



Commonwealth of Virginia

Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services

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Preventive Care Will Soon Be Available for All Adult Medicaid Members

Wellness exams, vaccines and counseling for smoking cessation accessible without prior authorization

RICHMOND – The Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) today announced that all adult Medicaid members will have access to preventive services, including screenings, check-ups and counseling to support positive health outcomes under a policy that takes effect September 2022.

“Increased access to preventive care will encourage healthy behaviors and provide opportunities for early diagnosis of chronic diseases like diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease,” said Virginia Secretary of Health and Human Resources John Littel. “When we address the risk of serious health conditions before they become debilitating, we improve the quality of life for our members and empower them to achieve their maximum potential.”

Similar to commercial insurance policies, preventive services are available to Medicaid members at no cost. Preventive services also are available to members without a prior authorization from their doctor. The Virginia Medicaid agency designed the preventive services benefits package to align with recommendations from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, an independent, volunteer panel of experts in primary care and prevention who evaluate the effectiveness of services and advise on evidence-based practices for disease prevention.

“Virginia Medicaid supports a whole-health approach to coverage that includes preventive care, dental benefits and a full array of behavioral health services,” said Acting DMAS Director Cheryl Roberts. “We have made great strides to provide a comprehensive set of services that will generate meaningful improvements in health outcomes for Virginia.”

Preventive services covered by Medicaid include the following:

- Adult wellness exams
- Individual and group smoking cessation and alcohol counseling
- Vaccines, including tetanus and diphtheria, shingles, hepatitis A and B, influenza, and human papillomavirus
- Mammography, prostate and other cancer screenings
- Sexually transmitted disease screenings
- Depression screenings
- Type 2 diabetes screenings
- Blood pressure and cholesterol screenings

Preventive services are already available to all children receiving Medicaid coverage. Federal law established the benefit package, including preventive services, available to newly eligible adults receiving Medicaid coverage starting in 2019. The traditional Medicaid benefits package for adults in other eligibility categories previously did not include all of those preventive services.

However, managed care health plans offered additional preventive services to adults in all eligibility categories as an enhanced benefit to ensure consistency and support overall wellness goals. The new state budget that took effect July 1, 2022, establishes preventive services as a standard Medicaid benefit, ensuring that all adult Medicaid members have access to the same services.

Other changes to Medicaid health coverage in the new state budget include:

- An updated policy guaranteeing that Medicaid members can maintain their health coverage for 12 months following pregnancy to support maternal and infant health.
- An increase in reimbursement rates for dentists who provide services to Medicaid members to build participation in the program and increase access to care.
- \$82 million to increase Medicaid reimbursement rates for primary care providers.

The Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) plays an essential role in the Commonwealth’s health care system by providing lifesaving medical coverage to one in five Virginians. For more information, visit www.dmas.virginia.gov.

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