



March 12, 2025

Dear Ohio Providers,

The Ohio Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCO), in partnership with the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM), are working collaboratively on a quality improvement project to better serve our members impacted by substance use disorder (SUD) and mental health by focusing on connecting members to long-term, evidence-based, treatment services and supports after experiencing an emergency department visit for substance abuse or mental health. Quality improvement projects entail Managed Care Organizations working collaboratively with each other, healthcare providers, hospitals, associations, members, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders to improve the patient experience and remove barriers to evidence-based care. Our goals seek to meaningfully and measurably help people get better, transform care delivery, improve collective impact and community connectivity while improving health outcomes. Ultimately, we want to see all Ohio Medicaid members achieve their full health potential.

As we work together across the systems of care to support your patients – our members – we want to acknowledge the importance of data privacy and federal policy compliance implications. Here are a few highlights that we feel are important:

- The February 16, 2024, HHS final rule brings the Part 2 program into closer alignment with the HIPAA privacy rule. The HHS final rule permits re-disclosure of Part 2 information by HIPAA covered entities and business associates for health care operations, including for quality improvement purposes.
- Data sharing among the MCOs and ODM for health care operations activities, including quality improvement, are aspects that are expressly referenced by the final rule as permissible activities. Improving care for Ohioans with SUD will require unimpeded flow of information between the MCOs and ODM, consistent with legal requirements.

What this means for you: The Ohio Medicaid Managed Care Organizations and the Ohio Department of Medicaid are committed to upholding all applicable federal and state privacy laws. This collaborative work directly aligns to HHS final rule quality improvement permissible activities. This update is meant to provide health systems, providers and other community-based supports with information to help your respective organizations make an informed decision around participation in this collaborative quality improvement work.

We, the Ohio Medicaid Managed Care plans and the Ohio Department of Medicaid, also understand providers may have many questions prior to partnering on quality improvement initiatives. We recognize the perception that partnering in Quality Improvement can make partners feel locked into specific operational pathways. We want to assure you that working with us on quality improvement projects means we want to collaboratively co-design interventions with you that have the potential to lead to improvement and will fit into your operations. We are working to build trust in the spirit of open and ongoing collaboration and will address any concerns you may have. This partnership is voluntary, and any changes made based on project learnings will be done at your sole discretion.

We thank you for your willingness to consider working with us to promote improved outcomes for all Ohioans.

Sincerely,



Mark Grippi
Ohio Market President/CEO
AmeriHealth Caritas Ohio



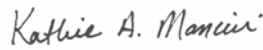
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