin, St. Mary, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne, Washington, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana.**
 - The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) is directing all Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) to ensure that any enrollee, in one of the declared parishes, who is in need of replacement durable medical equipment (DME) or supplies previously approved by the MCO, may contact any DME

provider contracted with the MCO to obtain a replacement. Enrollees should not be required to have a new prescription and medical documentation for the replacement equipment or supplies.

- Enrollees who were approved to receive medical equipment, supplies, home health services, rehabilitation, pediatric day healthcare, or personal care services from a provider in a parish with a mandatory evacuation that is no longer in business or unable to provide the approved equipment, supplies or services; may obtain the approved items or services from a new provider of their choice. The provider must be enrolled in Medicaid or contracted with an MCO. The MCO shall provide any guidance to the provider on the cancelation of the original authorization and issuance of a new authorization, if applicable.
 - **Pharmacy**
 - LDH is directing MCOs to lift the following edits for Medicaid beneficiaries who live in the parishes referenced in this notice. This edit should be changed from a denial to educational, or bypassed within 24 hours of this notice for the affected areas and continue through September 30, 2021.
 - Early refills on non-controlled medications should be bypassed or allow a pharmacist override, except for controlled and/or specialty drugs.
 - **All existing prior authorizations for the services listed below should be extended through October 31, 2021:**
Any necessary medical and surgical procedures • Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) • Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) • Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment (CPST) • EPSDT Personal Care Services (PCS) • Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare (FFT-CW) • Functional Family Therapy (FFT) • Home Health Services • Homebuilders • Hospice Services • Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) • Pediatric Day Health Care • Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) • Pharmacy (for non- controlled, non-specialty drugs) • Psychiatric Outpatient by Licensed Mental Health Professionals (LMHPs) • Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR) • Substance Use Outpatient and Intensive Outpatient • Therapies (PT/OT/SLT)
 - Updates from our members, stakeholders, and providers on disaster relief efforts and resources.
 - Community needs, barriers, and obstacles to care.
- **Group discussion - takeaways**
 - Walthena Gosa – Just wanted to reinforce what Peter said for the providers — "If you are working with any Healthy Blue members or a member from any of the five health plans and this member is having difficulty, and they've relocated due to evacuation, please encourage them or you can call in with them, to the health plan and ask to speak to a case manager. Even if the person wasn't previously in Case Management a case manager will work with that member and with you to help the member get what they need."
 - Walthena Gosa deferred to Ciara Pierce about out-of-town-pharmacy. Ciara stated that, "Healthy Blue has been able to take care of pharmacy fills. The one barrier we were running into was for controlled substances that required a provider to prescribe out of state. If we couldn't figure out where your provider was, we couldn't get the fill. Outside of that, we could override most things, and were able to resolve most issues."
 - All prior authorizations were lifted until October 31, 2021.
 - Kathy Victorian – Gave an update regarding the vaccination campaign. "We are still going strong with the vaccination campaign in the northern part of the state. The northern part of the state has more rural areas, and our goal is to reach as many rural areas in this part of the state. Healthy Blue has its own mobile medical van, and Rashad Bristo is the driver. Since we have so many events in the area, the van has been there since June 2021. June 5th was the first time we introduced the mobile medical van to the community. To date, we have provided 241 vaccinations working with Ochsner, Pafford Medical Services, under the Louisiana Department of Health, and David Raines. At some point, the van will make its way down to the southern part of the state, but with the van, we need a driver and a provider."
 - Crystal Pichon – "Always grateful for Healthy Blue's partnership and the trust that the agency places in our organization to deliver outreach programs and services to the community. We have been piloting our safe spaces initiative. It's going well and new things are being learned. I've been working with Lisa to arrange some safe spaces for patients to get to and have lodging whenever they go for their medical treatments across

the state. We are learning how easy or how difficult the procedure is, and trying to figure out moving forward, when we start working with other Healthy Blue case workers on what the processes and procedures should be to make it easier for both parties, and to make it seamless for the patient. We are still in the process of planning our Q4 events. Our next event partnering with Healthy Blue will be attending the Capital Area Transit System (CATS) health fair. We are also preparing to host our Halloween event in October, where we do trunk-or-treat, vaccinations, distribute health and safety information, and mental health information with community partners. Our big community baby shower, which is typically in October, was pushed back to December, and we will be partnering with a local birthing hospital.”

