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Date: July 27, 2021

To: Coordinated care organizations, Kepro, CareOregon

From: Dana Hittle, Interim Medicaid Director

Subject: Extreme heat outreach to vulnerable and at-risk members

Extreme heat is predicted over the next week. The [National Weather Service](#) is forecasting increasing temperatures through the remainder of this week. Temperatures are expected in the upper-90s to above 100 degrees in Medford, the Dalles, Pendleton and the Portland metropolitan area by Friday, with temperatures remaining above 100 in the Dalles, Pendleton and Medford on Saturday.

Heat-related deaths and illness are preventable. Simple steps can make a big difference, particularly for people who are vulnerable and at high-risk. These steps include encouraging people to stay cool, stay hydrated, and stay informed about resources available to them.

Please reach out to vulnerable and at-risk members

While this heat event is not predicted to be as extreme as the June 2021 heat event, we are using lessons learned to prepare vulnerable and at-risk Oregon Health Plan (OHP) members for this and future heat events. Outreach is key to ensuring that OHP members stay healthy and safe during a heat wave. Please make use of the following information to reach out to members:

■ **Check hospitalization and Emergency Department utilization data**

Look at hospitalization and emergency department utilization data from the June 2021 heat event and identify those members who accessed services. These members should be considered part of the priority outreach population.

■ **Identify other vulnerable and at-risk members**

Those at greatest risk for heat-related illness include young children; adults 65 and older; and people with chronic illness or who are overweight, work outdoors, are unhoused, or have a low income. These members should be considered part of the priority outreach population.

Conditions that put people at increased risk during heat waves	
Chronic illness	Heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer or kidney disease, alcohol and other substance use, mental illness
Conditions that impair sweating	Heart disease, dehydration, extremes of age, skin disorders (including sunburn, prickly heat and excessive scarring and burns), congenital impairment of sweating, cystic fibrosis, Parkinson’s disease, quadriplegia, scleroderma, people taking medications with anti-cholinergic effects. Acute illness.
Impaired activities	Poor mobility, cognitive impairment
Social factors	Living alone or socially isolated, low socioeconomic status, unhoused
Occupation, recreation	Exercising vigorously in the heat or working in a hot environment

Extreme heat resources

There are several extreme heat resources available to use and share, including:

Cooling centers

- 211info has a [list of cooling centers](#) for each county.
- For help anytime, members can call 211 or 866-698-6155. For help 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday, members can text their zip code to 898211 or email help@211info.org.

Weather alerts

- Sign up for [emergency notifications](#) from OR-Alert.
- Check [alerts and advisories](#) from the National Weather Service.
- Check the [Heat Risk map](#) from the National Weather Service.

Fact sheets and other information

- [Fact sheets are available in multiple languages](#), including frequently asked questions, first-aid for heat illnesses, caring for patients during a heat wave and more.
- [Social media graphics and extreme heat tips](#) are also available.

Please ensure members know they can get free help or information in a format that works best for them, including Braille, audio, large print, other languages, and other formats. They can also ask for an interpreter.

Questions?

CCOs: Please contact your Innovator Agent if you have any questions.

Kepro, CareOregon: Please contact Dr. Dawn Mautner at dawn.mautner@dhsosha.state.or.us if you have any questions.

Thank you for your continued support of the Oregon Health Plan and the services you provide to our members.