



**From Dr. Kara B. Hawkins, Endocrinology, Internal Medicine at Sentara Endocrinology Specialists**



Welcome to the SQCN/SACO newsletter, *Inside Population Health*. We are observing healthy vision and minority mental health this month.

**Our measures include the Diabetic Eye Exam, HbA1C, Kidney Health Evaluation for Patients with Diabetes, Controlling High Blood Pressure, and Statin Therapy in People with Diabetes.** Also, the **Depression Screening and Annual Wellness Visit (AWV).**

The ability to see affects how we perceive and interpret the world around us. Vision issues can interfere with social development and academic achievement in children. In older adults, functioning vision can reduce chronic disease, falls and injuries, social isolation, and depression. Healthy eating, being active, and avoiding smoking can lower the risk of diseases that can lead to vision problems. These include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes.

While diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in those aged 20-74, some 90% of blindness caused by diabetes is preventable. Related measures to help improve this outcome include the Diabetic Eye Exam, HbA1C, Kidney Health Evaluation for Patients with Diabetes, Controlling High Blood Pressure, and Statin Therapy in People with Diabetes. **Download the [Type 2 Diabetes Ambulatory Protocols](#) for your practice.**

July is National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. Minorities—including racial/ethnic, gender, and sexual—often have poor mental health outcomes due to multiple factors. This may include lack of access to high quality mental healthcare services, cultural stigma surrounding mental healthcare, discrimination, and overall lack of awareness about mental health. Screening is an important step for detection—both screening and monitoring for depression are SQCN and SACO quality measures.

By offering the AWW to Medicare beneficiaries, healthcare providers can improve patient activation and engagement, identify health risks such as depression and falls, and connect beneficiaries to behavioral counseling. This may include smoking cessation and nutrition counseling, and preventive care services like vaccinations and cancer screenings. Discussion of advanced care planning services is also an important component of the AWW.

The AWW is intended to prevent disease and disability, improve the quality of life, and potentially reduce healthcare expenditures for Medicare beneficiaries. **Share this [tip sheet](#) with your patients for more information and FAQs about the AWW.** Completion of the AWW is also one of our quality measures. If your practice is having difficulties offering these visits, please reach out to us—we have resources that can help.

Thanks for continued commitment to high-quality care for our communities.

### **SQCN July 2023 Primary Care Meetings\***

- The Pediatric PCPC will be held on July 18 from 6-7:30 p.m. Dr. Melissa Mark from CHKD will present on Central Nervous System Tumors. Meeting link [here](#).
- The Adult PCPC meeting will be held on July 20 from 7-8 a.m. Dr. Christian Iudica and Kristen Wilson will present on Pain Management and Opioid Prescriptions. Meeting link [here](#).

### **SQCN July 2023 Practice Managers Meeting\***

- The meeting is cancelled this month. Please look for your August invite.

### **SACO July 2023 Primary Care Leadership Meeting**

- The monthly meeting will be held on July 21 at 7 a.m. Discussion includes the 2023 practice quality performance and scorecard, MIPS 2022 quality results preview, and an introduction to provider performance on Tableau.

\*No preregistration is necessary, simply join the links above. Click on the button below to access the 2023 meeting schedule and information.

2023 SQCN Primary Care Engagement Bonus Meetings

## SQCN Impact Scorecards

This [link](#) will take you to your monthly 2023 Adult and Pediatric Practice Impact Scorecard and updated SQCN distribution information. Please be sure to check back monthly for your practice performance.

Avoidable ED visits (rate per 1,000) remain as our utilization metric and there are several quality metrics for adult and pediatric populations. These metrics are scored for each practice and the total score is expressed as a percentage from 30-100%. That Performance score will be combined with attribution to determine distributions. The report will be updated monthly so that you can track your practice's performance.

See the button below for more information.

Please contact [SQCN@sentara.com](mailto:SQCN@sentara.com) if you have any questions.

Impact Scorecards SBAR

## SACO Beneficiary Notice

We mailed the 180-day beneficiary notice to our patients this June. Please note that if your practice needs more of the CMS required posters or letters, they can be ordered from [Sentara Health Print Services](#).

Contact [SACO@sentara.com](mailto:SACO@sentara.com) with questions.

## HCC/Coding Tip: Diabetic Ophthalmic Complications and Major Mental Health

The Diabetic Eye Exam can help prevent and detect diseases in their earlier

stages. This makes for easier treatment and improved outcomes.

The **HCC coding for Diabetic Ophthalmic Complications** is as follows:

- Retinopathy - proliferative: be specific as to type/complications (E11.3XXX) CAT 18 (RAF 0.302) + CAT 122 (RAF 0.222)
- Diabetic cataract (E11.36) (RAF 0.302)
- Diabetic glaucoma (E11.39, H42) (RAF 0.302)

In observance of National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, [here](#) are **Major Mental Health HCC** categories.

