
GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH PLAN CONSUMER-FRIENDLY MATERIALS

Prepared by the Materials Review Subcommittee (MRS) of the RItE Care Consumer Advisory Committee for DHS and those Health Plans Participating in Medicaid Managed Care Programs

SECTION A: CHECKLISTS

FORMAT:

- Publication is in handbook format where applicable
- Follows the guidelines in Section B
- Uses “bullets” to highlight important ideas or information
- Type is easy to read (e.g., large enough, clear fonts, reasonable spacing)
- Any chart or graph is very simple
- Important telephone numbers on inside front cover, and placed prominently in text (where helpful)
- Materials are printed on recycled and recyclable paper with soy-based inks
- All routine forms (e.g., grievance and contact log forms) are appended
- Materials are ADA complaint (e.g., available on tape, video, etc.)

LANGUAGE:

- Reader’s required literacy level is sixth grade (highest allowable)
- Independent literacy group has reviewed the materials to confirm sixth grade level
 - Recommendation: Plans/DHS should test materials with Dorcas Place and/or similar group to ascertain appropriate level.
- Materials are available in required non – English languages (see also Cultural Concerns, below)
- Language is clear
- Language is simple but not condescending
- Language is non-coercive & non-threatening to a person who does not have an extensive vocabulary

CONTENTS:

- Content has been checked for factual accuracy (compared with contracts and policies prior to publication) and consistency
- Content is non-redundant & brief
- Concepts are clear to consumers (not just to employees of plans/DHS)
 - Recommendation: Plans/DHS should test materials with at least 10 consumers to ascertain that consumers understand the concepts

CULTURAL CONCERNS:

- Photos/Illustrations are culturally diverse
- Information is presented in culturally appropriate and culturally sensitive contexts
- All listed services/procedures actually function as described in materials, and are accessible in the manner described to people whose primary language is not English
 - Recommendation: MRS suggests that DHS and the plans test any described procedures with advocacy groups representing consumers from specific cultural groups.
- Translated materials are professionally evaluated by outside consultants for linguistic/content accuracy and specified reading level, and then evaluated by appropriate cultural advocacy agencies for consumer-friendliness
 - Recommendation: MRS suggests that such materials be designed in consultation with agencies that work closely with such consumers, since it is possible that these consumers might prefer to access important information in a different way.

B. PLANS: HANDBOOK STYLE RESOURCE BOOK FOR MEDICAID MANAGED CARE CONSUMERS:

1. Inside front cover should list all important phone numbers (1 page)
 - In an emergency, dial 911
 - Preauthorization number(s)
 - Plan's quality assurance/customer service number
 - Listings which can be customized by consumers:
 - My PCP's number is:
 - My child's PCP's number is:
 - My (my child's) specialist's number is:
 - My (my child's) mental health provider's number is:
 - My (my child's) dentist's number is: (Etc.)

- DHS RItE Care Info line number & any other DHS or program Helpline numbers
 - RI Department of Health number (for grievance)
 - RI Legal Services number
2. Table of Contents
 3. Welcome & Introduction (up to 3 pages):
 - How RItE Care or Rhody Health Partners works at this plan (generally)
Note: this is NOT an introduction to managed care itself
 4. Emergency and urgent care (1 page):
 - What is emergency – go straight to Emergency Department (ED)
 - What is urgent care – call PCP for what to do, where to go
 - When in doubt...
 5. Regular care (up to 5 pages):
 - PCP's & how to get one
 - Specialists & how to get one
 - Prescription (how this works – append list of participating pharmacies in back, if possible)
 - Prescription drugs
 - OTC's
 - Injectable drugs
 - Mental Health & how to access a provider
 - Chemical dependency & how to access a provider
 - Dental benefit & how to access help
 - Skilled nursing, CNA, Homemaker, and DM
 6. Transportation (1/2 page):
 - RIPTA Bus Pass – How to obtain
 - How to access taxi service (for RItE Care only)
 - How to access other non-emergency transportation
 7. Telephone Access (1 page):
 - Why phones are important

- What to do if you don't have a phone
8. Consumer Rights and Responsibilities (up to 3 pages):
- Health Plan rights
 - DHS rights – use consumer guidelines
 - CAC meetings
9. Grievance procedures (up to 3 pages):
- In-plan (with phone number): also note that they may use the forms at the back of the handbook
 - DHS & DOH (with phone numbers)
 - RI Legal Services (with phone numbers)
10. Consumer – Friendly Forms (we provide the format):
- Contact log (3 pages): use with all RIte Care and Rhody Health Partners calls
 - Number I called
 - Date & Time I called
 - Name of person I spoke with
 - What I asked for
 - What they said to do
 - What I did
 - What happened
 - In-plan grievance form (1 page)
 - DHS appeals DHS – 121
11. Whom to call if you need assistance or are confused (1 page)
12. Zainyeh bill glossary
13. Appendices (if necessary): pharmacy list, OTC list, etc.
14. Benefits:
- In-Plan
 - Out-of-Plan
 - Non-covered