



FIRST CHOICE:
Tried and True,
Time to Renew!

Healthy NOW

FALL/WINTER 2024

www.selecthealthofsc.com

Join our
Community
Advisory
Committee!
See page 2

Renewing your
Healthy Connections
(Medicaid) benefits
Learn more on page 4

The CAC needs you, our members!

The First Choice by Select Health of South Carolina Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is made up of our members, as well as our associates, health care providers, and members of community-based organizations that represent the culturally diverse communities we serve.

We value our members' voices. They help us in our ongoing work to improve processes and add extra benefits and services. The goal is to improve members' health outcomes and overall experience with our plan.



L to R: CAC members Brandi Lane and Sharon Salley.

Join the CAC if you would like to:

- Help us decide what extra benefits, such as glasses for adults and swim lessons, are helpful to our members.
- Offer feedback about how we can improve.
- Help us make sure member materials are easy to access and use in the correct way.

Here is how it works:

- To join, you must be a First Choice member and age 18 or older.
- The CAC meets once each quarter.
- You can attend in person or virtually via Zoom.



Join the First Choice CAC!

To learn more about or join the CAC, please call Tina Dailey at **1-803-847-6521** or Eulanda Cameron-Bethea at **1-854-240-2002**.

Scenes from the May CAC meeting

In May, the third CAC meeting of 2024 was held in Conway, South Carolina. CAC members (shown above) and Select Health associates (shown at right) had a great time getting to know one another and sharing experiences. They also received information about the importance of follow-up visits for physical and mental health concerns. The meeting ended with dinner and lots of laughter. All of the thoughtful, valuable ideas shared that day were taken back to the plan to be considered for use (implementation).

We would love to have more members. This is your invitation to join us! Call us to learn more about the CAC or to join. Your voice can make a difference.



Congratulations, First Choice Scholarship recipients!

Five high school students received a First Choice Member Scholarship in 2024. These are 4 of the recipients:

- **Timothy Chiles Carter** from Greenville will attend Francis Marion to major in computer science.
- **Jermall Kinley III** from Orangeburg will attend Lander University to major in medical biology.
- **Carolina Holmes** from Camden will attend Coastal Carolina University to major in biology.

- **Giselle Rubio** from Camden will attend the University of South Carolina to major in psychology.

To celebrate their achievements, a special brunch was held for recipients and their families on June 6, 2024. Senior leadership of Select Health of South Carolina presented certificates to the scholarship recipients who attended.



Members of Select Health of South Carolina Senior Leadership team presented certificates to scholarship recipients at the May awards brunch. L to R: Will Camp, Dr. Nate Patterson, scholarship recipients Jermall Kinley III and Timothy Chiles Carter, Sean Popson, and Peggy Vickery.

2 ways to further your education

First Choice Member Scholarship

If you are hoping to go to college or a trade school or continue your education, First Choice has a scholarship program for selected qualifying members that could help make your dream possible.

For more information, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com. Click on **Community** at the top. Then, click on **Member scholarship program**. If you have questions, please call **1-803-254-5601**. Applications are due by March 7, 2025.

Mission GED program

First Choice has a program to help you get your high school equivalency diploma. The Mission GED (general educational development) program helps cover the cost of the GED exam (up to \$150 in testing fees) and 1 retake, if needed. There is no cost to members who qualify. You may be eligible to take part if you:

- Are a First Choice member at the time of enrollment into the GED program.
- Are age 19 or older.
- Do not already have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Are not enrolled in high school or college.

For more information, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com/community/ged-reading-internships.



Attention: Action Needed!

Yearly Process to Keep Your Medicaid Benefits

MAKE SURE YOU KEEP ELIGIBLE BENEFITS FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY!



**FIRST CHOICE:
Tried and True,
Time to Renew!**



When you get your annual Medicaid eligibility review form, you have limited time to complete and return it. If you don't return it on time, you and/or your children are at risk of losing Healthy Connections (Medicaid) benefits.

