



Healthy NOW

SPRING 2024

www.selecthealthofsc.com

Renewing
your Healthy
Connections
(Medicaid)
benefits
Learn more on page 2

Get or stay
well with
support from
Extra Benefits
See page 4

Attention: Action Needed!

Yearly Process to Keep Your Medicaid Benefits



**FIRST CHOICE:
Tried and True,
Time to Renew!**



Time is short! When you get your annual Medicaid eligibility review form, you have limited time to complete and return it. If you don't return it on time, you and/or your children are at risk of losing Healthy Connections (Medicaid) benefits.

To make sure you get your form, it's important that Healthy Connections has your current address and contact information. Please visit the Healthy Connections online portal (<https://tools.apply.scdhhs.gov/quick-tools>) today to update your information to prevent a gap in coverage. For the latest information about annual reviews, please visit Healthy Connections (<https://msp.scdhhs.gov/annualreviews>).



Scan with your phone.

RESPOND QUICKLY TO KEEP YOUR BENEFITS!

Your annual Healthy Connections review process: Easy as 1, 2, 3!

1 Once a year, Healthy Connections will mail you an Annual Review form in an envelope that looks like this.

- When you get it, please fill it out completely and go to Step 2.
- If you are unable to locate the form, see the green box on the back for replacement instructions.



2 When returning the completed form, you will need to include the following:

- Social Security numbers (or document numbers for any legal immigrants who need insurance).
- Employer and income information for everyone in your family (for example, paystubs, W-2 forms, or wage and tax statements).
- Policy numbers for any current health insurance, including information about any job-related health insurance available to your family.



3 Return the form and documents to Healthy Connections:

- Submit the form online at <https://apply.scdhhs.gov>.
- Upload the documents to the portal at <https://apply.scdhhs.gov>.
- Scan the form and documents. Email them to 8888201204@fax.scdhhs.gov.
- OR fax the form and documents to 1-888-820-1204.
- In person: You can bring your renewal form and documents to a local South Carolina Healthy Connections Eligibility office. You can find an office near you by checking a list of Healthy Connections offices (<https://www.scdhhs.gov/site-page/where-go-help>).
- Or mail them to:
SCDHHS –
Central Mail
P.O. Box 100101
Columbia, SC
29202-3101
- Call SC Health Connections at 1-888-549-0820.

FirstChoiceSM
by Select Health of South Carolina
Your Hometown Health Plan

Healthy Connections



Help us better help YOU!

We need your help! First Choice by Select Health of South Carolina sends out a Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey each year to evaluate services important to you. The survey is mailed to a random sample of members. It is designed to tell us how you feel about your health care providers, our plan, and the care you receive. The results of the survey help us make improvements to programs and services used by our members.

The latest CAHPS survey went out in early 2024. If you get or have gotten a survey, please fill it out and mail it back in the prepaid envelope provided. For more information, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com or call Member Services toll free at **1-888-276-2020**.

Need a replacement Annual Review form?

- Download and print the form from www.scdhhs.gov/sites/default/files/WKR002.pdf.
- Ask for the Annual Review form by secure email at www.selecthealthofsc.com/contact.
- Call First Choice Member Services at **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**. We can send a form and a postage-paid envelope for sending your completed form to Healthy Connections.
- Call the Healthy Connections Member Contact Center at **1-888-549-0820**.

If you need help filling out the form, call your health plan or Healthy Connections at **1-888-549-0820 (TTY 1-888-842-3620)**.

It's easy: updating your contact information

Do we have your current address?
Did your phone number change?
Let us know:

- **Step 1:** Log in to our Member Portal. To access the Member Portal online, go to www.selecthealthofsc.com. Select **Members** at the top, then click on **Sign in to the Member Portal**. Follow the steps if you have not already registered.
- **Step 2:** Update and confirm your information.
- **Step 3:** Call Healthy Connections at **1-888-549-0820** or go to apply.scdhhs.gov to change or add your address, email, or phone number. Or visit your local eligibility office. Note: For changes to take place, Healthy Connections needs the same information that is in our Member Portal.

You can also update your information on our mobile app! Find the app in the Google Play™ store or Apple App Store®. Search for FCSH Mobile.



“I love knowing she will be safer around the water.”

