

Initiation and Engagement of Alcohol and Other Drug Dependence Treatment

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The Substance Abuse Treatment Dilemma

Recent statistics reveal a worrying trend in substance-related fatalities among adolescents, particularly involving fentanyl. According to an article by the [JAMA Network](#), adolescent fentanyl-involved fatalities rose sharply from 253 in 2019 to 884 in 2021. This underscores the need for robust harm-reduction education, widespread access to naloxone, and enhanced mental health and substance use services.

Neighborhood’s Performance on HEDIS Measures

Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island (Neighborhood) evaluates substance use disorder treatment efficacy using the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measure “Initiation and Engagement of Alcohol and Other Drug Dependence Treatment (IET).” This measure includes:

- **Initiation of Treatment:** Members 13 or older diagnosed with alcohol or drug dependence must begin treatment within 14 days of diagnosis.
- **Engagement in Treatment:** After initiating treatment, members should have at least two follow-up services within 34 days.

Current Performance Stats

Our Medicaid rates fall below the goal set by the 2024 National Medicaid Quality Compass 90th percentiles.

Medicaid IET Rates				
	MY 2021 Rate	MY 2022 Rate	MY 2023 Rate	Goal 2024 QC 90 th Percentile Rate
IET: Initiation of Treatment	40.17	40.75	40.31	54.92
IET: Engagement of Treatment	16.05	14.39	13.32	26.72

For INTEGRITY Medicare-Medicaid Plan members (MMP), rates also remain below Centers for Medicaid Services and State benchmarks.

INTEGRITY (Medicare-Medicaid Dual Eligible)				
	MY 2021 Rate	MY 2022 Rate	MY 2023 Rate	Benchmark
IET: Initiation of Treatment	36.31	36.85	38.31	45.00
IET: Engagement of Treatment	8.05	9.94	7.06	16.00

How You Can Help

For your patients newly diagnosed with Substance Use Disorder (SUD), treatment should begin within 14 days of diagnosis. Two additional visits should be scheduled within 34 days after their first visit. Follow-up visits can be in-person or via telemedicine.

Neighborhood’s Behavioral Health partner, Optum, has specific resources available to all physicians to help you identify SUD treatment providers and schedule appointments for your patients.

- **SUD Helpline:** 1-855-780-5955. Available 24/7 for provider and patient support.
- **Screening Tools and Patient Education:** Visit providerexpress.com and liveandworkwell.com (access code “clinician”) for resources tailored to managing alcohol or drug disorders.