

May 2020 Update

From the CEO

All of us at Banner – University Health Plans (BUHP) are deeply grateful to all our health care providers who are working tirelessly to help keep our members and community safe.

We are dedicated to serving close to 250,000 members across ten Arizona Counties, and we're committed to supporting our providers when you need us the most.

At BUHP, we're doing our part by having everyone who can work remotely, restricting employee travel and canceling on-site member and provider visits as necessary. **WE'RE STAYING HOME FOR YOU. THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU ARE DOING FOR OUR MEMBERS!** Please know that your service is valued.

Providers can reach out to their assigned Provider Relations Representative via phone with any requests.

We've also assembled important resources and information on COVID-19 on our member and provider sites. Visit us at:

Member Websites:

www.bannerufc.com/ACC

www.bannerufc.com/ALTCS

www.banneruca.com

Provider Website:

www.banneruhp.com

Please find us and 'Like Us' on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BANNERUFC/>. Our page has been a catalyst of information for our followers. We present meaningful information on COVID-19 and meaningful social interactions. This month, we are featuring great posts regarding Mental Health Awareness Month.

All the best,

Jim

James R. Stringham
VP/CEO
Banner – University Health Plans

Banner Health: A Safe Place for Care



Care begins with a safe place. As we go about our daily lives today, we all want to feel secure. That's especially true when it comes to the places where we get our health care.

And, it's why Banner is committed to making all of our locations a safe place for care.

Whether you need to see your doctor, have an elective surgery, or receive any other routine or urgent health service, you can rest assured that we've taken all the steps we can to protect you and those you love.

Banner is making sure you don't have to choose between safety and getting the care you need.

That's a promise we put into practice. Here is what you can expect, at a minimum, in any of our locations to ensure that you're in a safe place for care.

In our Hospitals:

- Patients as well as employees at all Banner facilities are continuously masked.
- Anyone scheduled for surgery has a COVID-19 test prior to surgery.
- At Banner hospitals, all COVID-19 patients are kept in separate and strictly isolated quarters.
- All employees and visitors are screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to entering facilities.
- Banner hospitals have entrances for surgical patients to avoid lobbies or waiting areas with other patients.
- In order to keep patients safe, visitors are restricted while COVID-19 is still present.

In our clinics:

- Nearly 100% of our Banner physicians are able to see patients remotely via telehealth video.
- Every day, we screen each and every employee and patient who enters our facilities.
- Clinic lobbies are cleaned every four hours.
- Banner has reconfigured waiting-room layouts to maintain proper social distancing.
- We've also reconfigured employee workstations to maintain proper social distancing.
- Finally, Banner has set up alternate care sites for patients exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms in order to keep these patients away from the general population.

Helping Members Thrive Following Hospitalization: The importance of inpatient discharge follow-up appointments

Members hospitalized for behavioral health issues are vulnerable after discharge without appropriate follow-up care in place. In order to prevent hospital readmission, AHCCCS requires follow-up appointments at 7 and 30 days after discharge to monitor the member's progress towards recovery.

Getting Member Buy-In Is Critical For Discharge Planning

Reducing hospital readmission can be complex because it involves a wide variety of factors. However, these factors can be identified with proper assessment and engagement strategies during the discharge planning process. Specifically, best practices indicate behavioral health staff should include members during the discharge planning process to increase the likelihood they will understand their discharge plan and attend post-discharge appointments. According to the Joint Commission website, "Patients and caregivers are sometimes excluded from the planning related to the transition process. Patients may lack a sufficient understanding of the medical condition or the plan or care. As a result, they do not buy into the importance of following the care plan, or lack the knowledge or skills to do so."

Data also supports the importance of member buy-in to discharge planning. According to a 2017 study published in the journal Patient Experience, patients who reported in surveys that they were not engaged in their own care were 34 percent more likely to be readmitted to the hospital within 30 days of discharge. In addition, members who reported they did not receive written discharge instructions were 24 percent more likely to be re-admitted. Together, these two statistics accounted for a 54 percent increase in the likelihood that a person would be readmitted to the hospital.

