



Healthy NOW

SUMMER 2024

www.selecthealthofsc.com

**Renewing your
Healthy Connections
(Medicaid) benefits**
Learn more on page 6



Get well or
stay well with
support from
Extra Benefits
See page 2



Above: Select Health Medical Director Dr. Caton recently competed with the USA team on the 2023 World Medical Football Tour, part of the Physician's World Cup. This is a soccer championship league of doctors and dentists from around the world.

Let's play! Youth sports vouchers now available

Would your child enjoy trying a new sport? Or do they already love playing sports? First Choice has a member benefit that may be the perfect fit for you. We offer vouchers for youth sports programs at participating local YMCA locations.

Members who qualify can get one youth sports voucher each year. It can be used any time of year so you can find the right fit at the right time for your child. YMCAs offer a range of sports activities, which may vary based on the location. Check with your local YMCA to find out what sports they offer and the schedules. The sports may include:



“When kids play sports or take part in physical activities, they gain more than exercise,” said Kirt Caton, M.D., Select Health’s chief medical officer, who is an avid soccer player. “They get a chance to be with peers, to socialize, and to learn teamwork. They learn how to cooperate and focus.” Dr. Caton also explained that physical activity releases endorphins, which are hormones that help improve mood and lower stress.

To qualify for youth sports vouchers, you must be a First Choice member. For more information on youth sports vouchers, call First Choice Member Services at **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**. Or visit www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/english/enroll/index.aspx.

Sports physicals

A sports physical does not include the same screenings and counseling as a well visit. If your child plans to play sports, tell your provider. Ask for a well visit, which can include what is done in a sports physical. Take any needed release forms with you. To learn more, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com/pdf/member/eng/teen-well-care-checklist.pdf.

Is it time for a well visit?

Regular checkups, also called **well-child visits** or **well visits**, allow a **primary care provider (PCP)** to make sure your child is **growing up healthy**. If the PCP finds a problem, they will be able to watch it and treat it early. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends well visits:

- At 3 to 5 days old.
- At months 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 24, and 30.
- Once a year from ages 3 to 21.

What to expect

You should not be charged for well-child visits. These visits are part of your benefits as a First Choice member.

What the PCP does and asks during your child's exam depends on their age. They may ask you questions about their diet, mental health, and how they act with other kids the same age. Learn more about what to expect at www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/english/staying-healthy. Click on **Well visits for women and children**. Choose **Well-child visits**.

Stay on track with shots

A PCP should check to see if your child needs to have any immunizations (shots). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says these shots help prevent a wide range of diseases, such as flu, measles, and chickenpox. The shots the CDC recommends depend on a child's age. Some shots are needed before they can attend daycare or school. Learn more at www.scdhec.gov/health/vaccinations. Click on **Childcare & School Vaccine Requirements** under **General Public**.



Jump-Start Back-to-School events

Children in grades K through 12 can get health screenings, haircuts, and backpacks filled with school supplies at no cost to you.*

First Choice by Select Health will host the events listed below from 9 a.m. – noon:

- **July 20:** Mount Pleasant Community Center, Greenville
- **July 27:** First Choice Community Center, Columbia
- **August 3:** Danny Jones Athletic Complex, North Charleston
- **August 10:** Conway Elementary School, Conway

For more information, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com/community/jump-start-back-to-school-program. To register, call **1-888-676-9588**.

**One per child while supplies last.*

Boys need HPV vaccines, too

HPV is a common virus that can lead to cancer later in life for both boys and girls. HPV vaccines (shots) can help protect them from HPV infections, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The CDC recommends that **all preteens** ages 11 to 12 get **2 doses** of the HPV vaccine. It is best for children to have a full set of HPV shots before they are exposed to the virus. The shots can be given as early as age 9.

You should also know that a person with HPV may not have any symptoms. They can still spread the virus through skin-to-skin contact.

Blood pressure screenings: A key part of prenatal care



Blood pressure checks are easy and important. If you are pregnant, your health care provider should take a reading at every prenatal (before birth) visit, says the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. High blood pressure raises a person's risk of:

- Giving birth early.
- Having a baby with a low birth weight.
- Death, including an increased risk of the baby dying.