- Mary Schulteis – “I would like to thank Peter. Immediately after the hurricane, I was able to connect with Peter in reference to our members wanting to know if they could use their Medicaid out-of-state. I was very grateful that Peter was able to connect with me and we were able to get some communication. We have resumed our WIC service. We’re going to be resuming our food pantry, and we were able to get a lot of diapers out through our diaper bank — over 10,000 diapers. The Second Harvest will be supplying us with additional food. We won’t be doing the traditional income guidelines and requirements. For our Healthy Start program, we are definitely looking for our prenatal moms. So, as the case managers identify moms in the Jefferson parish, in region one, anything that they can do to help support us get those moms in our Healthy Start program, is appreciated. We will be addressing a lot of the moms’ needs, and providing breastfeeding support with breastfeeding storage bags and breast pads.”
- Stephenie Marshall – “Thanks so much to Lisa Ellsworth for reaching out to us to find out if we need anything, doing a well-check in the midst of. We have all of our clinics reopened with an exception of the Kenner clinic which had to be closed at noon due to rain going into the building. Thanks Healthy Blue for all you do, not just for DePaul, but for the State as whole. You are really a gem.”
- Matthew Wallace – “I just want to share about a couple of new behavioral services that we have been able to bring to the south of Louisiana area that we are offering in partner with other community-based agencies in New Orleans. We are working with UNITY of New Orleans, the leader of the homelessness coalition, to provide the rapid rehousing program. It’s a program for individuals who are currently homeless, or at risk for homelessness. It provides them a short-to-medium-range, several months’ worth of rental assistance. It will pay their rent, utilities, and deposit to get them in a stable situation to allow them to then address other situations in their lives. We will be doing this in Baton Rouge as well. We’ve been offering this program for years in the Shreveport area. In Shreveport, we have rapid rehousing through HUD, and then also, we have temporary housing through the district, which is transitional housing for individuals with a substance use disorder. They can receive housing for up to two years. We’ve offered this program for the last two years in Monroe as well. Three months ago, we started a new strategic partnership with Florida parishes’ human services district, to imbed Case Managers into their clinics. We have two on board now, and we’re currently hiring for our third Case Manager. Those are individuals who are doing traditional case management navigation. The Florida Parishes’ human services district identified that they had funding for that direct mental health support, some counseling, and various interventions. What happens between that gap when they are discharged from a facility there, or leave their encounter and between the next encounter? How will we make sure they have the support they need to be successful on that pathway? We’re in great partnership with Healthy Blue. We started a pilot program for a community garden, with transitional housing, and a peer support center in Monroe. This program is in conjunction with the Northeast Delta human services program in the Monroe area. Our peer center is a wonderful program. The drop-in center is for either homeless, or near homeless individuals, who have current or reoccurring substance use disorders. We have really up-ticked our numbers recently. There were about 40 individuals each day that dropped in our center and received service. What makes that unique is those who are providing the interventions themselves are inactive, long-term recovery, so they have the ability to speak directly to what it’s like to struggle with recovery and provide that support. Kathy and her team provided us with a wonderful grant to offer a community garden. They currently are starting to cultivate and grow

various items there. Our team has also established a partnership with the Monroe School of Occupational Therapy. We work with them in the gardens there, and to provide therapeutic intervention as well.”

- Alisa Stevens – “I would like to let everyone know that the SWLA Center for Health Services continues to work with our patients with social determinates of health — including education and distribution of pack and plays for the risk reduction of SIDS. I’m a child passenger safety technician instructor, and we do have some technicians. Also, we are working with our families with food insecurities, behavioral health, and the Medicaid center. We really appreciate the support we receive from Healthy Blue, and the support we receive from Monette Kilburn.”