HCC Code	RAF	Description
HCC 54	RAF 0.329	Substance Use with Psychotic Complications
HCC 55	RAF 0.329	Substance Use Disorder, Moderate/Severe, or Substance Use with Complications
HCC 56	RAF 0.329	Substance Use Disorder, Mild, Except Alcohol and Cannabis
HCC 57	RAF 0.524	Schizophrenia
HCC 58	RAF 0.393	Reactive and Unspecified Psychosis
HCC 59	RAF 0.309	Major Depressive, Bipolar, and Paranoid Disorders
HCC 60	RAF 0.309	Personality Disorders

Remember, the difference between codes with RAF value and codes without RAF value can mean thousands of dollars each year per patient.

## Pharmacy Highlights: Eye Drops for Eye Health

Recent reports from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) demonstrate the impact of vision impairment in Virginia and North Carolina. Additional research shows that the connection between visual impairment and other comorbid conditions is important, which promotes learning about disparities in health status and developing interventions aimed at improving a person's quality of life with vision impairment and other coexisting chronic diseases.

Certain medications may cause or worsen eye health. This includes medications with strong anticholinergic properties. Commonly recommended nonpharmacological approaches include:

- Smoking cessation
- Avoiding low-humidity environments
- Using warm compresses
- Taking frequent breaks from computer/television screens
- Avoiding diuretics/anticholinergics when possible

The available pharmacotherapy for most eye conditions includes many brand-name medications with limited availability for generic or lower cost

alternatives. In particular, the medications used to treat glaucoma may present a high cost to patients.

Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/data/state-profiles/virginia.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/data/state-profiles/north-carolina.htm>

### **Cost of eye drops**

See this [insurance coverage chart](#) for information regarding plan coverage (preferred or non-preferred) for some of these medications. Being mindful of cost helps the patient and insurance companies save.

Sources: <https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/eye-conditions-and-diseases/diabetic-retinopathy>

<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/diabetes-vision-loss.html>

<https://scoallentown.com/news/types-of-eye-drops-learning-the-difference>

<https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/healthyvisionmonth/index.htm>

### **An Important Update for Humana Providers: Medically Accepted Indication Edit**

Effective June 1, 2023, Humana will require pharmacies to enter a diagnosis code for a medically accepted indication provided by the prescriber when processing a prescription claim for a GLP-1 receptor agonist for Humana-covered patients.

Click the button below to download the information and details. If you have questions, please contact [Kristen Wilson](#), PharmD, MBA, BCPS, Team Coordinator, Pharmacy Population Health.

[Humana Medically Accepted Indication Edit](#)

### **Healthy Vision Month: Diabetes Care**

Early diagnosis of diabetic retinopathy and timely treatment reduce the risk of vision loss. However, as many as 50% of patients are not getting their eyes examined or are diagnosed too late for treatment to be effective.

The risks of diabetic retinopathy are reduced through disease management that includes good control of blood glucose, blood pressure, and lipid abnormalities. **Share the [attached tip sheet](#) with your patients on the importance of eye health.**

For more information about diabetes self-management services for your patients, contact SQCN at [SQCN@sentara.com](mailto:SQCN@sentara.com) or SACO at [SACO@sentara.com](mailto:SACO@sentara.com).

## Diabetes and Your Eyes

### A Message on Behalf of Your Primary Care Team

Having diabetes is a condition that may affect your eye health. Your primary care team is working with specially trained registered nurse care managers and care coordinators. Together, they can help you understand and manage your diabetes.

Here are some tips for taking care of your eyes:

1. **Get an eye exam each year.** Make sure it includes dilation so the doctor can see the back of your eyes.
2. **See your eye doctor right away if you see red spots or fog, and/or black lines or spots.** Contact your eye doctor if it takes more time to adjust to darkness or you don't see as clearly.
3. **Have a plan to manage your diabetes.** This includes healthy blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.

### Tips to maintain your diabetes:

- ✓ Keep our average blood sugar (A1C) within your goal range.
- ✓ Make sure your blood pressure is not high. This can cause eye damage, kidney damage, and heart disease.
- ✓ Your good (HDL) and bad (LDL) cholesterol should be within your goal range.
- ✓ Stop smoking or using tobacco.



Your diabetes self-care manager can work with you to keep your vision healthy. Note:

- Diabetes is a major cause of blindness for those 75+. It's the main cause between ages 20-74.
- You are more likely to have serious eye issues, including cataracts and glaucoma.
- Seeing your doctor regularly can help treat eye issues early.