Does Healthy Connections have your current address? It's important that Healthy Connections has your current address and contact information. Please visit the Healthy Connections online portal (<https://tools.apply.scdhhs.gov/quick-tools>) today to update your information to prevent a gap in coverage. For the latest information about annual reviews, please visit Healthy Connections (<https://msp.scdhhs.gov/annualreviews>).

RESPOND QUICKLY TO KEEP YOUR BENEFITS!

Once a year, Healthy Connections will mail you an Annual Review Form. When you get it, please fill it out completely and return it. There are seven ways to submit your completed documents:

1. **Submit** the form online at <https://apply.scdhhs.gov>.
2. **Upload** the documents to the portal at <https://apply.scdhhs.gov>.
3. **Scan** the form and documents. Email them to 8888201204@fax.scdhhs.gov.
4. **Fax** the form and documents to **1-888-820-1204**.
5. **Mail documents to:** SCDHHS — Central Mail
P.O. Box 100101
Columbia, SC 29202-3101
6. **Call SC Healthy Connections at 1-888-549-0820.**
7. **In person:** You can bring your renewal form and documents to a local SC Healthy Connections Eligibility office. You can find an office near you by searching at <https://www.scdhhs.gov/site-page/where-go-help>.



For a list of required documents: <https://www.scdhhs.gov/members/getting-started>

Select Health is here to help, too! Call us at **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

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FirstChoiceSM
by Select Health of South Carolina
Your Hometown Health Plan

SHSC_243805350-1 | FC-01062023-M-2.1_WM_U

Healthy Connections

Healthy Now **4** Fall/Winter 2024

First Choice: 1-888-276-2020 (toll free) • 1-888-765-9586 (TTY)

FC-10042024-M-1.3_WM_R

CAHPS survey results are in!



Drumroll please! Our member satisfaction scores are in from the 2024 Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey.

The child survey had an overall score of 4 out of 5 stars. The adult survey had an overall score of 4.5 out of 5 stars.

CAHPS survey results tell us how you feel about your health care providers, our plan, and the care you receive. It helps us improve our programs to better support our mission to help

people get quality care, stay well, and build healthy communities.

First Choice by Select of South Carolina sends out CAHPS survey each year to evaluate services important to you. The survey is mailed to a random sample of members.

We will mail the next CAHPS survey in early 2025. If you get one, please fill it out and mail it back in the prepaid envelope provided. We look forward to hearing from you!

We want to get to know you

At First Choice, we want to help make sure you get access to the best care. We would like to know more about your cultural background and what language is easiest for you to speak and understand when you are getting primary care. The better we know you, the better we can work to meet your health care needs. To help us serve you and your family, please:

1. Call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**.
2. Answer 5 questions about your cultural background and language preferences.

If you choose to share this information with us, it will stay private and safe by law. We will use it only to better meet your needs. Thank you for helping us improve our services! Learn more at www.selecthealthofsc.com. Go to the **Members** section, click on **Information for you**, then **FAQ**.

We have employees who speak Spanish and are ready to help you. Tenemos empleados que hablan español y que están listos para ayudarle.

Need a replacement Annual Review form?

- Download and print the form at www.scdhhs.gov/sites/default/files/WKR002.pdf.
- Ask for the Annual Review form by secure email at www.selecthealthofsc.com/contact.
- Call First Choice Member Services at **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**. We can send a form and a postage-paid envelope for sending your completed form to Healthy Connections.
- Call the Healthy Connections Member Contact Center at **1-888-549-0820**.

If you need help filling out the form, call your health plan or Healthy Connections at **1-888-549-0820 (TTY 1-888-842-3620)**.

The importance of getting a flu shot

Hundreds of thousands of people go to the hospital because of the flu every year, warns the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). One of the best ways to protect the people you care about is to get a flu shot each year. You will be less likely to catch the flu. This means you will also be less likely to pass it on to others.

Keep others safe

The CDC warns that people at risk for serious illness related to the flu include:

- Adults ages 65 and older.
- Infants and children younger than age 5.
- People who are pregnant.
- People with diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, or other chronic health conditions.