—Brandi, parent of a First Choice member who is taking swim lessons

Extra Benefits offer support, in and out of the pool

As a parent of a First Choice member, Brandi was exploring First Choice Extra Benefits online when she discovered swim lessons. First Choice

vouchers allow qualifying members to take swim lessons at regional YMCA locations. She knew this would be a perfect fit for her daughter Marleigh.

“She loves to be around water,” said Brandi. “And I love knowing Marleigh will be safer around the water. It has been great for both of us.”

Marleigh is excited about her lessons each week because she’s meeting new friends. Together, they learn swimming techniques

and other skills. When asked about her experience learning to swim, Marleigh responded, “I love the water! Swimming is fantastic!”

Mom agrees. “I really like that First Choice is offering a physical sport that supports healthy habits,” said Brandi. “And it’s available all year, not just during the summer months.” She also appreciates that, “Marleigh is building confidence and eager to learn. The swim lessons are fostering her independence, and she is learning to follow directions.” She added, “It’s a great tool to have before she goes to summer camps or on trips

with others.” And now Marleigh can safely join her older brother, who already knows how to swim, in the water.

We have more!

First Choice offers all the standard Medicaid benefits plus Extra Benefits to help keep your family healthy! To learn more about swim lesson vouchers and other Extra Benefits, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com. Click on **Learn about our Extra Benefits**.

If you need help, call First Choice Member Services at **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**. We can help answer your questions.

Give your baby a healthy start

When you are pregnant, everything you do affects your unborn baby. This is why you need to let your health care providers know as soon as you think you are pregnant. Be sure to tell First Choice, too.

You should start having regular checkups, called prenatal visits. At your first visit, your provider should give you an exam and ask you about your health. They may also do tests to rule out health problems. At later visits, your provider will check to see how you are doing and how your baby is growing.

Here are more ways the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says you can help your unborn baby grow and be healthy:

- Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet. Ask your provider what you should eat and avoid.
- Take prenatal vitamins if your provider tells you to.
- Do not smoke. If you do smoke, ask your provider to help you quit.
- Do not spend time with people who are smoking. Their smoke hurts unborn babies, too.
- Do not drink alcohol or take illegal drugs. If you need help to stop, talk with your provider.

- Do not start any medicine, even over-the-counter products, unless your provider says it's safe.

Talk about these topics with your provider. Ask for help if you need it.

"5 Tips to Reduce the Risk of Birth Defects," American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/prenatal/Pages/reduce-the-risk-of-birth-defects.aspx. "Nutrition and Exercise During Pregnancy," AAP, www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/prenatal/Pages/Nutrition-and-Exercise-During-Pregnancy.aspx.

Taking care of moms

First Choice has benefits to support pregnant and new moms. Visit www.selecthealthofsc.com. Click on **Members, Benefits,** and then **Additional benefits** for more information about:

- Care Managers available through our Bright Start® prenatal program.
- Regional baby showers with car seats, diaper bags, and more.*
- Home-delivered meals for new moms.**
- Electric breast pumps for new and expectant moms.**
- Diaper Days for children ages 0 – 30 months.*

*For qualifying members, while supplies last. **Conditions apply; see website.

Take control of your allergies

If you sneeze so much that you just might buy stock in Kleenex, you may suffer from seasonal allergies. This is also known as hay fever or allergic rhinitis. The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI) explains that our immune system causes this condition when it overreacts to a substance that is usually not harmful. It releases a chemical called histamine, which triggers your symptoms.

The things that set off your allergies are called allergens. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) says tree pollen is a common allergen from March through May. Mulberry and willow trees are just 2 types that trigger symptoms. Grass and weed pollen can also cause symptoms, says the AAFA.



Symptoms

Depending on what your triggers are, seasonal allergies can come about in the spring, summer, or fall. The AAFA says some common symptoms include:

- Sneezing.
- Runny or stuffy nose.
- Itchy nose, mouth, throat, or skin.
- Itchy or watery eyes.

Treatment

Having allergies does not mean you have to suffer. One of the most helpful things you can do is avoid the things that make your symptoms flare. You can:

- Check local pollen counts. When counts are high, stay indoors or reduce your outdoor activity. Pollen counts are usually highest on hot, dry, windy days.
- Ask someone else to mow the lawn, pull weeds, and do other outdoor chores. Wear a dust mask when you do yardwork.

