

Memorandum

To: Gold Coast Health Plan Primary Care Providers and Pediatricians

From: Kim Osajda, RN, MSN
Director of Quality Improvement

Re: **Appropriate Strep Testing for Children with Pharyngitis**

Date: September 7, 2017

One of the Healthcare Effectiveness Data Information Set (HEDIS[®]) measures that Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) evaluates is **Appropriate Testing for Children with Pharyngitis (CWP)**. This measure evaluates the percentage of children, 3 to 18 years of age, who were diagnosed with pharyngitis, dispensed an antibiotic and received a group A streptococcus (strep) test for the episode. A higher rate represents better performance (i.e., appropriate testing).

The CWP measure is meant to reduce the inappropriate use of antibiotics by requesting providers to follow clinical practice guidelines that recommend children infected with group A streptococcus be treated with antibiotics based on appropriate lab tests.

GCHP's CWP Rates

The table below shows that GCHP's annual rates for the CWP measure have been very low. According to the National Committee for Quality Assurance's (NCQA) national percentile ranking, these scores rank in the 10th percentile. Lower rates indicate lower utilization of appropriate strep testing in children diagnosed with pharyngitis.

| Measurement Year | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| CWP Rate | 43.92 | 41.49 | 51.46 | 59.46 |

Recommendations for Appropriate Strep Testing

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed a program, "Get Smart: Know When Antibiotics Work," to educate patients and assist providers in the appropriate use of antibiotics. The program emphasizes the use of the rapid antigen detection (RADT) test prior to considering antibiotic treatment for pharyngitis.

[Click here](#) to view the CDC's Get Smart program web page.

The CDC also provides a fact sheet about careful antibiotic use in children with pharyngitis, as well as prescribing recommendations for antibiotics.

[Click here](#) to view the CDC's Careful Antibiotic Use fact sheet.

[Click here](#) for the CDC's pediatric treatment recommendations for antibiotic prescribing.

[Click here](#) for GCHP's CWP provider tip sheet.

If you have any questions, please contact GCHP's Quality Improvement Department at 1-805-437-5740 or hedis@goldchp.org.