Know your risk

Preeclampsia is a serious condition that includes high blood pressure. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says it often starts while a person is pregnant. Less often, it starts soon after giving birth (postpartum).

The CDC warns that Black women in the United States have a 60% higher chance of preeclampsia than their White counterparts. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists says other factors that raise the risk for preeclampsia include having:

- High blood pressure before you get pregnant.

- Diabetes.
- Kidney disease.
- Lupus or other autoimmune conditions.

If you have any of the above risk factors, work with your provider to manage it.

Watch for symptoms

Preeclampsia often starts after 20 weeks of pregnancy. Along with high blood pressure, it can result in too much protein in your urine. Other warning signs may include:

- Headaches that do not go away.
- Changes in eyesight or seeing spots.
- Pain in the shoulder or upper stomach.
- Nausea or vomiting in the second half of pregnancy.
- Swollen hands or face.

Tell your provider right away if you have these symptoms. You should also know that preeclampsia does not always have clear symptoms. That is why prenatal visits are key. Your provider can check for high blood pressure and other concerns, even if you feel fine.

Pregnant members can join the Bright Start program for support. A Care Manager will work with you to help you receive and use program services. If your pregnancy is high-risk, a team of nurses and Care Connectors will also check in with you often. To join, call **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

Do you need vaccines?

The CDC says your pregnancy care should include vaccines. These shots may include:

- Tdap (pertussis), between weeks 27 and 36 of pregnancy.
- Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).
- Flu.
- COVID-19.

The shots you need can depend on timing, travel plans, your health, and shots received before pregnancy. Some people may also need hepatitis A or B shots, for example.

Your baby will benefit from your vaccines, too. The CDC says protection (immunity) passed on from mom can help infants avoid some diseases during their first few months.

Signs of anxiety in children

How a child acts is often the key to knowing how well they are coping during hard times. A sudden change may be a clue that your child needs extra support.

Watch for signs

Every child does not react to stress the same way. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) says children with anxiety may:

- Not eat or eat poorly.
- Have headaches or stomachaches.
- Have nightmares or problems falling or staying asleep.
- Not enjoy activities they liked to do before.
- Seem very sad or worried.

Infants and children ages 2 and younger may cry or want to be held more often. The AAP says kids ages 3 to 6 may act in ways they had outgrown, such as:

- Fear being apart from parents or caregivers.
- Have tantrums or cry more often.
- Wet their clothes or bed.

The AAP says kids ages 7 to 10 are likely to have problems paying attention. They may want to talk about a traumatic event nonstop. Those ages 11 to 18 may use alcohol or drugs, warns the AAP. They may also fight with friends, act out in school, or not want to go to school.

Ways to cope

Kids are aware of and respond to the adults around them. The AAP says to try and set a good example. You can do this by managing your own stress in healthy ways. This includes eating healthy foods and staying active. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says the following may also help:

- Encourage your child to tell you about their concerns.
- Give your child lots of hugs. Personal contact is reassuring.
- Try to stay close to routine times for meals, school, play, and rest.

Seek support

Do you have concerns about your child? Talk with their health care provider or a mental health provider. First Choice members have access to mental and emotional health services. There is no copay for kids younger than age 19. Learn more at www.selecthealthofsc.com.

Or, call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**.



Working together to reduce stigma

If you have a behavioral health condition, you are not alone. One in 5 Americans ages 18 or older has a behavioral health condition, says the CDC. Stay connected to others and get support.

A stigma is when people may think badly of someone for something they might not be able to control, like a behavioral health condition. Getting rid of stigma starts with knowledge. When we judge others, it is often because we do not understand them. With greater education and awareness, we can reduce the stigma of behavioral health conditions.

Attention: Action Needed!

Yearly Process to Keep Your Medicaid Benefits



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



Time is short! 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.

To make sure you get your form, 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>).



Scan with your phone.

RESPOND QUICKLY TO KEEP YOUR BENEFITS!

Your annual Healthy Connections review process: Easy as 1, 2, 3!

1 Once a year, Healthy Connections will mail you an Annual Review form in an envelope that looks like this.

- When you get it, please fill it out completely and go to Step 2.
- If you are unable to locate the form, see the green box on the back for replacement instructions.



