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Availity is the new destination where health plans connect with their providers for meaningful collaboration. Availity is live for all Aetna Medicaid plans. More features are being added throughout the year.

Through a sophisticated multi-payer portal and Intelligent Gateway solution, Availity simplifies complex provider engagement processes like HIPAA transactions, provider demographic data management, clinical data exchange and much more. Built on a powerful, intelligent platform, Availity puts data to work through business solutions that strengthen communications, improve financial performance, and simplify processes and systems.

If you are new to Availity and want to register your provider organization, you'll begin by creating your Availity user account. You'll start by clicking Register on the Availity home page to create your user account at www.availity.com/provider-portal-registration.

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Medicaid renewals and eligibility checks resuming

At the start of the COVID-19 public health emergency, Louisiana Medicaid made numerous changes to eligibility and enrollment systems and procedures. This included pausing renewals and wage checks to keep members covered during the public health emergency. Since March 2020, the only reason a member could lose their coverage was if they died, moved out of state or asked to be closed.

Although we do not know when the public health emergency will end, Louisiana Medicaid is taking steps to prepare. In preparation for the end of the public health emergency, Medicaid has begun sending letters to members in the mail asking them to renew their coverage or for additional information. There are instructions in the letter for how to renew or how to provide the requested information. If members do not respond to these letters, they will lose their coverage when the public health emergency ends.

Providers can remind patients who receive Medicaid to read any mail they receive from Medicaid and follow the directions in the letter. Members must respond to these letters or they will lose coverage at the end of the public health emergency, even if they are eligible. **Click here to download a flyer for your office, clinic or facility.**

In June, Medicaid also began sending pre-closure notices to some members notifying them that they are no longer eligible for Medicaid. The letters explain that their coverage will continue through the end of the month in which the COVID-19 public health emergency ends. Members will receive another letter with the exact date their coverage will end. **Click here to view an example of the pre-closure notice.**

Members can check their case status and provide additional information at **MyMedicaid.la.gov** or call **1-888-342-6207** for more information.



COVID-19 vaccine communication

Aetna Better Health of Louisiana is encouraging all Medicaid members to get vaccinated at 100 percent cost free.

Benefits of getting a COVID-19 Vaccine (CDC; updated Aug. 16, 2021)

- While COVID-19 vaccines were developed rapidly, all steps have been taken to ensure their safety and effectiveness.
- COVID-19 vaccines were developed using science that has been around for decades.
- COVID-19 vaccines are not experimental. They went through all the required stages of clinical trials. Extensive testing and monitoring have shown that these vaccines are safe and effective.
- COVID-19 vaccines have received and continue to undergo the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history. Learn more about how federal partners are ensuring COVID-19 vaccines work.

As a practitioner in this pandemic, it is beneficial for you to share the facts with your patients. As we continue to work around the clock to get members vaccinated for COVID 19, you can help by sharing the links below with your members on the various sites that are currently performing vaccinations.

- <https://ldh.la.gov/assets/docs/covid/LACOVIDVACCINE-LOCATIONS.pdf>
- <https://www.vaccines.gov/search/>



Developmental screening tools

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) has modified the fee schedule as of January 1, 2021, to allow providers who use CPT code 96110 to be reimbursed for global developmental screening using standardized tools. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends developmental surveillance at most pediatric well-visits, and developmental screening using standardized screening tools during each of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years of life.

In addition, the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) and American Association of Pediatrics (AAP) have identified recommended Standardized Global Developmental Tools cited by Bright Futures (and the American Academy of Pediatrics statement on developmental screening) below:

- Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) – 2 months to age 5
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire – 3rd Edition (ASQ-3)
- Battelle Developmental Inventory Screening Tool (BDI-ST) – Birth to 95 months
- Bayley Infant Neurodevelopmental Screen (BINS) – 3 months to age 2
- Brigance Screens-II – Birth to 90 months
- Child Development Inventory (CDI) – 18 months to age 6
- Infant Development Inventory – Birth to 18 months
- Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status (PEDS) – Birth to age 8
- Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status – Developmental Milestones (PEDS-DM)

Chart Documentation Requirements

A note in the chart indicating the date on which the test was performed, evidence of a screening result or screening score, and the standardized tool used is required. Standardized tools used to screen for specific disorders (e.g., Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers M-CHAT) **do not meet** the numerator requirement for a standardized global developmental screening tool.

Louisiana Department of Health Developmental Toolkit

Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) has developed a developmental toolkit for providers who are focused on the health of children ages 0-3.

The developmental toolkit:

- Consists of a series of webpages, training videos, and worksheets to walk providers through three major steps.
- Offers relevant resources as providers implement developmental screening in their practices.
- Assists staff in evaluating their current processes and identifying areas of improvement.
- Allows practices to tailor screening services based on their individual goals, capacity, and time.

Aetna Better Health invites you to work through the entire toolkit, from start to finish, or to use only the parts that are most relevant and accessible to your practice.

You can print all of the worksheets ahead of time using this link: <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/3979>.



Learn how to help your patients quit tobacco

Tobacco Cessation Training for Louisiana Providers

Health care providers play a key role in identifying patients who use tobacco and helping them quit. In fact, **according to the CDC**, tobacco quit rates increase when health care providers consistently identify and treat tobacco use. The majority of people who use tobacco want to quit but getting started often takes support and motivation from trusted sources like you. Help your patients begin their quit story. Ask them if they use tobacco and refer them to quit resources during visits. Make tobacco screening and referring a standard of care.

