

To: All Providers
From: PerformCare
Date: April 2, 2024
Subject: 2024 DEI Provider Memo Series: Health Disparities

PerformCare has initiated a quarterly Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Provider Memo. The first Memo will cover information related to Health Disparities.

Health Disparities are preventable differences in health, closely related to social, economic, and environmental disadvantages. Health Disparities occur across a wide range of dimensions, such as race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual identity and orientation, disability status, immigration status, and the environment where people live (i.e., rural vs. urban communities). The Covid-19 Pandemic and its lingering aftereffects brought greater public awareness to the topic of pervasive racial and socioeconomic inequities which contribute to these disparities. PerformCare remains committed to achieving Health Equity and reducing and eliminating barriers for our Members so that they can achieve the quality of life and health that they desire.

PerformCare identified a significant health disparity impacting African American and Black Members in our network. In 2022, 3.2% of African American and Black Members were diagnosed with Opioid Use Disorder and/or Alcohol Use Disorder and only 8.8% received Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), while 4.6% of Caucasian Members were diagnosed with Opioid Use Disorder and/or Alcohol Use Disorder and 19.0% received MAT. These percentages demonstrate that **African Americans and Black Members are significantly less likely to receive MAT compared to Caucasian Members**. PerformCare continues to track this disparity, examine barriers to access, and discuss solutions and recommendations to best serve Members in our network.

Network Providers are key change agents in this process. As a provider, we are asking you to assist in the following ways:

1. Ensure that if you are treating or referring members with opioid use disorder or alcohol use disorder, you ensure that all Members are provided information on MAT and have equal access.
2. Regularly examine your data and outcomes and work on strategies to decrease identified health disparities.
3. Educate staff about the most current information regarding Medication Assisted Treatment options for individuals who may benefit. Be aware of resources where Members can be directed in their communities to access these needed services. A listing of MAT providers can be found on PerformCare's website: <https://pa.performcare.org/providers/resources-information/medication-assisted-treatment.aspx>
4. Educate staff on the importance of providing culturally responsive treatment. Recordings of presentations from our Fostering Cultural Responsiveness Seminar can be accessed at: <https://pa.performcare.org/providers/training-education/performcare-presentations.aspx>