Take care of yourself

Remember, you can't catch the flu from the flu shot. The vaccine lowers your risk of having to go to the health care provider's office with the flu by 40% to 60%, says the CDC. It also makes you less likely to miss work or school. If you do get sick, the shot may make your symptoms less severe.

If you have questions or concerns about flu shots or other vaccines, talk with your provider. You can learn more about the flu and how to stay well at www.selecthealthofsc.com. Click on **Members**. Choose **Staying healthy**. Then click on **Flu information**.



Online resources: Notice of Privacy Practices and more

Go to www.selecthealthofsc.com to find resources like the Notice of Privacy Practices, Member Handbook, and online Provider Directory for your First Choice plan. If you need printed copies of these items sent to you, call Member Services at 1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586). You can also download the Notice of Privacy Practices at www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/english/info-for-you/privacy-practices.aspx.



4 tips for school success

The past few years have brought many changes and challenges.

All of which have impacted kids' and teens' mental health, says the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Here are ways to help your children succeed this school year:

1. Have a routine. Knowing what to expect eases kids' minds. Aim to go to bed, have meals, and do other tasks at the same time each day. Include time for fresh air, movement, and play. As often as you can, sit down to a family dinner. The AAP says eating and talking together boosts mental health and well-being. Shared meals also tend to include more healthy foods.

2. Respect rest. The AAP says getting too little sleep plays a role in behavior and health problems. These include trouble focusing and depression. To promote slumber, turn off screens at least one hour before bed. Do not pile too many toys into young kids' beds. Limit evening activities, like practices and lessons.

3. Watch for red flags. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services says signs your child or teen is struggling may include:

- Ongoing sadness.
- Intense fears or worries.
- Big changes in behavior.
- Substance use.

Reach out to their health care provider or a mental health provider if you have these or other concerns about your child. Are you afraid your child may hurt themselves or others?

Call a crisis line or the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at **988**.

4. Connect with school officials. View the teachers and school counselors as partners, says the U.S. Department of Education. When needed, they should be able to offer suitable support or accommodation, such as counseling sessions. (See the sidebar on this page.) Talk about your child's work (academic) and emotional needs. Be sure to bring up major life changes, such as a death or divorce in your family.

School-based mental health services

Easy (convenient) access to high-quality health care services is a key to good health. First Choice maintains a network of physical and mental health providers to help make sure you have access to care.

As of July 1, 2022, master's-level mental health providers, who are contracted with a South Carolina school district, can provide services in school settings. Some of these services include mental health assessments and individual, family, and group talk therapies (psychotherapy). Our goal is to help improve access for children and their families.

To learn more about mental health services, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/english/staying-healthy/mental-illness.aspx. You can also get information and help from a care manager by calling **1-888-276-2020**.

Stay on the path to good mental health

When you are very ill, a hospital stay is sometimes just what you need to get the problem under control. That is as true after a mental health crisis as it is after a heart attack, says the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA). In the hospital, you can work with your care team to fine-tune your treatment and learn self-care skills.

But what happens after you go home? You should keep building on the progress you made in the hospital. Otherwise, the DBSA warns, depression, anxiety, or other mental health concerns may start to get worse again.

Get support

After leaving the hospital you should meet with your health care team. This includes your primary care and mental health care providers.

Seeing a provider within 7 days of leaving the hospital can help make sure you get the right treatment and stay on track with medicine. This can help you feel better now. It may also reduce your risk of having another mental health crisis in the future.

To learn about mental health services covered by your health plan, call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**. You can also

visit www.selecthealthofsc.com. Click on **Members**. Then, select **Staying healthy**. Click on **Behavioral health**.

Care for yourself

In your first weeks back home, the DBSA says to give yourself time to heal, just as you would after a serious physical illness. Follow a routine for eating and sleeping, much like you did in the hospital. Slowly ease back into activities.

If any problems come up, do not wait. Call your health care team. Managed (coordinated) ongoing treatment may help you readjust to life at home. It can help you stay on the road to recovery.