Contact our care management team to get started with diabetes self-management services at [SQCN@sentara.com](mailto:SQCN@sentara.com) or [SACO@sentara.com](mailto:SACO@sentara.com).

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/library/factheets/diabetes-and-healthy-eyes.html>. Accessed 22 June 2023.



## Diabetes Prevention in Children: Lifestyle Behavior Changes

Dr. Eric Gyuricsko, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Eastern Virginia Medical School, presented "Screening for Diabetes Mellitus in Children and Adolescents" at the February Pediatric PCPC meeting. Your child or teen patients who are overweight, obese, or prediabetic may benefit from an intensive lifestyle behavior change.

This includes:

- A reduced-calorie diet
- Introducing a variety of foods
- At least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week

The above goals may help achieve weight loss or weight stability. You can also consider referring your pediatric patients to an intensive lifestyle behavior change program. Access Dr. Gyuricsko's [presentation here](#).

## Care Corner: Diabetes and Blood Sugar

When your patient is new to diabetes, they may not be familiar with the importance of checking blood sugars with a glucometer. **Download this two-page tip sheet** to help your patients understand low and high blood pressure readings.

For more information about diabetes self-management services for your patients, contact SQCN at [SQC�@sentara.com](mailto:SQC�@sentara.com) or SACO at [SACO@sentara.com](mailto:SACO@sentara.com).

## Diabetes and Low Blood Sugar

### A Message on Behalf of Your Primary Care Team

When you have diabetes, there are many issues to manage. One of the most important is your blood sugar levels. Blood sugar is checked with a meter called a glucometer. Staying within range can keep away serious problems and help your overall energy and mood. The safe targets for most people are:

- From 80 to 130 mg/dl before a meal
- Less than 180 mg/dl two hours after you start eating

You will want to check with your primary care team on how often to check your levels and what is your safe range. If you test less than 70 mg/dl, you may have low blood sugar or hypoglycemia.

### If you have low blood sugar, here are some ways to take care of yourself:

- ✓ Drink 4 ounces of fruit juice or regular soda (not diet); juice boxes are easy options.
- ✓ Eat ½ cup of fruit or have a small piece of fruit.
- ✓ Eat 4 pieces of hard candy or take 4 glucose tablets.
- ✓ Wait 15 minutes to recheck. If your blood sugar continues to be less than 70, follow the same steps.



Low blood sugar can show there is a health problem. Pay attention to these issues:

- Shaking, sweating, nervousness or anxiety
- Dizziness or hunger
- Irritability or confusion
- Not everyone will have these signs/symptoms of low blood sugar. It can be dangerous since you won't know your blood sugar is low.



## It's National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

Why minority health? Minorities are groups of people who are represented by less than half of the population. It includes racial/ethnic groups, religious groups, and even those in the LGBTQ+ community. It may be even harder for some minority populations to get help. This may be due to cultural stigma, available information, and/or lack of mental healthcare services.

Here are some open-ended questions to ask your patients:

- What does mental health mean for you?
- How do you think your family/friends feel about mental illness?
- Who in your community would you trust to talk to about your mental health?
- What would you want a mental health professional to know when working with you?

Providers, like you, can help normalize reaching out for help. When you are with a patient, don't forget the depression screening.

Learn more about National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) site [here](#).

**Healthy Planet Update: Almost Live!**

Epic Healthy Planet and the Value-Based Program Scorecard will be available to provisioned SQCN providers and practices later this month. Users will be emailed when the training guides and resources are available on the MDOOffice Provider Portal. Live training session invites will be emailed to advanced users separately.

Healthy Planet is an Epic tool that allows non-Sentara partners to review and contribute clinical information to patient's record for the Optima Commercial population. Future expansion is planned for Optima MA, Optima Medicaid, and Humana MA populations.

Integrated within Healthy Planet is the Value-Based Program Scorecard. This interactive dashboard is available to provisioned SQCN partners and includes HEDIS® measures to track and trend quality and utilization outcomes for patients, goals, scores, care gaps, and access patient lists to close the care gaps. Sentara partners will be able to utilize the Value-Based Program Scorecard through Epic Hyperspace.

For additional questions, please email [Heather Lynn](mailto:Heather.Lynn).

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### **Questions About SQCN or SACO?**

**For Independent Practices, please contact the Population Health Team:**

**757-455-7330 | [SQCN@sentara.com](mailto:SQCN@sentara.com)**

**757-455-7040 | [SACO@sentara.com](mailto:SACO@sentara.com)**

**For SASD and SMG practices, please contact your Director of Business Operations and Director of Medical Operations, respectively.**

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#### **Sentara Health**

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