



**Neighborhood
Health Plan™**

Your health. Our promise.



Notice to all Commonwealth Choice Plan Members Amendment to NHP Coverage Effective July 1, 2009

Dear NHP Member:

This document represents an amendment to the NHP Commonwealth Choice Member Handbook. The following definitions and additions regarding plan services and/or benefits are effective January 1, 2009. The section where this information is located in your handbook is provided along with the new or revised definition, policy, or procedure this notice amends. In addition to the amended text provided on the following pages, please note the following two changes which apply throughout the entire Member Handbook:

PROVIDER / PHYSICIAN

Throughout your member handbook, any occurrence of the term "Primary Care Provider" now includes Nurse Practitioners (see detailed information on next page). This also applies to the term "Physician" when within the context of primary care or primary care services.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Please note that NHP has changed its hours of operation. Customer Care Representatives are now available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and Thursdays from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Please keep this notice with your handbook. If you have any questions about this information, please call a Customer Care Representative at 800-462-5449 (TTY 800-655-1761). Representatives are available to assist you Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and Thursdays from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Thank you for choosing Neighborhood Health Plan.

Sincerely,

Paul Mendis, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer

AMENDMENT1/CCEOC-v08-1.0 0709/10K

Information About NHP Providers | Section 1: *Your NHP Evidence of Coverage*

Replace existing text on page 10 and add the following new text below “Information About NHP Providers”

- *Additional information about physicians and nurse practitioners licensed to practice in Massachusetts is available from the Board of Registration in Medicine. Visit www.massmedboard.org to find information about your physician’s education, hospital affiliations, board certification status and more. You can find information about nurse practitioners at the Massachusetts Division of Health Professions Licensure website located at www.mass.gov. The following websites also provide useful information in selecting quality healthcare Providers: (bullet list).*

Enrollment | Section 2: *Eligibility and Enrollment*

Replace existing text on page 12, paragraph 2, with the following new text:

- *NHP will accept you into our plan regardless of your income status, source of income, physical or mental condition, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, creed, ethnicity or race, color, physical or mental disability, personal appearance, national origin, English proficiency, ancestry, marital status, veteran’s status, occupation, political affiliation, claims experience, duration of medical coverage, pre-existing conditions, actual or expected health status, need for health care services, ultimate payer for services or your status as a Member.*

Nurse Practitioners as Primary Care Providers | Section 3: *Your NHP Providers*

The Primary Care Provider you select can be a doctor or a nurse practitioner.

- Under subsection: “Changing Your Primary Care Provider” add this clause to the end of the sentence: *“including changing your PCP to a nurse practitioner.”*
- Under subsection: “Your Primary Care Provider” add the following new text: *NHP provides coverage on a “nondiscriminatory basis” (See Glossary) for covered services delivered or arranged for by a nurse practitioner.”*
- *If you need to change your Primary Care provider; you may do so at any time, for any reason, including changing your PCP to a nurse practitioner.”*

Emergency | Section 4: *Accessing Care*

Replace first sentence on page 21, paragraph 2 with the following new text:

- *You or your representative (such as another member of your family) must call your Primary Care Site for emergency medical conditions within 48 hours of any Emergency care. You or your representative must also contact your Behavioral Health Manager (i.e. Beacon) for emergency mental health conditions within 48 hours of any Emergency care.*

Specialty Care | Section 4: *Accessing Care*

Add the following new text on page 20, end of paragraph 2:

- *If at any time you or your PCP have trouble finding needed medical services in NHP’s network, you or your PCP can call NHP for referral help. If you request it, NHP will also confirm the availability and arrange for or obtain services not available in the network.*

Mental Health Care | Section 8: *Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services*

Under “NHP provides coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of:” replace the first bullet of text with the following new text:

- *Biologically-based Mental Health Conditions, including schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, paranoia, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, delirium and dementia, affective*

disorders, eating disorders, post traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse disorders, autism, and other psychotic disorders or other biologically-based mental disorders appearing in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) that are scientifically recognized.

The definition of all other non-biologically-based mental health conditions has been revised to exclude alcohol and drug addiction:

- *All other non-biologically-based mental health conditions, ~~including alcohol and drug addiction~~. Your policy may have an annual limit for non-biologically based services. Please see your Benefit Summary to determine if your benefits include an annual limit or contact NHP's Customer Care Center at 1-800-462-5449 or TTY 1-800-655-1761.*

Add the following new subsection at the end of Section 8:

- **Development of Clinical Guidelines and Utilization Review Criteria**
Clinical Guidelines and Utilization Review criteria for mental health and substance abuse services are developed and updated by Beacon Health Strategies (Beacon), NHP's Behavioral Health Manager. These are done so with input from practicing providers in the behavioral health network and member and provider advisory councils, and in accordance with standards adopted by nationally recognized sources. The behavioral health guidelines are evidence based, wherever possible, and are applied in a manner that considers the individuals health care needs. The guidelines are reviewed at least annually or more often as new treatments and technologies are adopted as generally accepted behavioral health practice.

Oral Interpretation | Section 12: Member Rights and Responsibilities

Add the following new member right to the top of page 51 under "Your Rights as an NHP Member":

- *The right to receive oral interpretation services free of charge for any materials in any language.*

Definitions (New or Revised) | Section 18: Glossary

- **Behavioral Health Manager:** *A utilization review organization that provides or arranges for the provision of mental health and substance abuse services to Members of NHP. Beacon Health Strategies (Beacon) is NHP's delegated Managed Behavioral Health Organization (MBHO).*
- **Grievance:** *Any oral or written Complaint submitted to NHP or one of NHP's utilization management designees that has been initiated by an Enrollee, or the Enrollee's Authorized Representative, concerning any aspect or action of NHP relative to the Enrollee, including, but not limited to, review of Adverse Determinations regarding scope of coverage, denial of services, quality of care and administrative operations.*
- **Nondiscriminatory Basis Coverage:** *NHP's coverage policies do not contain any annual or lifetime dollar or unit of service limitations imposed on coverage for care provided by Nurse Practitioners that are less than any annual or lifetime dollar or unit of service limitation imposed on coverage for the same services by other providers.*
- **Nurse Practitioner:** *A registered nurse who holds authorization in advanced nursing practice as a nurse practitioner under M.G.L. c. 112, §80B and regulations promulgated thereunder.*
- **Primary Care Provider:** *A doctor or nurse practitioner selected by the Member or assigned by NHP to provide and coordinate a Member's health care needs. Other health care providers, such as a registered nurse, nurse practitioners, physician's assistants or nurse midwives, acting on behalf of and in consultation with a Primary Care Provider, may provide primary care services. PCPs may refer Members to specialists. PCPs also supervise and prescribe health care services.*
- **Utilization Review Organization:** *An entity that conducts utilization review under contract with or on behalf of a carrier, but does not include a carrier performing utilization review for its own health benefit plans. A behavioral health manager is considered a utilization review organization.*

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