If you have used up the limits of covered benefits, you can call Member Services at 1-888-276-2020 for help and information about resources to continue care.



Benefit updates

To learn more about the benefit updates shown below, call Member Services at 1-888-276-2020.

Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM):

As of July 1, 2024, adult members who are enrolled in Medicaid health plans and have been diagnosed with *Type 2 diabetes mellitus* are eligible for the CGM benefit.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Services Phase II:

As of July 1, 2024, additional services are covered for members under ASD services: Along with a primary provider, two or more technicians can be included as a part of the treatment option in a session. A behavioral specialist will complete an additional assessment. Multifamily group treatment services are now covered.

Drug/medicine updates

As of July 1, 2024, the state of South Carolina's Medicaid program has moved to a single, preferred drug list (PDL).

This PDL is known to Medicaid health plans as the Comprehensive Drug List (CDL). All South Carolina Medicaid health plans will follow the CDL.

Your current prescription may be affected. Please work with your provider to move to a state-preferred product by December 31, 2024. You can find a direct link to the CDL at www.selecthealthofsc.com.



Our QI program works for you

First Choice has a Quality Improvement (QI) program dedicated to excellence in clinical care and service areas that we believe are important to you. Each year, the team evaluates our programs and identifies ways we can improve to better serve members and our mission to help people get care, stay well, and build healthy communities. To learn how the QI program supports you behind the scenes, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com or call Member Services toll free at 1-888-276-2020.

Your rights and responsibilities

As a First Choice member, you have many rights and responsibilities. For example, you have the right to be treated with respect. You also have the right to take part in choices about your health care. To see the full list of member rights and responsibilities, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com. Under the **Members** tab, click on **Information for you**. Then select **Member rights and responsibilities**. You can also find it in your Member Handbook. Or you can call Member Services toll free at 1-888-276-2020.

What you need to know about postpartum hemorrhage

As new moms can tell you, some bleeding is normal during and after giving birth. But for up to 6% of all deliveries, heavy bleeding during or soon after baby arrives can pose a health risk. This is called *postpartum hemorrhage*. If it is not found and treated, it can damage your heart, brain, and other organs.

Fast treatment can stem the flow. It may even save your life. So while thinking about it might feel scary, learning the risks and signs will prepare you to protect your health later.

Know the dangers

Often, postpartum hemorrhage happens because of things outside of a person's control. For example, the womb (uterus) may not contract enough to stop blood flow from certain key blood vessels (arteries). Other causes include injuries to the vaginal area, infections, or problems with the placenta. This organ connects the baby to the womb.

Some women are more likely to have these problems than others. This includes those who are older when they give birth. Other risk factors include having:

- Heavy bleeding (hemorrhaging) during a prior birth.

- High blood pressure and protein in your urine (preeclampsia) during your pregnancy.
- A blood disorder.
- Small noncancerous tumors in your uterus (fibroids).
- Many children or not having any prior children.

Do any of the above apply to you? If so, talk with your health care provider before your due date.

Notice the signs

The most common red flag of postpartum hemorrhage is large amounts of blood. Seek care right

away if you soak through one or more pads in an hour.

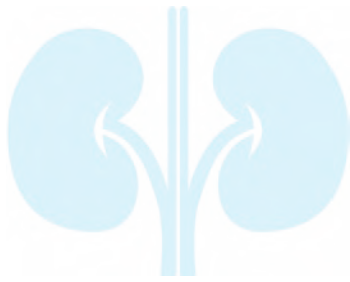
There are also other signs to watch for in the hours and days after you bring your baby home. These include:

- Feeling cold.
- An increased heart rate.
- Faster breathing.
- Feeling faint or fainting.
- Symptoms of shock, such as confusion, blurry vision, weakness, and clammy skin.

Do not wait to seek help. Fast treatment can help stop the bleeding and protect your health.