Social Determinants Of Health

Another key area for behavioral health staff to consider during discharge planning is whether a member has any social determinants of health (SDH) to address. Social determinants of health are defined as "the economic and social conditions that influence individual and group differences in health status." This includes, but is not limited to homelessness, lack of transportation, low income, and language barriers.

One of the major social determinants of health is the quality of a person's social network and support system. Many people who lacked adequate social supports prior to the COVID-19 pandemic might be experiencing even more isolation due to the social distancing measures put in place. People in this situation are at risk for not reaching out for help and not following through with aftercare appointments. Therefore, identifying what supports people might need and planning for such is essential to their recovery.

Bridging The Loneliness Gap

Banner utilizes Pyx to help bring people back together during this challenging time. According to the Pyx website, "Pyx Health is the first loneliness and social isolation technology focused on helping the most vulnerable populations in the country. By combining Artificial Intelligence and human interventions, Pyx Health offers patients and healthcare providers an innovative solution that effectively addresses this U.S. health epidemic through a mobile app and compassionate call center."

Pyx has a multi-faceted approach to addressing social isolation to help increase member participation in follow-up appointments. Pyx receives daily hospital discharge census information which is used as an outreach platform. From this information, the Pyx Compassionate Call Center contacts the member within three days after discharge. Call center staff answer any questions, introduce the Pyx application, and onboard the member. From there, members can contact a nurse hotline, locate a primary care physician, and review their discharge plan with a call center staff person.

The Bottom Line

Helping your members attend their follow-up appointments can help you catch the warning signs that can lead the member back to the hospital. Not only are follow-up appointments

necessary for member recovery, but it's also important to consider that hospital readmission rates are costly. Reducing the amount of people that return to the hospital will not only improve member outcomes, but it will also support the funding needed to provide quality care.

Interpretation Services available

Following social distancing guidelines while tending to the cultural needs of a patient can be challenging. Under the new guidance patients are attending appointments alone, without family members and/or friends that usually serve as interpreters. This scenario creates challenges for the patient in communicating symptoms and understating necessary care and treatment. When an in-person interpreter is not readily available, the health plan is available to assist. To learn the process, read below:

Access Interpretation Services for BUHP Members in 3 easy steps!

1. Call BUHP's – Customer Care Center: 800-582-8686 (TTY 771).
2. Provide the representative with member's AHCCCS ID number and the nature of the interpretation services required.
3. You will be placed on hold while the representative connects you with the interpretation services.

Important Tips

- Working with an Interpreter – Give the interpreter specific questions to relay. Group your thoughts or questions to help conversation flow quickly.
- Length of call – Expect interpreted comments to run a bit longer than English phrases. Interpreters convey meaning-for-meaning, not word-for-word. Concepts familiar to English speakers often require explanation or elaboration in other languages and cultures.
- Interpreter identification – Interpreters identify themselves by first name only. For reasons of confidentiality, they do not divulge either their full names or phone numbers.
- Document translation – BUHP is responsible for translating written documents for our members. If you have a written document that needs to be translated for a member, call the Customer Care Center.

AHCCCS recommendations for second newborn screening

The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) Office of Newborn Screening advises that newborn screening guidelines have not changed due to COVID-19. Certain conditions are often identified on the second screen after a normal first screen, and if the second screen is not completed, these conditions can be missed or identified late, causing irreversible damage.

To limit exposure of COVID-19 to newborns and families, providers are encouraged to collect the second screen during the first well check in-office instead of sending out to a lab. The Office of Newborn Screening can help providers who require supplies to collect in-office tests and provide a free FedEx account for timely transport of newborn screening samples. For more information, visit the ADHS website (<https://azdhs.gov/preparedness/state-laboratory/newborn-screening/index.php>) or contact nbseducation@azdhs.gov or (602) 364-0128 for more information. A flyer about the program can be found at the end of this newsletter.

