



919 Hidden Ridge  
Irving | TX 75038



NAME  
COMPANY  
STREET ADDRESS  
CITY, STATE ZIP



## Great American Smokeout

Talking to patients about quitting tobacco and tracking their quit progress helps them understand that you, as a clinician, are on their side. However, you may not be sure how to start the conversation. Below are training resources offering evidence-based information and practical advice to help your patients quit.

Tobacco dependence is a chronic, relapsing disorder that, like other chronic diseases, often requires repeated intervention and long-term support. The majority of people who use tobacco want to quit, but most try to quit multiple times before succeeding.

Health care providers in a variety of settings play a critical role in helping people quit using tobacco. Even brief advice from you can make it much more likely that your patients will try to quit—and ultimately succeed. Evidence-based treatment—including counseling and cessation medications approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)—significantly increases success in quitting tobacco. You can make a difference!

Quitting smoking isn't easy. It takes time. And a plan. Your patients don't have to stop smoking in one day. Start with day one. Let the Great American Smokeout event on the third Thursday in November (Nov. 19, 2020) be your day to start your journey toward a smoke-free life. You'll be joining thousands of people who smoke across the country in taking an important step toward a healthier life and reducing your cancer risk.

source: [cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/for-health-care-providers/index.html](https://cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/for-health-care-providers/index.html)  
[cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/great-american-smokeout.html](https://cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/great-american-smokeout.html)

# Health Matters

FALL  
2020

## Anti-Fraud

Report potential fraud, waste, or abuse in the CHRISTUS Health Plan Network by submitting details to the Special Investigations Unit via email, secure fax, or phone.

FWA Hotline: **855.771.8072**

Email:

[ChristusHealthSIU@ChristusHealth.org](mailto:ChristusHealthSIU@ChristusHealth.org)

Secure Fax: **210.766.8849**

If you prefer anonymity, call the Integrity Line at **888.728.8383** or visit [ChristusIntegrityLink.org](https://ChristusIntegrityLink.org).

For compliance questions or concerns, you can email us at [CHPCompliance@ChristusHealth.org](mailto:CHPCompliance@ChristusHealth.org)



## Enrollment Season

It's time for your patients to consider their health care options. Each of our health plans has its own enrollment period.

**Medicare** Annual Enrollment begins Thursday, Oct. 15 and runs through Monday, Dec. 7. Member Services can be reached at **844.282.3026**, 7 days a week, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (local time), beginning Oct. 1 (and Mon. - Fri. until then).

**Health Insurance Exchange** enrollment begins Sunday, Nov. 1 and ends Tuesday, Dec. 15. Member Services can be reached at **844.282.3025**, Mon. - Fri., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (local time).

**TRICARE® (US Family Health Plan)** Open Season begins Monday, Nov. 9 and runs through Monday, Dec. 14. Member Services can be reached at **800.678.7347**, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mon. - Fri.

## Follow us on Facebook!

CHRISTUS Health Plan

/CHRISTUSHealthPlan

US Family Health Plan at  
CHRISTUS Health

/USFHP

## Keep Your Demographics Up-to-Date

CHRISTUS Health Plan cares about our providers as much as we care about our members. To ensure you are able to care for our members, there are times when information needs to be distributed to you in a timely manner.

Please contact your Provider Relations Representative to ensure that your demographic information is current to prevent any delay(s) in receiving information sent to you.



## Provider Portal

Have you noticed what is new in the provider portal? Pay through dates and summary of benefits are now available. The addition of these enhanced features will allow you to get the information you need without having to reach out to Member Services – making your job faster and easier. Watch for more improvements coming soon. As always, questions should be forwarded to your local provider representative.

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## Vaccine Guidance During a Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused health care providers to change how they operate to continue to provide essential services to patients. Ensuring immunization services are maintained or reinitiated is essential for protecting individuals and communities from vaccine-preventable diseases and outbreaks and reducing the burden of respiratory illness during the upcoming influenza season.

### Purpose of Guidance

This interim guidance is intended to assist immunization providers in a variety of clinical and alternative settings for the safe administration of vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic. This guidance will be continually reassessed and updated based on the evolving epidemiology of COVID-19 in the United States. Healthcare providers who administer vaccines should also consult guidance from state, local, tribal, and territorial health officials.

### Importance of Immunization Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Efforts to reduce transmission of COVID-19, such as stay-at-home and shelter-in-place orders, have led to decreased use of routine preventive medical services, including immunization services. Ensuring that routine vaccination is maintained or reinitiated during the COVID-19 pandemic is essential for protecting individuals and communities from vaccine-preventable diseases and outbreaks. Routine vaccination prevents illnesses that lead to unnecessary medical visits, hospitalizations and further strain the health care system.

