



AlaskaCare Wellness: A Fresh Start

The AlaskaCare Employee Plan has included wellness programs for some time but the new benefit year has us thinking about a fresh start – one that includes our newest AlaskaCare Team member, HealthSmart. As of July 1, HealthSmart will replace Wellness Initiatives of Alaska (WIN) as our wellness vendor and will bring some new opportunities for AlaskaCare members.

Throughout this newsletter, you will find articles describing the new programs available, most of them free of charge to you. The programs include:

- Weight Watchers at Work
- Tobacco Cessation
- Nurse Advice Line
- Mother and Child Program
- Health Fairs

These are supported by a wellness program that includes a Wellness Assessment, 12-week Wellness Education Programs, and Personal Wellness Coaches. Also, be sure to read about increases in the preventive care benefits to help you get started on the right foot.

Make a new benefit year resolution to get healthy with your wellness program – it all starts July 1.

Preventive Care Benefit Increases Begin July 1

Regular preventive care is an important part of leading a healthy life. The AlaskaCare plan provides coverage for preventive services but benefits are currently subject to a deductible and coinsurance.

The AlaskaCare Wellness plan wants to help you and your family with the preventive care you need to stay healthy. As of July 1, the coverage for preventive services will increase. Preventive care will no longer require a deductible and will be covered at 100% of the recognized charge for each service, regardless of the plan you are enrolled in.

Covered preventive services include a routine physical exam and related lab tests, x-rays, mammograms, and other screening tests and services each benefit year. Services are limited to one of each type during the year for each covered member.

For a copy of the health plan booklet and the addendum with this change, visit AlaskaCare.gov.

Total Wellness Tools at Your Fingertips

Beginning July 1, the AlaskaCare Wellness program will offer services to allow you to make positive changes in your life and your health. The services will be available to you and your eligible dependents at no cost.

All AlaskaCare wellness program changes take effect July 1. Between now and then we'll be sending more information so watch your mailbox, email or visit AlaskaCare.gov.

You'll start your journey with an online interactive Wellness Assessment personalized for you. The assessment will provide a detailed report that includes your personal health risk factors. Then you can access the HealthSmart Wellness Web site to find information to help you manage risk factors identified and other health information to keep you on the right track.

The next step in your journey to health can be as personalized as you need. You can:

- Enroll in a 12-week Wellness Education Program – this online program provides you with weekly topics, worksheets, and assignments to help you in the areas of exercise and nutrition, stress management, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.
- Get Personal Wellness Coaching – if you have challenges with weight, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or stress, you automatically qualify for a personal Wellness Coach to guide you through a plan related to your specific needs.

If you are in Juneau, Anchorage or Fairbanks, plan to attend a Health Fair where you can meet the Wellness Team, including the Alaska-based Health Coaches.

Health Fairs Scheduled

The AlaskaCare Health Plans and Alaska Regional Hospital are co-sponsoring Health Fairs for all AlaskaCare members this year.

Upcoming Health Fairs:

- Anchorage, May 19 and 20 in the Alaska Regional Hospital Main Lobby
- Fairbanks, September 8 at Carlson Center
- Juneau, to be scheduled for Fall 2012

A variety of blood tests are offered at Health Fairs for free or at substantially reduced rates. Other health screenings will also be available. You will have the opportunity to connect with AlaskaCare partners including the HealthSmart Wellness Program Team and the Alaska-based Health Coaches.

Fairs also include health-related exhibits and other educational opportunities. No registration is necessary. Check AlaskaCare.gov for updates and additional information.

Nurse Advice Line: New Phone Number

The AlaskaCare plan includes a Nurse Advice Line, free of charge, where you may speak to a registered nurse any time of the day or night, seven days a week. As of July 1, this program will be managed by HealthSmart and will have a new phone number.

The Nurse Advice Line provides registered nurses to assist you, answer questions, explain medical options, and suggest resources. A Registered Nurse (RN) can also assess your symptoms and recommend care options from simple home care to follow-up care with your doctor. In some cases, the RN will check in to see if your condition has improved.

The Nurse Advice Line also includes access to an audio library of over 2,200 health topics to help you make more informed health care decisions for yourself and your family.

The new number will be printed on your new ID card mailing in late June, so watch for your new card or check AlaskaCare.gov for the new Nurse Advice Line number starting July 1.

Weight Watchers at Work to be Offered

AlaskaCare Wellness is partnering with Weight Watchers to bring you Weight Watchers at Work (WW@W), paid in full by AlaskaCare.

The AlaskaCare Wellness plan will pay the enrollment fee for you and for your eligible dependents up front so there is no out-of-pocket cost to you. All you need to do is sign up for a meeting in your area and attend regularly.

Weight Watchers uses a PointsPlus formula to take the complex science of how our bodies process different foods and creates an easy to follow plan. AlaskaCare Wellness and WW@W are bringing the Weight Watchers experience to your workplace. A trained leader conducts weekly 30-minute meetings allowing you to benefit from coworker support.

Members will have access to Weight Watchers eTools, the online companion where members can track PointsPlus, find recipes, join community message boards, and much more. Members may also download free Weight Watchers smartphone applications. Meeting attendees who use eTools lose 50% more weight than those who just attend meetings, making this a great added benefit.

Meeting locations are being determined now. What have you got to lose but a little weight – all while gaining better health!

Prenatal Support: Mother and Child Program

The new Mother and Child Program offered by AlaskaCare Wellness provides access to prenatal nurses and educational programs to help throughout pregnancy and beyond – all free of charge.

Having a baby is an exciting time, but 12% of women still don't receive adequate prenatal care and nearly one-quarter of all pregnant women face factors that can threaten their and their baby's health.

A prenatal nurse will help determine any pregnancy risk factors and will work with you to develop a plan to minimize complications. For all pregnancies, the nurse will monitor and assist with complications as they arise and collaborate with your physician to address your medical needs.

The program also includes educational materials, a week-by-week pregnancy handbook and free baby items. Let us help you deliver a healthy, happy addition to your family.

Tobacco Cessation: Improve Your Health and Save Money

If you use tobacco, the AlaskaCare Wellness Plan wants to help you quit. We've partnered with the Cleveland Clinic Tobacco Treatment Center to bring you a program offering one-on-one support and resources you need to become tobacco free – for free!

Studies show that people who receive counseling in addition to medications have a 28% chance of succeeding compared to 5% of those who quit abruptly. The Cleveland Clinic, combined with your prescription drug benefits, provides the tools to help you succeed.

You start with a phone consultation with a certified tobacco cessation specialist to develop an individualized plan. They will consult with your doctor to prescribe necessary medications including crave-stopping drugs and nicotine replacement items like gum, lozenges, or the patch, all covered 100% by your health plan.

The specialist helps you become aware of triggers and urges, provides suggestions to help you move away from dependence on tobacco and regularly checks on your progress.

Everyone has their own reasons, but quitting tobacco can:

- Improve your lung function and circulation
- Reduce your risk of ulcers, heart attack, stroke, and cancers
- Save you \$3,600 per year if you smoke a pack a day at \$7.50 per pack

More information about the tobacco cessation program will be available before the July 1 start date. Become tobacco-free to improve your health and save money!

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Disclaimer: Information in this newsletter summarizes the plan provisions, is supplemental only, and does not supersede the applicable Information Booklet's provisions.