2 When returning the completed form, you will need to include the following:

- Social Security numbers (or document numbers for any legal immigrants who need insurance).
- Employer and income information for everyone in your family (for example, paystubs, W-2 forms, or wage and tax statements).
- Policy numbers for any current health insurance, including information about any job-related health insurance available to your family.



3 Return the form and documents to Healthy Connections:

- Submit the form online at <https://apply.scdhhs.gov>.
- Upload the documents to the portal at <https://apply.scdhhs.gov>.
- Scan the form and documents. Email them to 8888201204@fax.scdhhs.gov.
- OR fax the form and documents to 1-888-820-1204.
- In person: You can bring your renewal form and documents to a local South Carolina Healthy Connections Eligibility office. You can find an office near you by checking a list of Healthy Connections offices (<https://www.scdhhs.gov/site-page/where-go-help>).
- Or mail them to:
SCDHHS –
Central Mail
P.O. Box 100101
Columbia, SC
29202-3101
- Call SC Health Connections at 1-888-549-0820.

Benefit updates

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

Developmental Evaluation

Centers (DECs): As of February 1, 2024, members younger than age 21 who are enrolled in Medicaid health plans are eligible for services provided at DEC's. These freestanding facilities offer a range of developmental children's (pediatric) services. A referral is needed from a doctor or other licensed provider of healing arts.

Intensive In-Home Services (RBHS) Multisystemic Therapy (MST)

(MST): As of January 1, 2024, youth members ages 11 to 18 are eligible to receive MST treatment. MST provides behavioral health care to youth and their families in their homes.

Hospital-Based Crisis

Stabilization (HBCS): As of January 1, 2024, members are eligible to receive care through HBCS services. There are multiple



hospitals throughout South Carolina that will have standalone crisis stabilization units that provide crisis intervention mental health services.

Nutritional Counseling Services:

As of January 1, 2024, members have additional coverage under the Nutritional Counseling benefit. Nutritional counseling is covered for members when the criteria are

met. Services may be provided in person or by telehealth.

Interprofessional Consultation: This benefit applies to (effective for) dates of service on or after January 1, 2024. Services are covered when a member's treating physician or other qualified health care provider works (collaborates) with a consulting provider (practitioner) to help with the patient's care.

Single Preferred Drug List: As of July 1, 2024, all South Carolina Medicaid health plans moved to one state-directed preferred drug list (PDL), known to the Medicaid health plans as a Comprehensive Drug List (CDL). For more information, visit <https://southcarolina.fhsc.com/providers/pdl.asp>. Your current prescription may be affected so please work with your provider to move to a state preferred product by December 31, 2024.

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).


How to manage diabetes

When you have diabetes, it is important to manage your blood sugar levels. This can help you avoid many health problems (complications).

You should follow your eating, exercise, and medicine plans. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says you may need to take a statin to help lower a high level of low-density lipoprotein (LDL), or “bad,” cholesterol.


You should also stay on track with checkups and tests that help guide your diabetes care. The CDC says you should have:

 **Blood pressure checks at every visit.** You may also need to check your levels at home.

 **A cholesterol blood test once a year.** This shows your levels of LDL and HDL (“good”) cholesterol and triglycerides.

A dilated eye exam at least once a year. This helps a provider look for eye diseases.