Summer Well Visit/EPSDT Child and Adolescent Member Incentive

BUHP will be moving forward in offering our Child and Adolescent Well Visit/EPSDT Member Summer Incentive. Members with certain criteria who have not had their Well Visit will be offered a \$15 gift card to encourage them to complete their visit. The time frame will be from June through August, but we will be honoring them through the month of September, too. The qualifying member household will receive a letter and flyer about the program. The letter instructs the parent/member to bring the flyer to your office when the Well Visit takes place. Please sign the flyer and fax back to us as outlined in the flyer. We hope this is helpful in improving the number of Well Visits for this population.

Children's System of Care – Child and Family Support Web Page

The Child and Family Support web page includes a number of resources to support providers in identifying specialty services, resources and other helpful information. Please share this link with your teams: <https://www.banneruhp.com/resources/child-and-family-support>.

Resources on the page include:

- Child and Family Team Practice
- Children's Specialty BH Provider Directory for Central and Southern Arizona
- School-Based BH Service provider lists, services and contacts for Southern Arizona
- Resource Guides for 0-5, Transition Age Youth, Anti-Human Trafficking, LGBTQ+
- 0-5 High Needs Tool
- Transition Age Youth Tool
- Peer and Family Run Organizations
- Additional resources, hotlines, contacts and more

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

As many of us enter our second month of the "stay-at-home" lifestyle due to COVID-19 concerns, the issue of mental health couldn't be more important. We've all seen the news stories of anxiety and depression on the rise due to financial woes or massive shifts in routine. So, how can we make mental health and the related issues a comfortable subject to talk about? And, why is it important to keep these conversations going?

May is Mental Health Awareness month and has been designated as such since the middle of last century. The hope is that the continued conversation around mental health will reduce the stigma and afford more opportunities/resources for those struggling daily with mental health issues.

In 2018, The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) conducted a study that found 47.6 million people in the U.S. experienced mental illness. That's almost 1 in 5 Americans, and that only captures what was reported, so the number is likely much higher as many still have a fear around reaching out for help due to stigmas and/or a lack of education around mental health issues.

During the month of May we want to challenge you to reduce the stigmas attached to mental health issues. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) outlines 9 simple things we can all do to fight the stigma:

1. Talk openly about mental health.
2. Educate yourself and others.
3. Be conscious of language.
4. Encourage equality between physical and mental illness.
5. Show compassion for those with mental illness.
6. Choose empowerment over shame.
7. Be honest about treatment.
8. Let the media know when they're being stigmatizing.
9. Don't harbor self-stigma

At Banner, our focus is always on those we serve. Our member-centric approach and values are the basis for all we do. Allowing our members to feel safe and empowered to discuss these issues related to mental health is so incredibly important. The creation and implementation of the Pyx Health application has afforded many Banner members the ability to feel safe and secure in sharing mental health issues in the moment. Our members are then able to get the appropriate help and level of care response based on the need identified. Our behavioral health providers are hopefully assessing for mental health issues/changes related to noted diagnoses during each engagement, too. But it's our physical health providers who are often on the frontlines of the integrated health care model, and it is paramount that even the simplest of mental health screening tools/questions be utilized to assess the member's mental health in the moment in addition to their presenting physical health issue(s). SAMHSA and MHA both offer excellent screening tools that could be easily added to the normal intake/assessment procedures you are currently using. With 4.8 million ER visits annually related to mental health, behavioral health and/or neurodevelopmental diagnoses (2017, CDC), connecting members to behavioral health services sooner, rather than later, can help drive down hospitalizations and higher levels of care and lessen the burden on our emergency rooms and hospitals.

According to the CDC, 71% of adults reported at least one symptom of stress, such as headache or feeling overwhelmed or anxious. Mental health issues directly affect businesses and their employees. Poor mental health and stress can lead to job performance and productivity issues, communication can erode, physical capability and daily functioning are directly affected as well as engagement with one's work and workload. The CDC also reports that mental illnesses such as depression interfere with a person's ability to complete tasks approximately 20% of the time and reduces cognitive performance about 35% of the time. With the stigmas still associated with mental illnesses, so many are left to suffer untreated for fear of repercussions. Mental Health Awareness Month is our opportunity to create open conversations and a safe place for our patients, members and employees to feel empowered to seek help for their mental health issues. Let May be the month that you do something new, different and/or unique to continue the conversation around mental health.

