



SENIOR WHOLE HEALTH

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We are on the web at  
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## South Cove Community Health Center; A Valuable Resource for Frail Elders

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committed to caring for their patients, especially those who are frail and elderly. For example, South Cove staff ensures that when referring patients for hospital services, the hospital knows in advance that a patient will need interpretation services.

Through one phone call, South Cove clinicians and/or office staff contact SWH to put community or home-

based services into place or coordinate transportation to and from appointments. Patients love to know that these services are a phone call away. The front office staff believes "[the collaboration with SWH] is a valuable service to our elderly community."

SWH has supported many of South Cove's initiatives, including having RNs who speak Chinese dialects be available to patients and their family members. This goes a long way toward achieving better outcomes for patients and the clinicians see better compliance as a result.

## Seeking Your Involvement

Senior Whole Health is seeking physicians and nurse practitioners to participate in our monthly Medical Advisory Committee (MAC). The MAC meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM at SWH's Cambridge office.

Primary responsibility consists of reviewing Quality Management and Credentialing materials. Dinner and an honorarium are provided. If interested, please contact Anne Feierstein, Director, Quality Management at 617-252-6320 or [afeierstein@seniorwholehealth.com](mailto:afeierstein@seniorwholehealth.com).

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# PROVIDER INSIDER

## How Will the Cost Containment Debate on Beacon Hill Impact SWH



There has been a flurry of media coverage of the health care cost containment legislation introduced by Governor Patrick. In turn I have been asked by providers how this will impact Senior Whole Health.

In the short run probably not much. The Governor's initiative is aimed at reducing health care costs for businesses. That means that the cost containment issues will be directed at how much insurance companies pay providers for people they cover through employer groups.

All of SWH members that providers see are eligible for Medicare and Medicaid. Medicare and Medicaid pay SWH a monthly premium based on the historic fee for service (FFS) trends. Unless the resulting legislation specifically addresses Medicaid payments there will be no direct impact. State legislation would have no impact on Medicare spending which is a federal entitlement program.

However, ultimately if the Governor's bill is adopted and/or cost containment initiatives that have been unleashed as a result of federal health

care reform in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) of 2010 change the standard fee for service reimbursement system then, ultimately SWH and you as participating providers will probably adopt and conform to that new system.

For the last few decades one would observe that as Medicare goes so goes the rest of health care. When Medicare adopted DRG reimbursement for hospitals it became the standard for private payers as well. When Medicare introduced a relative value based physician fee schedule in 1992, replacing the usual and customary reimbursement process, it was quickly adopted by the private insurers.

It is far more likely that reimbursement changes coming from Medicare will have more impact than changes adopted at a state level. However, Massachusetts is in an interesting and unique position. Many would argue that health care reform in Massachusetts has been a two step affair. Step one was the adoption in 2006 of the Chapter 58 reforms and its centerpiece individual mandate to have health insurance as the way to reduce the number of uninsured. This has resulted in over 98 percent of Massachusetts citizens now being insured. Step two is what Governor Patrick is addressing: health care cost containment.

The PPACA addresses the uninsured with a similar model as Chapter 58, namely an individual mandate to have health insurance. It is possible to imagine Massachusetts health care cost containment legislation providing a similar model for federal action, particularly if the individual mandate survives various court challenges. The nation would then look again to Massachusetts for a model for cost containment; assuming legislation has been adopted that is as effective as Chapter 58 was in meeting the goal of reducing the number of uninsured citizens.



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## It's That Time of Year.

### SWH is updating its provider records.

In August, a provider data form will be mailed to you requesting verification of the information we have on file for your practice.

Having accurate provider demographic information will enable us to continue accurate claims payments and will help ensure your practice is listed correctly in the SWH provider directory.

SWH is requesting a clinical fax number if it's different than the office fax number as well as a corporate email address.

Thank you in advance for your support in this initiative.

*John Baackes—CEO*

## Meet our Quality Manager – Nathalie Nopakun

Nathalie Nopakun joined SWH in 2008 as the Quality Manager and works collaboratively with departments throughout SWH to ensure the quality and efficacy of care and resources for members while in compliance with federal and state regulations. Prior to joining SWH, Nathalie worked in Quality and Compliance for 6 years at BMC HealthNet.



Advisory Committee, Quality Management Committee (QMC) and Senior Management in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the SWH Model of Care. She partners with departments throughout the organization to identify any opportunities for improvement.

As the quality and compliance subject matter expert, Nathalie assists in the design and implementation of training curriculum focused on communication protocols, use of SWH adopted clinical documentation tools; quality management guidelines and measures of care standards to orient new and existing personnel.

Tracking quality of care incidents to identify opportunities for improvement in care delivery to SWH members is an important function of Nathalie's role. She works to improve the health status of Provider's members with chronic conditions by analyzing member

health status data to assist in developing quality improvement programs. These programs provide mechanisms to support members and practitioners in the management of their chronic conditions.