- Wash your skin and hair when you are done with outdoor activities. Put on clean clothes.
- Keep your windows closed in your car and home. Use air conditioning instead.
- Clean the filters on air conditioners often. Replace them as needed.

Over-the-counter (OTC) medicines may help ease your symptoms. The AAAAI says many of them work better if you start taking them before pollen counts are high and your symptoms start. Talk with your health care provider about which medicines might work best for you. People with more severe reactions may need a prescription medicine or other treatment from their providers.

Do you need extra support?

First Choice offers the Breathe Easy program at no cost to members with asthma. To learn more, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com. Click on **Members**, then **Staying healthy**. Click on **Care management**.



Drug/medicine updates

For up-to-date pharmacy information, visit

www.selecthealthofsc.com.

This includes changes approved by the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee. This committee meets 4 times a year. Committee members vote on changes to the preferred drug list, including which medicines to add or remove. The website also includes:

- Preferred drug list updates. These are in the **Member tools** area of the website.
- New prior authorization criteria and procedures for submitting a prior authorization request. Click on **Benefits**, then **Prescription benefits**. Finally, click **Prior approvals and authorizations**.
- Pharmacy benefit restrictions. Find these by clicking **Benefits** and then **Prescription benefits**.
- Drug recall information. Find this in the **Information for you** section.



Reduce asthma triggers

Did you know that pollen can cause asthma symptoms to start or get worse? The American Lung Association (ALA) warns that other common triggers include:

- Air pollution, like smog and car fumes.
- Animals with fur or feathers.
- Colds, flu, and other illnesses.
- Exercise, including swimming and walking.
- Molds found indoors or outdoors.
- Pests, such as dust mites and cockroaches.
- Smoke from cigarettes, campfires, and more.
- Some OTC and prescription medicines.
- Strong emotions, like anger, stress, and fear.

- Strong smells from cleaning products, candles, and more.
- Weather, such as storms and temperature changes.

Removing asthma triggers can help reduce asthma flare-ups in children and adults. The ALA says this can help you use less quick-relief medicine and stay out of the emergency room.

When you can't avoid a trigger, limit your exposure to it. Ask your provider if you should use quick-relief medicine to prevent an asthma attack when you can't avoid a trigger. To learn more about asthma and how to manage it, visit www.lung.org/asthma.

How Well Do You Know YOUR FIRST CHOICE HEALTH PLAN?

Quick-reference information for getting health care, prescriptions, and member service.

FirstChoiceSM
by Select Health of South Carolina

Your Hometown Health Plan

Healthy Connections 

HEALTH CARE APPOINTMENTS



PLAN WELL VISITS with your primary care provider (PCP) **4 to 6 weeks** in advance.

URGENT CARE

(sick visits) at your PCP should be available within **48 hours** of calling for an appointment.



A SPECIALIST should be able to be seen **within 12 weeks** of asking for an appointment.

Ask your PCP about

WALK-IN VISITS and **after-hours care.**



REMEMBER!

- Arrive **early.**
- Bring **both** your Healthy Connections and First ChoiceSM ID cards.
- If you **cannot** make your appointment, call your provider to cancel.
- Bring a list of all **medicines** you are currently taking.



Some health care services require **PRIOR AUTHORIZATION.**

Your provider will submit this request.

- Decision for a standard request can take up to **14 calendar days.**
- Decision for an urgent request can take up to **72 hours** after it is received.
- If the request is denied, you and your provider will get a denial letter with an explanation and appeal rights.



PRESCRIPTIONS

There is generally **NO MONTHLY LIMIT** to how many prescriptions you can have (certain medicines have limitations).

Some medicines require a **prior authorization.** Your provider will submit this request.

Ask your provider to **check the list of preferred drugs** on our website to see if a prior authorization is needed.

For medicines that need a prior authorization, you may get **72-hour temporary supply** from your pharmacy while the request is pending.* A decision for drug prior authorization can take up to **24 hours.**

*A member is permitted one temporary supply per prescription number. Inhalers, diabetic test strip and supplies, and creams or lotions are exceptions to the supply limit because of how they are packaged. For those medicines, the member may receive the smallest package size available.



