



# FCH

# PROVIDER NEWSLETTER

## SPRING 2021

### The Impact of COVID and Deferred Care

As COVID-19 began to sweep the country, healthcare leaders raced to expand capacity and stay ahead of the demand curve by canceling elective procedures. The financially deleterious effects of this decision on our nation's hospitals are well-documented, but the longer-term implications for our delivery system remain far more uncertain.

Early domestic and international data suggests that these decisions may have a profound effect on patients and the delivery system. **Dramatic reductions in cancer detection and increases in diabetic foot amputations during COVID-19 are two narrow, but perhaps emblematic, examples of the damaging effects of deferring care.** But beyond clinical care, the pandemic also has forced providers to make decisions about investments and operations that may not contribute to improving the U.S. healthcare system over the long term.

The major clinical, financial and operational implications of COVID-19-related care deferrals for those who pay for, deliver and consume healthcare are reflected in the perspectives of healthcare leaders who are shaping their organizations' tactical and strategic responses to the post-COVID-19 care delivery reality. **The comments of these leaders, gleaned from dozens of conversations and research conducted between March and September, shed light on the early successes that leading organizations have achieved in preparing to address these issues.** They also provide practical advice to other healthcare executives in responding to what will likely be the defining healthcare theme of 2021.

Click here to read the full article: <https://www.hfma.org/topics/financial-sustainability/article/the-crisis-within-the-crisis--preparing-for-the-wave-of-covid-19.html>

### New Telehealth Service Recommendations

Last month, the Oregon Health Leadership Council published a document on "Clinical best practice guidance for adult primary care", to provide guidance to primary care providers in determining whether an adult patient's condition is clinically appropriate for telehealth care. In general, providers should continue to exercise clinical judgement, taking into account clinical considerations such as cognitive capacity of the patient, geographic distance to the nearest emergency facility, patient's support system, potential for disease exposure, and patient's current medical status. In addition to outlining typical telehealth principals, the documents includes recommendations and considerations for:

- Chronic condition management
- Routine care
- Acute symptoms
- Behavioral health (adult patients with non-emergent symptoms)
- Implementing successful telehealth services

The full document is available here: <http://www.orhealthleadershipcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Telehealth-Service-Recommendations-Final.pdf>



## New VP of Health Systems Partnerships



First Choice Health is pleased to announce the hire of Troy Williams as its Vice President of Health System Partnerships. In his new role, Williams will help lead our efforts in creating partnerships with clinically integrated networks (CINs) aimed at making healthcare more accessible and affordable for individuals in a growing number of states.

Troy previously served as the Vice President of Employer Solutions for Vanderbilt University, which is regarded nationally as an innovator of health services. At Vanderbilt, he was responsible for the school's statewide clinically integrated network (CIN) product as well as partnering with Aetna, UnitedHealthcare, and Cigna. Prior to Vanderbilt, Troy worked for GE Healthcare and Unisyn, where he was the Vice President of Service Sales.

"Troy is perfect for this role because he understands how to message the value of clinically integrated networks to health systems, brokers, and employers," said FCH CEO Jaja Okigwe. "His experience with Vanderbilt will help First Choice Health open doors to provider systems who may not know about us, and we look forward to the results he'll bring to our organization."

"Throughout my career, I've examined different ways for providers and employers to collaborate, looking at goals and incentives from each perspective and ultimately providing better value in healthcare delivery," Williams said. "This mission aligns perfectly with the work First Choice Health has been doing with clinically integrated networks, and I'm eager to join this initiative that will really show a tangible difference for members."

FCH is focused on the delivery of exceptional healthcare products to the employer market in the Northwest, Mountain West and the Great Plains. Our high-touch, high-tech direct-to-employer products are centered on serving members and patients with increased value, enhanced access and unparalleled customer support.

## We need you!

### Mental Health Providers Needed

First Choice Health EAP is designed to be convenient for our providers and clients. We work to learn your practice to offer the best referrals by matching specialty, age range, office hours, insurance, and more. You choose to accept or decline appropriate referrals.

EAP clients typically have up to 3 sessions available and can be self-referred afterward. Our billing paperwork is simple and we typically reimburse within a week of receiving payment.

**For more information and to join the network:**

[www.fchn.com/Providers/JoinEapMapPap](http://www.fchn.com/Providers/JoinEapMapPap)

## How Supervisors Can Support Their Employees' Mental Health

Understanding how supervisors can support their employees' mental health has evolved drastically over the past year as the pandemic continues to take a toll across the country. When employees are healthy and engaged, they are more likely to be productive in the workplace and have a positive impact. By making employee mental health a priority, managers play a role in creating a supportive professional environment where people can bring their best selves to work.

We share five ways that managers can support their employees to help ensure a healthy workplace where people feel able to exceed their goals and feel healthy both in their work and personal life.

**Tip #1: Promote using time off**

**Tip #2: Create a safe space**

**Tip #3: Offer multiple ways to communicate**

**Tip #4: Model preventative self-care**

**Tip #5: Remind employees to use EAP services**

Click here to read the full article: <https://www.fchn.com/Blog/how-supervisors-can-support-their-employees-mental-health>



## Compliance with Surprise Billing Law

Congress has passed a new law, called the No Surprises Act, that seeks to eliminate surprise billing, as well as pursue other consumer protections, such as price transparency. Starting January 1, 2022, the No Surprises Act will serve to protect patients from surprise medical bills from providers elected under employer health plans by putting the burden of negotiating surprise bills between the provider and the plan.

First Choice Health is preparing to change some billing practices in order to comply with the new law and price transparency rules. These changes will affect our payor clients and network providers. Please stay tuned for more detailed communications later in the year.

## Updates & Reminders

### Providence Behavioral Health Services

Please Note: As of January 1, 2021, Providence Health Plans switched to Beacon Health Options. Optum Provider Network and First Choice Health Network are no longer in-network for Behavioral Health services at Providence locations.

## State of the Network

We are pleased to announce that as of May 2021, our network includes 120,145 practitioners, 369 hospitals, and 2,301 ancillary facilities, located across our eight state service area plus Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska.