 **HbA1c test at least twice a year.** This shows your average blood sugar level over the past three months.

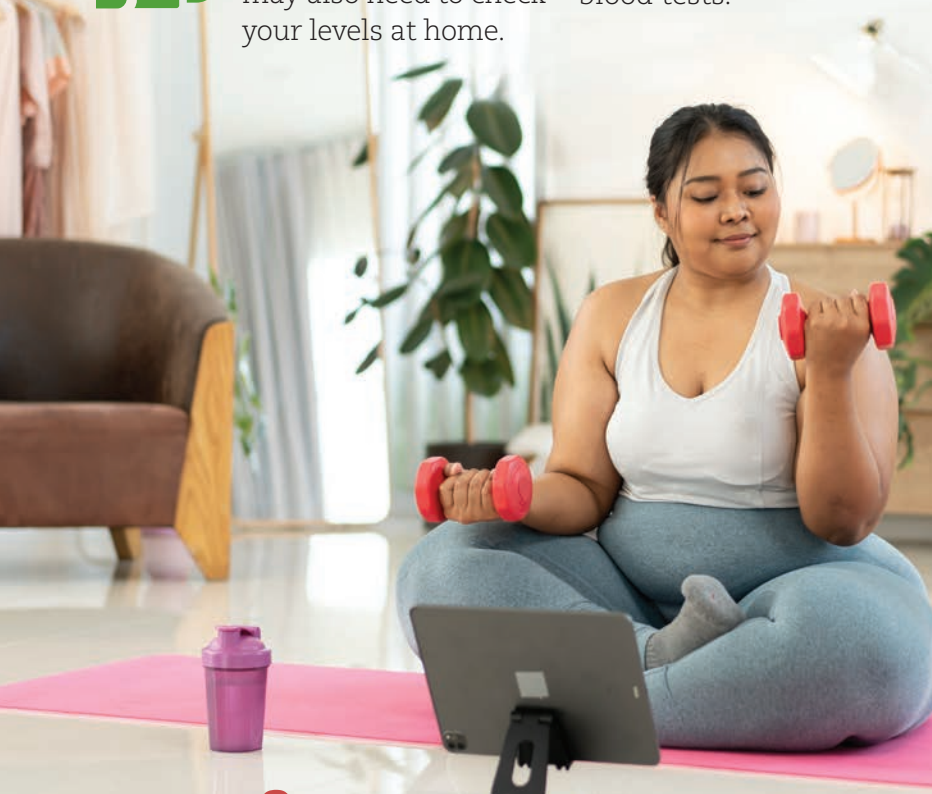
Kidney function tests once a year. These often include urine and blood tests.



Drug/medicine updates

For up-to-date pharmacy information, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com. This includes changes approved by the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee. This committee meets 4 times a year. Committee members vote on changes to the Comprehensive Drug List, including which medicines to add or remove. The website also includes:

- Comprehensive Drug List updates. These are in the **Member tools** area of the website.
- New prior authorization criteria and procedures for submitting a prior authorization request. First, click on **Benefits**. Next, select **Prescription benefits**. Last, click **Prior approvals and authorizations**.
- Pharmacy benefit restrictions. Find these by clicking on **Benefits** and then **Prescription benefits**.
- Drug recall information. Find this under **Information for you**.



Save the date!

Warming Up for Winter events will take place:

- November 7 – Ferndale Community Center, North Charleston
- November 14 – Mount Pleasant Community Center, Greenville
- November 21 – Myrtle Beach Community Center, Myrtle Beach
- December 5 – First Choice Community Center, Columbia

For more information, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com.

How to prepare for a hurricane

Severe weather is not something we may want to think about. But doing so can help you and your family get through it together.

Gather supplies

Every household should have an emergency kit ready before there is a storm. We can help you get started now. First Choice members can call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020** to claim a personal safety emergency kit at no cost to you.* It has these items:

- Handheld flashlight.
- Two emergency ponchos.
- Hand sanitizer.
- First aid kit.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) says you should also store the following in an airtight plastic container:

- Water.
- Nonperishable food.
- Can opener, if needed.
- Whistle, to signal for help.
- Radio with batteries or a hand crank.

You may also need other supplies, such as medicines, infant formula, or pet food. See the full list of suggested items at www.ready.gov/kit.

Make a plan

You should also have an emergency plan ready before there is a hurricane warning.