MEMBER SERVICE

LET US HELP! WE ARE HERE FOR YOU.

We can help you **SCHEDULE** a provider visit.

We can answer **BENEFIT QUESTIONS.**

LET US KNOW if you wait longer than **45 minutes** from your appointment time.

We can help you get your covered **MEDICINES FILLED.** Call Member Services for help before you leave the pharmacy.

We can help you **ARRANGE TRANSPORTATION** to get to and from provider visits or to pick up your covered medicine from a pharmacy.

MEMBER SERVICES: 1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)

24-HOUR NURSE CALL LINE: 1-800-304-5436

Please see your Member Handbook at **www.selecthealthofsc.com** for complete and detailed information.



How to sign up for a no-cost Care Management program

We have Care Managers who do outreach by phone to help you get and stay healthy. Our Care Management programs are designed to help with pregnancy, long-term illnesses, injuries, and mental health conditions. We have health programs for asthma, pregnancy, heart problems, and diabetes. There are many ways you can join these programs, provided to you at no cost.

You can ask your primary care provider (PCP) to enroll you, or you can refer yourself. Just call us at **1-888-276-2020** and select the options for **Rapid Response/Care Management**. You can also contact us by sending a secure email from the **Contact** page on our website, and someone will respond within 24 hours, Monday through Friday. Or log in to the Member Portal and go to **Enroll in a special program**. We can:

- Give you or your authorized caregiver your health evaluation.
- Help you get covered medicines and covered medically needed equipment and supplies.
- Arrange for rides.
- Communicate some information by 2-way texting* if you or your caregiver, who is authorized to receive your health information, opts in.
- Find specialists and more.

First Choice is proud to support South Carolina families receiving Foster Care services. Members who are in Foster Care, and their Foster Parents, are automatically enrolled in a Care Management program and must participate. All other members can choose not to participate and opt out of any Care Management program by calling Member Services or their care manager.

*The secure email inbox is not monitored 24 hours per day and should not be used to report a medical emergency. In the event of a medical emergency, call 911.

**Standard messaging and data fees may apply.

Some people may have multiple health issues and would benefit from a Complex Care Management program. If you are a member who feels you would benefit from such a program, you can be referred by a health care provider, a discharge planner, a Care Manager who works in 1 of the programs listed here, or a caregiver. Or you can refer yourself. Just call us at **1-888-276-2020** and select the options for **Rapid Response/Care Management**.

Want to learn more about these conditions and get tips on how to get and stay healthy? Join 1 of these programs:


heart**first**
For members
with heart disease.


breathe**easy**
For members
with asthma.


in**control**
For members
with diabetes.


BRIGHTSTART
For pregnant
members.



Cardiac rehab can help more than your heart

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stresses that **cardiac rehabilitation (rehab) is an important part of healing after a heart attack.** These programs can help you live longer, prevent future heart problems, and more. For example, they can help:

- Ease depression and anxiety.
- Improve your ability to exercise.
- Return you to your daily activities.

The programs are not only for people who had a heart attack. Cardiac rehab may also help those with heart failure or chronic stable angina, or who had bypass surgery or angioplasty.



Did you know cardiac rehab is a covered benefit? Please ask your provider for more information.

Benefit Updates

Cochlear implants: Effective January 1, 2024, cochlear implant coverage includes members 21 and older who meet medical necessity.

Mobile Optometry Services (Eye Care): Additional coverage is provided for optometry services received via mobile units on site at public schools for students enrolled in Healthy Connections (Medicaid).

Contraceptives (Birth Control): Do you need family planning support, but your provider's next available appointment is months away? Now you can go to your local pharmacy. Ask if one of their pharmacists is certified in consulting with you about family plans and prescribing oral contraceptives, if needed. This would mean you do not need to wait to see your provider.

For more information about these benefit updates, call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**.

Use your benefits the right way

At First Choice, we work with you and your primary care provider (PCP) to make sure your benefits are used the right and most cost-efficient way. First Choice makes decisions based on the care, the services, and your coverage.

We do not give rewards or money to our staff, providers, or anyone else for denying, limiting, or delaying health care coverage or services. Please call Member Services to ask about specific services and benefits that First Choice covers.

