

The results are in!

At Medica, we are committed to continuously improving the way we interact and communicate with our provider network. Therefore, Medica implemented the Provider Review process to focus on improving relationships and building more committed partnerships.

As part of this process, Medica employees interviewed 64 provider representatives from July through October 2003. When we completed our Provider Reviews, we promised to keep you informed as we developed action plans to address your concerns. This brochure is the first step. It reflects the consolidated feedback from the interviews we completed.

The interviews were conducted using a structured interview guide, customized specifically for Medica. This guide was designed to measure a variety of topics based on the following five performance indicators: Service Quality, Ease of Doing Business, Communication, Clinical Programs, and Partnering.

This brochure summarizes provider feedback in two ways:

First, we have highlighted the areas where you have recognized us for good performance. Your positive comments will encourage us to keep doing well in these areas.

Second, we have taken your improvement suggestions and developed an action plan to address each area. Some of the actions have already been taken and others will be implemented in the near future.

Thank you for contributing your valuable time and input. We are committed to using your feedback as we work to continuously improve health outcomes and administrative processes.

Sincerely,



Ted Loftness, M.D.

Vice President and Medical Director of Provider Relations

AREAS OF RECOGNITION

Many of you recognized the following aspects of our service to you as positive. Your comments will motivate us to continue to excel in these areas.

Claims Process

We take pride in being able to meet your claims needs. Many of you appreciate the timely payment of claims and Medica's management of the claims process. Some comments you had were:

"Claims turnaround time, accuracy, and submission are going a lot better."

"You manage claims well. We get paid quickly."

"Your claims processing and turnaround time is fantastic."

"Electronic submission of claims is easy, claims are turned around quickly, and you don't send back a lot of claims."

Communication

You recognized us for our high level of communication. You like the *Connections* newsletter and you share the newsletter with others in your organization. Also, you appreciate senior management's effort to come out and meet with providers. Some comments you had were:

"I like Connections. We make copies and distribute it to everyone who is affected."

"Having the 'ear' of Medica has improved. It feels like Medica is paying attention."

"The Connections bulletin is great."

"Connections is pretty good and helpful. It's practical, with things like coding information, etc."

Improvements to the Contracting Process

We appreciate your recognition of the improvement in our contracting process. You think the process has improved from past years. You appreciate Medica being amicable and reasonable throughout the process. You said:

"The contracting process has become smoother and collaborative."

"The most recent contracting process we worked through fairly well."

"The contracting process is easy and appropriate – we're satisfied."

"We had a good, honest contracting discussion."

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

One of our goals in conducting these interviews was to better understand the areas where we can improve. We were especially interested to learn what we can do to improve our working relationship with you. Your suggestions and concerns are truly valued. Based on your input, we have identified the following priorities for action.

Improve Relationship/Partnership With Providers; Establish More Regular Meetings and Increase the Amount of Face-to-Face Communication

Providers said they would like to be partners with Medica. Some of you felt that Medica was not interested in being a partner. You want to have a relationship with Medica and work toward common goals such as clinical programs and quality initiatives that help providers serve Medica members. You requested that Medica spend more time meeting with you face-to-face. You feel that the overall relationship and communications would improve with regular meetings. You said:

“You don’t see us as a partner. There’s a ‘don’t bother us’ attitude as long as we pay you.”

“Face-to-face communication is needed to discuss the implementation and implications of new programs.”

“At least two meetings a year need to take place between the contract manager and the business office team.”

Action Plans

- Structured meetings with the Vice President and Medical Director of Provider Relations and a contracting representative will be scheduled with you during the first half of 2004. The purpose of these meetings is to address your issues and to determine a plan for building a stronger partnership.
 - A process will be developed to follow up and communicate the progress of issues raised at these meetings.
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OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT *(continued)*

Clinical Programs

Providers indicated that they are not always aware of Medica's clinical programs. Understanding the health plan's role in offering disease management and other clinical programs is important to you. Some comments you had were:

"Educate us on what your clinical programs are. Give us a better understanding of the spectrum of programs you have to offer."

"You somehow need to bring the clinic and physicians into the loop and provide more exposure on your disease management programs."

"We would like to partner with you and work on improving quality and outcome measurements."

Action Plans

- Medica is committed to communicating our clinical programs in a format that meets your needs and reaches the appropriate audiences within your provider offices. We will work with you to identify who within your clinic offices should receive information on our clinical programs.
 - Medica is launching a new initiative with performance-based incentives to provide financial rewards to those providers driving care improvements and achieving evidence-based outcomes.
 - Medica is developing training and education programs that will be offered through a "Provider College." The education programs will support our disease management and quality improvement initiatives. Watch for more information on the "Provider College" early this summer.
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OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT *(continued)*

Improve the Contracting Process

Although we were recognized for the quality of our contracting process, some of you had improvement suggestions for us. Your comments were:

“Cumbersome contracting process due to new Medica staff.”

“Contract negotiations – come up with ways to benefit both of us.”

“The contracting process is one-sided. We need more collaboration between the two organizations.”

Action Plans

- Medica is committed to clearly defining contracting parameters to simplify and standardize our contracts with providers. For example, we are beginning to discontinue the Geographic Practice Cost Index (GPCI) as part of our payment methodology.
- Medica plans to evaluate, develop and implement a best-of-practice negotiation approach for our contracting process by the end of the year.
- Medica will continue to work with, and communicate our contracting efforts to the Minnesota Medical Association.

Offer One Point of Contact; Ensure Providers Know Who to Call

Many of you mentioned your frustration with not having a single point of contact within Medica. The previous field representative position led to bottlenecks within our system. Medica’s new philosophy is to dedicate our efforts and resources to ensure consistently high levels of performance, thereby preventing problems before they happen. Self-service resources, tools, and other transactional applications are available to you and your offices in the “Provider Resources” section of www.medica.com. These resources and tools include Points of Contact reference lists, Provider Alerts, credentialing forms, and more. Your operational success is our success, and our operational success leads to your success. Let’s keep working together.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

We welcome your comments and continued suggestions.
We encourage you to provide feedback on how we are doing
by contacting:

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