For the upcoming influenza season, influenza vaccination will be paramount to reduce the impact of respiratory illnesses in the population and resulting burdens on the health care system during the COVID-19 pandemic. Communicating the importance of vaccination to patients and parents | caregivers as well as the safety protocols and procedures outlined in this guidance can help provide reassurance to those who may otherwise be hesitant to present for vaccination visits.

### Additional Considerations for Influenza Vaccination

Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for all persons age 6 months and older to decrease morbidity and mortality caused by influenza. Health care providers should consult current influenza vaccine recommendations for guidance around the timing of administration and use of specific vaccines.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, reducing the overall burden of respiratory illnesses is important to protect vulnerable populations at risk for severe illness, the health care system, and other critical infrastructure. Thus, health care providers should use every opportunity during the influenza vaccination season to administer influenza vaccines to all eligible persons, including:

- Essential workers: Health care personnel, including nursing home, long-term care facility, and pharmacy staff, and other critical infrastructure workforce
- Persons at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19: Including adults age 65 years and older, residents in a nursing home or long-term care facility, persons of all ages with certain underlying medical conditions. Severe illness from COVID-19 has been observed to disproportionately affect members of certain racial/ethnic minority groups.
- Persons at high risk for influenza complications: Including infants and young children, children with neurologic conditions, pregnant women, adults age 65 years and older, and other persons with certain underlying medical conditions

### Vaccine Administration During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Vaccination in the medical home is ideal to ensure that patients receive other preventive services that may have been deferred during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, vaccination at locations outside the medical home may help increase access to vaccines in some populations or situations, particularly when the patient does not have a primary care provider or when care in the medical home is not available or feasible.

Regardless of vaccination location, best practices for storage and handling of vaccines and vaccine administration should be followed. In addition, information on administered vaccines should be documented (e.g., through the state-based immunization information system [IIS], patient's electronic medical record, client-held paper immunization records) so that providers have accurate and timely information on their patients' vaccination status and to ensure continuity of care in the setting of COVID-19-related disruptions to routine medical services.

source: [cdc.gov/vaccines/pandemic-guidance/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pandemic-guidance/index.html)

Dear Friends,

In this issue of Health Matters, we discuss the importance of influenza vaccination during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Great American Smokeout, and all of our enrollment dates coming up.

All of us here at CHRISTUS Health Plan and US Family Health Plan want to take a moment to offer our thanks during this season of gratitude. We are so appreciative of everything you do for our members.

Sincerely,

David Engleking, MD  
Medical Director  
CHRISTUS Health Plan

## Honor These Awareness Dates and Encourage Your Patients to Get Healthy

### September

Labor Day (7)

Patriot Day (11)

First Day of Fall (22)

Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

World Alzheimer's Month

### October

World Mental Health Day (10)

Medicare Enrollment Begins (15)

Halloween (31)

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

### November

HIX Open Enrollment Begins (1)

Election Day (3)

TRICARE Open Season Starts (9)

Marine Corps Birthday (10)

Veterans Day (11)

Great American Smokeout (19)

Thanksgiving (26)

American Diabetes Month

Epilepsy Awareness Month

Lung Cancer Awareness Month

## Claim Corrections and Late Charges

Providers who believe they have submitted an incorrect or incomplete claim may submit an updated claim within the relevant timely filing period indicated in the Timely Filing of Claims section. The corrected claim must include bill type code 117 if it is an inpatient claim or code 137 if it is an outpatient claim. Updated claim submissions that do not have these codes may be denied as duplicate submissions.

Please consult your Provider Manual for proper claim submissions.

## Quality Program

We want you to know about our Quality Program. A summary is available on the website that explains the CHRISTUS Health Plan Quality Program, our goals, successes and opportunities for improvement. [ChristusHealthPlan.org](https://www.christushealthplan.org) also contains important information on how to use your benefits. You'll find information on:

- Member rights and responsibilities
- How to use your health care coverage
- Covered and non-covered benefits
- Pharmacy procedures
- How to access medical and behavioral health services
- How to appeal payment decisions and the right to external review
- Guidelines for decision making
- How to file a complaint
- Continuity of care
- Population Health Management programs, including wellness programs, case management and other member safety initiatives
- Member satisfaction surveys and other quality measures
- Utilization Management (UM) procedures
- Clinical criteria for decision making

### Utilization Management Affirmative Statement

1. CHRISTUS Health Plan UM decision making is based on only the appropriateness of care and service, and existence of coverage.
2. CHRISTUS Health Plan does not specifically reward providers or other individuals for issuing denials of coverage.
3. Financial incentives for UM decision makers do not encourage decisions that result in underutilization.

### Member Rights and Responsibilities

Do you know what your rights and responsibilities are as a member of CHRISTUS Health Plan? Visit [ChristusHealthPlan.org/Member-Resources/Rights-And-Responsibilities](https://www.christushealthplan.org/Member-Resources/Rights-And-Responsibilities) to review this information. It can also be found in your Member Handbook. If you have any questions, call Member Services at **844.282.3026**.