Do you have questions about a pending authorization or denial? We are here to help with utilization management concerns during and after normal business hours. We also have no-cost TTY and language services for members. Please call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

Online resources for you

Go to www.selecthealthofsc.com to find resources like the Member Handbook, Copayment Reference Guide, and online Provider Directory for your First Choice plan. Under **Information for you**, click on **Member rights and responsibilities** to see a detailed list of this information.

If you need printed copies of these items, call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**. Also, check our website for notices of any temporary benefit changes related to extreme weather, such as hurricanes, or public health emergencies.

What is health care fraud and abuse?



There are many types of fraud and abuse. These can include when doctors bill for services you did not get or bill the wrong way on purpose to get paid more. Or when people use member ID cards that are not theirs or people who are not supposed to get coverage are on a health plan. To help, you can:

- Check your Explanation of Benefits (EOB), if you have received one, to help make sure all information is right.
- Protect your health plan card and private information at all times.
- Only share your Medicaid ID number or Social Security number if you have confirmed who you are speaking with and they are acting in an official role related to your health care.
- Count your pills each time you pick up medicine to make sure you get the amount prescribed. If the amount is not correct, tell your pharmacist. If you get too few pills on more than 1 occasion, report it as directed here (at right).

Report it: If you think someone is abusing the Medicaid system, you should report it. Your report can be anonymous, if you choose. Call any of these numbers:

- Select Health Fraud Tip Hotline (to report fraud, waste, or abuse): **1-866-833-9718**.
- Select Health Compliance Hotline (secure and confidential 24 hours a day, 7 days a week): **1-800-575-0417**.
- South Carolina's Division of Program Integrity Fraud and Abuse Hotline: **1-888-364-3224**.

Email South Carolina's Division of Program Integrity: **fraudres@scdhhs.gov**. Or **mail a letter** to:

- Special Investigations Unit
200 Stevens Drive, Mail Stop 13A
Philadelphia, PA 19113
- SC Fraud Hotline Division of Program Integrity
P.O. Box 100210
Columbia, SC 29202-3210

If your primary language is not English, language services are available to you, free of charge. Call **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.

Llame al **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

First Choice is here for you! This newsletter and other materials are translated into Spanish and can be found on our website at www.selecthealthofsc.com. If you need help with translations of other documents, or in other languages, please call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**.

Disponibilidad de traducción

¡First Choice está aquí para usted! Este boletín informativo y otros materiales están traducidos al español, y se pueden encontrar en nuestro sitio de Internet en www.selecthealthofsc.com. Si necesita ayuda con traducciones de otros documentos, o en otros idiomas, llame a Servicios al Miembro al **1-888-276-2020**.

www.selecthealthofsc.com

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Mocktail: Citrus Ginger Fizz

Ingredients

Juice of 2 oranges
(about 1 cup)
Juice of 1 lemon
(about ¼ cup)
2-inch piece of fresh
ginger, peeled and
finely grated
1 – 2 tablespoons
honey (to taste)
Ice cubes
Soda water
A few fresh mint
leaves (optional)
Orange and lemon slices
for garnish (optional)

Directions

In a pitcher, combine the orange and lemon juices and freshly grated ginger. Add honey and stir until it is fully dissolved.

Fill 2 glasses halfway with ice cubes, then pour in the juice mixture. Top off the glasses with soda water. Stir gently to combine.

Optional: Lightly roll a few leaves of fresh mint between your palms. Add them to each glass. Garnish with orange and lemon slices (see photo).

Per serving

Serves 2. Each serving size is about 8 ounces and provides: 113 calories, 0 g total fat (0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 21 mg sodium, 29 g total carbohydrate, 0 g dietary fiber, 24 g total sugars (13 g added sugars), and 1 g protein.



First Choice Member Services
P.O. Box 40849
Charleston, SC 29423



Member Services:
1-888-276-2020
TTY for the hearing impaired:
1-888-765-9586



@firstchoicebyselecthealth



@firstchoicebyselecthealth



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Download **FCSH Mobile** app from
Google Play™ or Apple App Store®.

FirstChoiceSM
by Select Health of South Carolina
Your Hometown Health Plan

Healthy Connections 