"Anything that's human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary." – Fred Rogers

NAMI – www.nami.org

SAMHSA – www.samhsa.gov

MHA - <https://screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools>

Distributed May 8, 2020

Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Resources

Each of the following phone numbers is available throughout the state.

Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Resources: Support During COVID-19			
Agency	County	Contact	Services
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	All	1-800-273-8255	Phone line and chat suicide prevention services
Eldervention Program	All	602-864-4357	24-hour senior help line
Teen Lifeline	All	602-248-8336	Teens suffering from depression, at risk of suicide, provides resources, parents can also call if they need support for their teens
Child Mind Institute	All	212-308-3118	COVID-19 support through remote telemedicine and evaluations and video chats with expert clinicians
Talkspace	All	facebook.com/groups/1570599106420510/	Therapist led COVID-19 Facebook support group
Empower Work	All	Text 510-674-1414 or chat online at empowerwork.org/how-it-works	Free text support for workplace situations through trained peer counselors for members impacted by COVID-19
SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline	All	800-985-5990	24/7 crisis counseling to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters
The Trevor Project	All	866-488-7386 or text START at 678678	Suicide prevention and support for LGBTQ+ youth
HOPELine-Spanish Speaking Crisis Line	All	800-784-2432	Suicide prevention and crisis intervention for adolescents, teens and adults in Spanish
Veterans' Suicide Prevention Lifeline	All	1-800-273-TALK (8255)	For veterans, crises can be heightened by their experiences during military service. If you're a veteran or service member and in crisis, these resources can help.

AzCHER warns of counterfeit PPE, testing kits

From Arizona Coalition for Healthcare Emergency Response (AzCHER)

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, several notices of counterfeit PPE and testing kits have come to our awareness. Government and healthcare organizations have a great need for these materials and have been ordering PPE from inauthentic suppliers. The United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are monitoring the situation closely.

Additionally, Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich and United States Attorney Michael Bailey announced the formation of a joint federal, state, and local task force to combat coronavirus-related fraud. The mission of the Task Force is to streamline the government's response to reports of fraud related to COVID-19 in Arizona.

N95 Masks

Among the counterfeit items are inauthentic 3M N95 masks. 3M has provided a website to validate authenticity of their products. https://www.3m.com/3M/en_US/safe-guard-us/

Testing Kits

CBP officers at Los Angeles International Airport and Chicago O'Hare Airport intercepted and seized shipments of fraudulent COVID-19 test kits that both originated from the United Kingdom. Some of these kits contained chemicals that may cause extensive harm to a user who washes and rinses their mouth per the kit's instructions.

A list of approved COVID-19 test kits can be found here (<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/emergency-situations-medical-devices/emergency-use-authorizations#covid19ivd>).

Non-Delivery of Purchased Orders

The most common COVID-19 PPE scam is the solicitation and subsequent non-delivery of purchase orders of N95 respirator masks, protective gowns, and ventilators after victims sent money.

The FBI has identified the following proactive measures for consumers and procurement personnel to help mitigate financial loss or the purchase of potentially harmful counterfeit N95 masks. These recommendations are not meant to be an exhaustive list of guidance regarding COVID-19 fraud protection:

- When ordering PPE from online retailers, always verify the URL and confirm "https" in the web address, as a lack of a security certification ("https") may be an indicator that the site is insecure or compromised
- Consult the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) NIOSH website to view a list of all NIOSH approved manufacturers of N95 respirator masks and validate approval and certification numbers
https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/disp_part/n95list1.html
- If procuring other categories of PPE such as gowns, gloves, goggles, and face shields, consult the manufacturer to verify authenticity and availability
- Be wary of unprompted solicitations to purchase large quantities of PPE and do not provide usernames, passwords, personal identifying information (PII) such as social security number and date of birth, or financial information in response to an email or robocall

The Regional Information Sharing System's (RISS) Regional Organized Crime Information Center (ROCIC) has created a short YouTube video describing these scams. You can find it here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdVIIJRFO_Q&feature=youtu.be

If you believe you are the victim of an Internet scam or cyber-crime, or if you want to report suspicious activity, please visit the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center at www.ic3.gov.