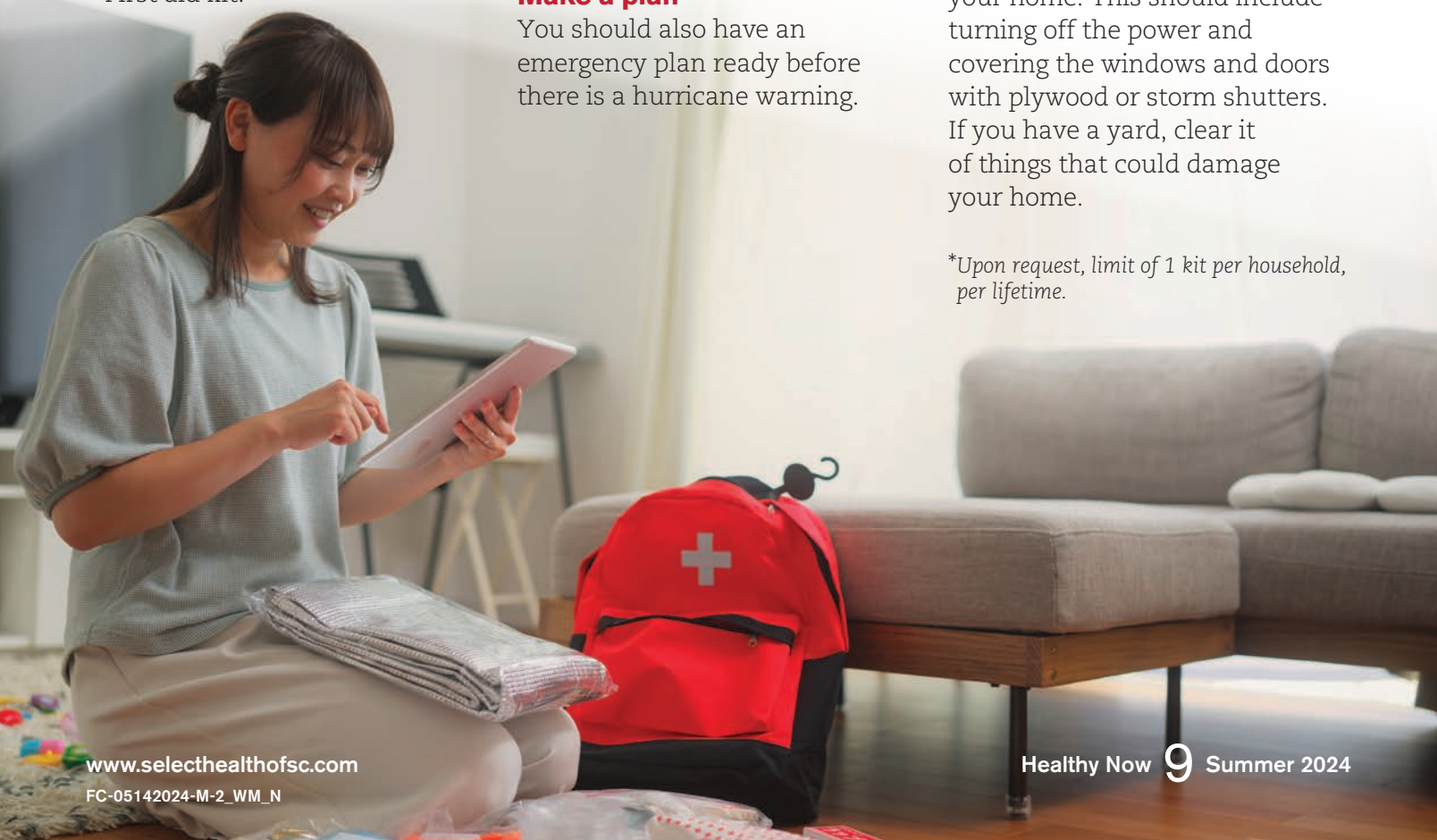
For information about local shelters, making an emergency plan, and hurricane evacuation zones, visit the South Carolina Emergency Management Division's website at www.scmd.org.

Some questions you will want to ask yourself are:

- How will our family members contact each other if we are not in the same place?
- What are all the routes to get to the nearest shelter?
- What will I do with my pets?

Also make a checklist of things to do before leaving (evacuating) your home. This should include turning off the power and covering the windows and doors with plywood or storm shutters. If you have a yard, clear it of things that could damage your home.

**Upon request, limit of 1 kit per household, per lifetime.*



Learn more about your **benefits and services** on our website, through your member portal, or by mail

The First Choice website, www.selecthealthofsc.com, described below is home to important resources and information about your health benefits and services.

The member portal

Here you can see your medical and drug benefits, and health information. You have access to your recent medical care history while you have been a First Choice member. You can also:

- Request a new ID card.
- Change your primary care provider (PCP).
- See a list of your medicines.
- Enroll in a care management program.