Brief Tobacco Intervention Training

The Brief Tobacco Intervention is a quick, easy and

effective approach for providers to address patient tobacco use in less than three minutes. This saves time for you and your staff, and ensures that your patients receive the treatment they need.

In the Brief Tobacco Intervention Training you will:

- Learn three simple steps to help you effectively talk with your patients about tobacco in less than three minutes.
- Learn about evidence-based cessation treatments available in Louisiana, including individual, group and telephone counseling and seven FDA-approved medications.
- Earn continuing education units in less than an hour!
- **Register now**



Screening guidelines for STIs

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are very common and costly to the nation's health and economy. In 2018, new infections totaled nearly \$16 billion in direct medical costs. Therefore, Aetna Better Health of Louisiana encourages providers to continue to have conversations with members about screening and prevention of STIs during annual physical exams and/or well visit appointments. It is only through continued conversation that we can work to increase screening rates and reduce untreated infections.

As a reminder, Aetna Better Health of Louisiana covers annual physical exams and STI screenings, such as chlamydia and gonorrhea. If untreated, chlamydia can cause permanent damage to a woman's reproductive system making it difficult to get pregnant later; while untreated gonorrhea also poses health risk for women and may lead to pelvic inflammatory disease. Therefore, annual conversations with patients about their risk of infection, and the ease of screening through urine specimen will help to reduce the rates of untreated chlamydia and gonorrhea infections in our member population.

Even though STIs affect individuals of all ages, chlamydia and gonorrhea are particularly prevalent among young people. The CDC estimates that youth ages 15-24 make up just over one quarter of the sexually active population, but account for half of new STI cases in the United States each year. To protect fertility health of both males and females, screenings are recommended annually and six months after treatment in infected persons. It is also recommended to screen for chlamydia and gonorrhea at the first prenatal visit, and again during the third trimester in pregnant women who test positive or are at an increased risk for infection.

- For more information on STI screening guidelines, **click here**.
- For more information on STI prevalence, incidence, and cost estimates in the United States, **click here**.



LGBTQIA+ Health Education

The National LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center has created a series of interactive learning modules on providing quality/affirming care to LGBTQIA+ patients to be accessed on-demand. These learning modules are eligible for CME and HEI credit. You can access the learning modules [here](#).

The National LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center aims:

- To advance health equity for LGBTQIA+ people and the populations which may intersect with the LGBTQIA+ community
- To address and eliminate health disparities for the LGBTQIA+ community
- To optimize access to cost-effective health care for the LGBTQIA+ community
- To improve the quality of care for LGBTQIA+ people by providing training and technical assistance to health care providers and staff across the globe

For questions, contact D'Andra Odom by phone at **504-667-4533** or by email at OdomD2@aetna.com.



Aetna Better Health Mobile App

Our members can get on-demand access to tools they need to stay healthy with the Aetna Better Health mobile application. Members can find a doctor, view or request a member ID card, change their primary care physician (PCP), see their medical and pharmacy claims, view the member handbook, send us secure messages and more – at any time, from anywhere.

The mobile app uses the same login ID and password as our website's secure member portal. There's no cost for the app and it's easy to use. Members can download the app to their smart phone or tablet from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.



Has Your Information Changed?

Aetna Better Health of Louisiana is committed to having the most accurate and up-to-date information in our system for you and your group. Please contact Provider Relations with updates to your phone or fax numbers, physical or mailing address, and to add your email address to our system.

For updates or changes to your information, call Provider Relations at **1-855-242-0802** or send your update via email at laprovider@aetna.com.



Provider Relations Liaisons

Our Provider Services Department serves as a liaison between the health plan and the provider community. Each Louisiana Department of Health Region in the state has one or more regional representatives.

Name	Phone	Email	Region	Provider Groups/Hospitals
Kellie Hebert	985-348-5763	HebertK@aetna.com	statewide	Ochsner Health System, LSU, state complaints/inquiries, appeals
Marion Dunn	504-444-6569	DunnM7@aetna.com	1	St. Thomas, Access Health, Med Data, Daughters of Charity
Eve Serbert	504-220-1413	SerbertE@aetna.com	2	Verity, Volunteers of America, FMOL
Katy Kuntz	985-201-4093	Kuntzk1@aetna.com	3	South Louisiana Medical Associates
Adrian Lozano	504-402-3417	LozanoA@aetna.com	4	Healthlink, Children's International, Pediatric Group of Acadiana
Tyeasha Matthews	504-252-7624	MatthewsT1@aetna.com	5	Quynh Mai Clinic, LLC/LCMC, East Jefferson Hospital
Brandy Wilson	504-264-4016	Wilsonb8@aetna.com	6	
Christine Duke	318-344-1059	Dukec2@aetna.com	7	Willis Knighton
Jennifer Thurman	318-413-0725	ThurmanJ@aetna.com	8	Christus, Health Services of N. Louisiana
Kathleen Dickerson	504-462-9986	DickersonK2@aetna.com	9	
Melissa West	504-239-2796	Westm5@aetna.com		Manager of Provider Relations Department

For any questions or to contact your Provider Relations Liaison, contact Aetna Better Health of Louisiana Provider Relations by calling **1-855-242-0802** and selecting **option 2**, then **option 6**.

Provider Relations mailbox/general inquiries: laprovider@aetna.com