Compliance Corner: COVID-19 related fraud

It's important to remember the dangers of letting down your guard during this time of national emergency. The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) recently issued 2 warnings to Covered Entities, including Providers:

- Consultants and Education providers have informed providers that either the consultants or their materials or systems are endorsed or required by the Department of Health and Human Services or by the OCR. This is false.
- An individual posing as an OCR Investigator is calling Covered Entities, including Providers, in order to obtain patient/member information. If you are contacted from someone claiming to be an OCR Investigator, ask for the investigator's email address (it should end in @hhs.gov) and then ask for a confirmation email from the OCR Investigator's @hhs.gov email address.

There are multiple fraud schemes targeting consumers, especially vulnerable populations. These include:

- Offering members COVID-19 tests in exchange for personal details including Medical insurance;
- Offering a vaccine or cure for COVID-19 to members;
- Seeking donations for illegitimate or non-existent charitable organizations;
- Convincing consumers to invest in a biotech company who is working to develop a vaccine for the coronavirus and claiming they will get rich on this.

The FBI Warns of Teleconferencing Hijacking – reports of VTC hijacking called “Zoom-bombing” are emerging nationwide. If using teleconferencing as a part of telehealth, be sure to not make the meeting public and provide a link directly to specific individuals.

The Federal Trade Commission has reported it has received 12,000 consumer complaints related to COVID-19. If you or your members need to report any potential fraud related to COVID-19 you can report to the following:

- National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline: 1-800-720-5721 or email: disaster@leo.gov
- Arizona Attorney General's Office www.AZAG.gov/complaints/consumer
- FBI's IC3 (for internet related scams) www.ic3.gov

Banner University Health Plans Contact Information

BUHP Customer Care

Banner - University Family Care – ACC (800) 582-8686
Banner - University Family Care – LTC (833) 318-4146
Banner - University Care Advantage – SNP (877) 874-3930

BUHP Compliance Officers

(520) 874-2847 or (520) 874-2553

BUHP Compliance Department FAX

(520) 874-7072

BUHP Compliance Department Email

BUHPCompliance@BannerHealth.com

BUHP Compliance Department Mail:

BUHP Compliance & Audit Dept
2701 E Elvira Rd
Tucson, AZ 85756

**Confidential and Anonymous Compliance
Hotline (ComplyLine)**

(888) 747-7989

AHCCCS Office of the Inspector General

Providers are required to report any suspected FWA directly to AHCCCS OIG

Provider Fraud

(602) 417-4045
(888) 487-6686

Website

www.azahcccs.gov (select **Fraud Prevention**)

Mail:



Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP)

is accepting referrals during the COVID-19 crisis



DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC SECURITY

Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona

Children **birth through 3 years of age** who meet one of the following criteria, may be considered eligible for early intervention services in Arizona:

- Developmental delay of 50% or greater in one or more areas of development.
- A diagnosed condition with a high probability of resulting in a 50% or greater developmental delay.
- Under special circumstances, children may also be determined eligible based on additional information indicating that there is a potential delay in areas that are difficult to assess with standard measures.

The initial evaluation and assessment for eligibility, and the development of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for those eligible, must be completed **within 45 days** of the date that your referral is received.

Please note that due to COVID-19, AzEIP services may look different, with alternative service delivery and communication methods used such as tele-intervention, phone/video conferencing, emails, etc. However, referrals are still being processed and responded to and ongoing services are being provided as agreed upon families' IFSP.

Anyone who is concerned about the development of a child who is between 0-3 years of age can make a referral to AzEIP by contacting our central referral agency, Raising Special Kids at:
Toll-Free: 1-800-592-0140 or [Complete an online referral](#)

**For more information or to answer your questions, please contact us at:
Phone: 602-532-9960 | Email: allazeip2@azdes.gov**

Equal Opportunity Employer / Program • Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities
• To request this document in alternative format or for further information about this policy, contact the Division of Developmental Disabilities ADA Coordinator at 602-771-2893; TTY/TDD Services: 7-1-1 GCI-1117A FLYENG (04-20)



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