To register: In the **Members** section, click on **Member tools**. Click on the **Member portal** link. Enter your information to log in.

The most current Member Handbook

This has information about:

- Benefits and services that are and are not covered.
- How to get language services. These services are provided at no cost.
- How to choose a PCP and find providers in our network.
- When to access emergency services and how quickly you should be seen in urgent and routine situations.
- How to get care in case of an emergency or when you are out of town.
- What to do if you need to be admitted to the hospital.

- How to get care after normal business hours.
- How to get a second opinion.
- How to get specialty care and mental health services.
- Member Rights and Responsibilities and the Notice of Privacy Practices.
- Grievances and Appeals and how to report suspected fraud and abuse.
- How First Choice makes decisions about your care when there are advances in medicine and new treatments become available.
- Other benefits and services to help you be successful in your health decisions.

Network hospitals, doctors, and behavioral health providers

Using the online provider directory, you can search for a First Choice health care provider, behavioral health provider, or hospital by name, ZIP code, or county. You can see their specialty, languages spoken, gender, office hours, and wheelchair accessibility.

Copayment amounts for adults

As of July 1, 2024, there are zero copays for all.

Medicine updates

You can find Comprehensive Drug List changes (under **Member tools**), information and limits about pharmacy benefits (under **Benefits**, then **Prescription benefits**), and drug recall information (under **Information for you**).

Member Rights and Responsibilities and the Notice of Privacy Practices

To view these documents, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com/rights and www.selecthealthofsc.com/privacy. It is important for you to know your health care rights and what information you can control.

Instructions for how to report fraud or make a complaint

You can learn how to:

- Report suspected fraud or abuse.
- Make grievances (complaints).
- Ask for an appeal if a service you feel you need is denied.
- Request a Medicaid State Fair Hearing.

Frequently asked questions and urgent notices

You can find out about many things like what to do if you get a bill, the policy on prior approvals, whom to call if you have trouble getting medicine filled, and how to change your PCP. Remember to check our website for notices of any temporary benefit changes related to public health emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, or extreme weather, such as hurricanes.

Please call Member Services if you want a Provider Directory, Member Handbook, list of Member Rights and Responsibilities, or other information sent to you by mail.

Have you received a bill?

Bills are sent by a health care provider. They often come with a return envelope so that you can send in a payment. If you receive a bill, make sure your provider was given your insurance information so that your claim could be filed with First Choice.

If that was done, call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)** for help. One of our Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) will help you:

- Research the charges from the provider.
- See (verify) if there is a claim on file with First Choice.
- Confirm if a claim filed with First Choice has been processed.

When you call us, please make sure you have the bill in hand. The CSR will need you to give them important information that is printed on the bill.

It is also important for you to make sure that you were eligible for First Choice on the date of service shown on the bill.



Need an interpreter?

If your primary language is not English, First Choice has phone interpreters to help you with health care services anywhere, anytime. These interpreters are available for more than 200 languages. You also can use our interpreters when you are at your provider's office. This is offered at no cost to you or your provider. Call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**. You can also call the First Choice Nurse Call Line at **1-800-304-5436** for free health advice, 24 hours a day. They can also connect you to an interpreter.

Spanish: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al **1-888-276-2020** (TTY: **1-888-765-9586**).

Russian: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните **1-888-276-2020** (TTY: **1-888-765-9586**).

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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Mission GED program

First Choice by Select Health of South Carolina 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 participate 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.



To fill out the online application, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com. Choose the **Community** tab. Follow the instructions on the form. For help, call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)** or email ged@selecthealthofsc.com.

Be a part of our Community Advisory Committee

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is a group made up of community partners and First Choice members. To help make sure we provide the best care for our members, we created the CAC. It is a way to get your voice heard. With your help, we can better understand our members' needs.

If you join the group, you would take part in CAC meetings. The CAC meets 4 times a year to share feedback about the plan, better understand the member experience, and give ideas about how to improve our benefits and services.

If you would like to share your voice on the CAC, call Michelle at **1-843-460-7850** or Eulanda at **1-843-569-4827**.



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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