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2023 WELLNESS PROGRAM SUCCESSES

With another wellness season in the books and incentive cards in wallets across the state (or perhaps already spent?), MMIA Employee Benefits wanted to take a moment and share the impressive participation increases and positive feedback received from this year's installment.

In fact, participation numbers were up three to four percent across the board in all wellness incentive activities above last year's already impressive turnout. The Education video and quiz completion has increased a whopping 11% since 2021!

Other groups marvel at our participation levels for these programs and inquire how we're able to hit such great member involvement, and it is truly a testament to your amazing clerks and HR staff throughout the state of Montana and YOU, all medical plan participants, who prioritize these programs year after year.



This is the best process that has been set up. It gets me to pay attention to my health.

I can't believe everybody doesn't do this program.

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2023 WELLNESS PROGRAM SUCCESSES

I learn something new every time I do my labs and come to this call. I always make at least one adjustment to my routine, and it improves my labs the next year.

I can't believe everybody doesn't do this program. It is so easy, helpful, and informative. Everybody could profit so much from doing all the (wellness) activities.

Nobody in my department is deficient in Vitamin D now that we know our level and do something about it when it's low. We all need extra during the summer and winter.

I knew I'd been slacking off and this helps me get back on track.

I appreciate this service. My doctor draws labs but never goes over them with me unless there is something wrong. It's nice to hear that I'm doing pretty well!

I wouldn't have known that I had become pre-diabetic without the labs and a follow-up call. I went to my doctor, signed up for a health coach and now my A1c is better.

I like being able to track my health progress each year with someone.

COVID was hard on my health habits, and I've been working hard to make changes, it's great to see the changes not only in my weight but also in my labs.

If it weren't for this program to get my labs and get to talk to somebody about them, I wouldn't have known I had a thyroid condition. I got a Primary Care Provider for treatment and it's good again.

Thank you for all your efforts and we look forward to even more in 2024!

COMBAT THE WINTER BLUES

The dense darkness of winter descends like a raven, cloaking the expansive Montana sky. Okay, so it's not *that* dramatic, but in case you didn't notice, we don't get much sunlight during our winter days!

Whether you technically experience Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) or not, winter can be tough for everyone. The time there *IS* light outside, many of us are inside staring at a screen.

Here are some things we can all do to help combat the winter blues:

Light exposure – Direct sunlight is best, but full spectrum lights for your home or office sure can help. We can't stress enough the importance of short walks during the day or at least getting outside for some sunlight. At minimum, take time to look out a window a couple times a day and take a few deep belly breaths.

Talk to professionals – It is truly refreshing to speak with specialists who can relate to what you're experiencing and offer individualized recommendations to help (see chart below for mental health and counseling options available through your MMIA coverage).

Focus on positives – Start a gratitude journal and write down three things you're thankful for each day. Make plans for some exciting things to look forward to and get them on your calendar – it can be a weekend getaway or even something smaller like a dinner with friends, massage/spa day, or a concert.

Set realistic goals (see also: don't take on too much)

– and for whatever you take on, compartmentalize tasks into smaller parts and set priorities to reduce stress and overwhelm. Exercise, eat healthy meals with whole foods (not half foods, haha), remove/reduce alcohol and drug use since they are often depressants and can often lead to, well, more depressed feelings.

Turn up the tunes! – A study at the University of Missouri reported listening to upbeat or cheery music significantly improves mood both short and long term.

We're all a little different, so if one of these things isn't your cup of tea, see if another works better for you. Cut out the chart below and post in your office. It's good to have this information readily available in case you or a coworker needs to contact any of these helpful resources.

Name	Description	Cost	In-Person or Virtual	Contact Information
Sapphire Resource Connection	Primary EAP Vendor. Counselors across the state. No preauthorization necessary. Find a counselor on their website and call direct. Tell them you have Sapphire EAP with MMIA. Available to all on MMIA medical plan and others in the household. Financial and Legal advice is also provided.	Six visits free per person, per issue, per year.	In-person and virtual	Reach our directly participating providers listed at: sr-connection.com 406-523-7707/866-767-9511 (After hours emergency lines) Financial Consultation - 833-210-6026 Legal Consultation - 866-262-5749
Premise Health (Montana Health Center)	Professional virtual counseling services with licensed therapists	Free for medical plan participants	Phone and Video	855-200-6822 mypremisehealth.com
Brightside	Contracted by Allegiance for virtual care with licensed psychiatrists and therapists. Brightside generally has sessions available within 24 hours after taking the online assessment.	Standard medical benefits apply. Deductible waived on most plans and only coinsurance amount would apply.	Phone and video	brightside.com/askallegiance
Licensed provider of your choice	Always available. Use especially after six free visits from Sapphire have been completed to continue care as necessary.	Standard medical benefits apply for Allegiance participating providers.	In-person	Contact therapists directly and provide a copy of your insurance ID to process through medical benefits.



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