Jessica L. Bienstock et al., "Postpartum Hemorrhage," *New Engl J Med*, Vol. 384, No. 17, 2021, pp. 1635 – 1645. Kelly C. Wormer et al., "Acute Postpartum Hemorrhage," *StatPearls*, National Center for Biotechnical Information, National Institutes of Health, 2023, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK499988. Prabhcharan Gill et al., "Uterine Atony," *StatPearls*, National Center for Biotechnical Information, 2023, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK493238. "Signs and Symptoms of Urgent Maternal Warning Signs," U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/healthier/maternal-warning-signs/index.html.



5 ways to care for your kidneys

An unfiltered swimming pool becomes full of waste fast.

The same goes for your blood. If your kidneys do not clean it 24/7, extra fluid and toxins build up. This can make you sick with a condition known as chronic kidney disease (CKD).

It is not only people with diabetes who need to worry about CKD. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warns that people with slightly high blood sugar (prediabetes) may also be harming their kidneys. Over time, the damage could lead to CKD or kidney failure.

So what can you do? The CDC says the following actions can help keep everyone's kidneys working the right way:



1. Do not smoke.

If you smoke, take steps to quit. Your efforts now will improve your kidney and overall health down the road.



2. Make healthier food choices.

People with elevated blood sugar should follow their health care provider's instructions for how to keep it in check. For most people, this means eating fewer processed foods with lots of salt. Enjoy more fruit, vegetables, and whole grains.



3. Limit or avoid alcohol.

It can raise blood pressure. If you have diabetes, it can cause your blood glucose level to drop.

4. Get or stay active.

Regular exercise can help lower your blood pressure. In turn, this can help reduce your risk for kidney disease. Walking and cycling are good options for many people.



5. Do not use over-the-counter painkillers too much.

While they are OK for most people to use sometimes, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen can cause kidney damage when taken long term.*



*Eric Y.F. Wan et al. "Comparative Risks of Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs on CKD." Clin J Am Soc Nephrol. Vol. 16, No. 6, 2021, pp. 898 – 907.

If your primary language is not English, language services are available to you, free of charge. Call **1-888-276-2020** (TTY **1-888-765-9586**).

Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.

Llame al **1-888-276-2020** (TTY **1-888-765-9586**).

First Choice is here for you! This newsletter and other materials are translated into Spanish and can be found on our website at www.selecthealthofsc.com. If you need help with translations of other documents, or in other languages, please call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**.

Disponibilidad de traducción

¡First Choice está aquí para usted! Este boletín informativo y otros materiales están traducidos al español, y se pueden encontrar en nuestro sitio de Internet en www.selecthealthofsc.com. Si necesita ayuda con traducciones de otros documentos, o en otros idiomas, llame a Servicios al Miembro al **1-888-276-2020**.

www.selecthealthofsc.com

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Need help? Want to talk?

At First Choice by Select Health of South Carolina, we know you have important health matters to talk about. To help you have those conversations, we provide interpreters at no cost to you.

Please know that we want to hear from you! You can call us at **1-888-276-2020** or walk into our First Choice Community Center located at:

217 Park Terrace Drive, Suite 100
Columbia, SC 29212

Here, we will get an interpreter to help us talk with each other. We can also help you get an interpreter for your health care provider visit if they do not provide one.

There are 3 ways an interpreter can join us:

1. Over the phone interpreting (OPI). Interpreters can be called and added to a phone call. We can also use an interpreter on speaker phone if you are meeting with us in the First Choice Community Center.

2. Video remote interpreting (VRI). We can set up a video call (like Zoom). The interpreter will join that call. This could be done when we are at different locations or at the same location.

3. In-person interpreting. If you have an appointment scheduled in advance, we can have an interpreter join us.

You can also ask to have letters from First Choice changed (translated) to the language you need. It will take a bit of time to get the letter translated. It is faster to call and ask for an interpreter.

All these language access services come at no cost to you. We hope to hear from you soon.



First Choice Member Services
P.O. Box 40849
Charleston, SC 29423



Member Services:
1-888-276-2020
TTY for the hearing impaired:
1-888-765-9586



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