Nathalie coordinates and works collaboratively with the Medical

## PCP Access Survey Results Bode Well for SWH Members

With all the press these days about access challenges relative to primary care, it is heartening to know that SWH PCPs are reporting favorable waiting periods for urgent and routine appointments. In the fourth quarter of 2010 SWH Provider Relations staff conducted its annual telephonic survey of 400 PCPs on three essential elements of access to primary care: 1) urgent care, 2) routine care, and 3) after-hours access to physician consultation.

Over 85% of surveyed practitioners responded, and the results are excellent; participating providers exceeded SWH's compliance goal for every category!

Being a self-reported survey, SWH was obligated to validate the results using other sources of information, namely

the annual member satisfaction survey, analysis of access-related member complaints, and after-hours calls to providers (to verify after-hours access). The results of these additional items corroborated the provider survey results.

Thank you to all providers who participated in the survey. More over, thank you for the services you provide to your SWH member patients.

	Percent Meeting Standard (n=342)
Urgent Care (≤ 48 Hours)	100%
Routine Care (≤ 30 Days)	97%
After-Hours Care 24-Hour Access	97%

## South Cove Community Health Center; A Valuable Resource for Frail Elders

Primary Care Providers are key providers in the Senior Whole Health network and are a vital link in maintaining the health and well-being of vulnerable patients. Our partnership with physicians and nurses in the community health center setting is the cornerstone of our success. SWH places a high value on the work done by these clinicians and appreciates the difference they make in the lives of our members.

South Cove Community Health Center, with locations in Boston and Quincy, and serving the "underserved Asians in Massachusetts," is a shining example of this partnership. South Cove has been collaborating with SWH over the last 4 years and now boasts 669 SWH members! Staff at South Cove is

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## Pharmacy Corner

Prepared By: Gayle Ditcher, PharmD

In addition to our internal team, SWH uses Outcomes, a company that contracts with local pharmacists to do medication reviews and provide education to our members. Following are examples of the types of things they do:

While consulting with an Outcomes-covered patient at Dorchester House Clinical Pharmacy in Dorchester, Outcomes Personal Pharmacist, Rebekah Sherman, identified an opportunity to improve patient care. When questioned about insulin administration, the patient reported using the short acting insulin after meals instead of before meals as prescribed.



Rebekah educated the patient about proper short acting insulin administration and the patient will likely benefit by seeing improved post-prandial glucose readings and a reduced risk of hypoglycemia.

At Walgreens 03151 in Worcester, Outcomes Personal Pharmacist Beth McDonagh, recognized a gap

in patient knowledge. The patient was prescribed an inhaler that was to be administered twice daily, however, the patient was not separating the two doses as intended. Beth educated the patient that by separating the doses there would be improved efficacy from the inhaler therapy and better disease control.

You can request that an Outcomes pharmacist do a comprehensive medical review or a specific educational review for your patients. Please just call the SWH pharmacy department to request this service. This is no cost to you or your patient.

## SWH Provides Essential Medication Management Resources

SWH members take an average of 7 medications daily usually prescribed by at least 2 clinicians. It is no wonder that elders experience medication side effects, drug interactions, drug misadventures, and adherence issues. The SWH Pharmacy Department is available to assist clinicians with medication management through a number of processes that include bringing issues or potential issues to your attention, making a recommendation for a change in drug therapy, offering medication adherence systems to patients, facilitating counseling for patients with a local pharmacist, and assisting you with coordination of care.

In the past, SWH participated in a retrospective review program (Retro DUR), which is an auto-generated

communication based on specific algorithms. Many providers expressed concerns that the information received was not always relevant or actionable. SWH heard your concerns and discontinued the program. At present, when you receive a letter/fax from the SWH Pharmacy Department, a clinical pharmacist has reviewed that particular issue in the context of the clinical information available to SWH. This information may include your clinical notes, PCP Assessments, and other relevant information that you provided to SWH. For example, we may see from your clinical notes that you started a patient on a Statin, but review of our pharmacy data demonstrates that the medication was never filled. This information would be included in our review prior to contacting you.

The SWH Pharmacy Department serves as a resource to providers for medication management. Please contact us regarding an education referral for face-to-face member education with a pharmacist, a medication profile, help in getting a patient on special packaging, or a clinical medication review.

The SWH team of pharmacists is lead by Gayle Dichter, Director of Pharmacy, and includes Joseph DaSilva, Andrea Luisi, and Joely Graber. Our staff works with Northeastern University, Rhode Island College of Pharmacy and Albany College of Pharmacy, and actively trains new pharmacists. Please feel free to contact us at 617-252-6366 or [pharmacy@seniorwholehealth.com](mailto:pharmacy@seniorwholehealth.com).