

## October 2021 Stakeholder Update



### Healthy Connections Prime is Available Statewide

Effective Jan. 1, 2022, there will be at least one participating Healthy Connections Prime plan in every county in South Carolina! People who live anywhere in the state, including York and Lancaster counties, and are eligible for Healthy Connections Prime can now choose to receive their Medicare and Medicaid benefits from one health plan that offers the benefits of both programs to their members. In many counties, there are two or more plans to choose from. Click [here](#) to access the provider toolkit, which includes a county participation map.

### Health Plan Name Change – Absolute Total Care (Medicare-Medicaid Plan) Will Become Wellcare Prime

One of our Healthy Connections Prime health plans, Absolute Total Care (Medicare-Medicaid Plan), will be changing its name on Jan. 1, 2022. At that time, Absolute Total Care (Medicare-Medicaid Plan) will be known as **Wellcare Prime by Absolute Total Care** (Medicare-Medicaid Plan). The name change to Wellcare Prime will not affect current medical benefits or services for members. As part of the rebranding, Wellcare Prime will have an updated logo, color palette, and member- and provider-facing materials. More information about the name change will be shared with current Absolute Total Care members and providers soon.

### Member Experience Interviews

In December 2020 and January 2021, South Carolina Healthy Connections Medicaid partnered with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to learn more about the experiences of Healthy Connections Prime members. A sample of our members was selected for in-depth member interviews conducted by an independent research firm. Members in urban and rural areas of South Carolina were represented in the sample.

In these conversations, members consistently reported high satisfaction with the program, an overall sense of “being taken care of,” and especially appreciated the outreach from their care coordinator. Some reasons for high satisfaction included peace of mind from full benefits coverage and the health plans’ attention to the members’ health care needs. Participants mostly found it difficult to identify any negatives about their experiences with their Healthy Connections Prime health plan.

Healthy Connections Prime would like to highlight what some members had to say about being a part of Healthy Connections Prime program:

- **Full Program Benefits (including Waivers)** - “Before, I had trouble getting into certain programs and signing up for things that I felt like I needed, but I wasn’t getting them and didn’t know how to go about getting them. Once I got into my Healthy Connections Prime plan, it was much better and I was getting things like food stamps and medicine. Before, I had to pay for medicine and I just couldn’t afford it. They helped me tremendously with that.” –*Member in a rural area*

- **Compassionate Care Providers and Care Coordinators** - “She treats me like a peer. We bounce goals and ideas back and forth, and we come up with a lot more than I would alone. It works really well.” –*Member in an urban area*
- **Access to Medicaid and Medicare Services** - “Now I have health coverage and am able to go to the doctor; if I didn’t have this plan, I would put a lot of things off.” –*Member in a rural area*
- **High-Quality, Affordable Care** - “They call me, and they really seem to be caring people and they keep me alert about what is going on with things that they have. They explain things to you and they are very excellent at that. All I can say is good stuff about them.” –*Member in a rural area*

More information on the Member Experience Interviews can be found in our [Member and Advocate Toolkit](#).

This material as well as others on our website provide valuable information on program benefits and practices. We encourage you to look at the material to learn more about the impact the Healthy Connections Prime program has on its members!

## Flu Season

Flu season is coming up and Healthy Connections Prime wants to remind members and caregivers to get the annual flu vaccine. The flu can be serious for everyone – but for adults age 65 years and older, the risk of flu-related hospitalization and complications is particularly high. According to the CDC, “While seasonal influenza (flu) viruses are detected year-round in the United States, flu viruses are most common during the fall and winter. The exact timing and duration of flu seasons can vary, but influenza activity often begins to increase in October.” To learn more, please click on this [link](#).

## Community Resources

One of our local partners, SC Thrive, has been featured on the **Koko! In the Metro Broadcast** to discuss the different services and resources available in South Carolina, including Healthy Connections Prime. Tune in [here](#) to learn more!

## Other Updates & Recently Posted Documents

Additional program information is available on the Healthy Connections Prime Program Data page. The most recently posted information is linked below.

- [Healthy Connections Prime Monthly Enrollment Dashboards – January to August 2021](#)

## Join the Healthy Connections Prime Distribution List

Requests to join the Healthy Connections Prime email distribution list can be emailed to [prime@scdhhs.gov](mailto:prime@scdhhs.gov) or submitted [at this link](#).

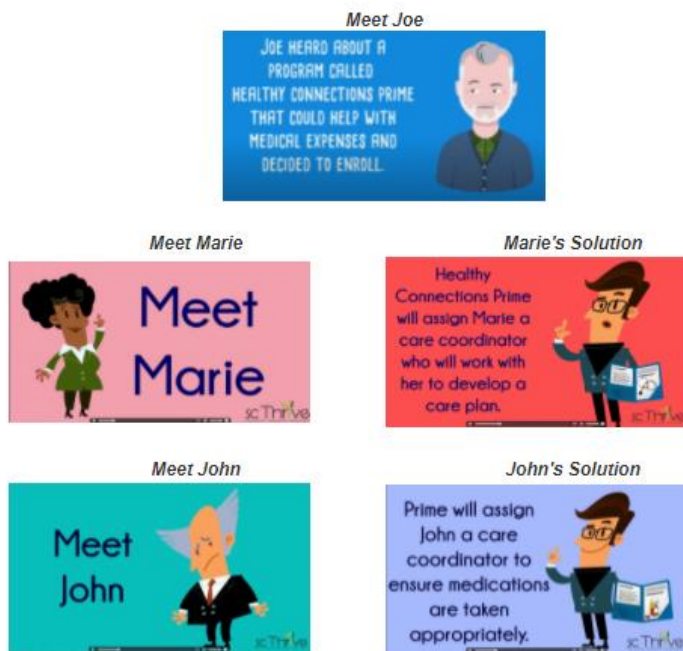
## Request a Presentation for More Information

Providers or organizations that are interested in learning more about Healthy Connections Prime and would like to request a free presentation and/or training session can email [primeproviders@scdhhs.gov](mailto:primeproviders@scdhhs.gov). The email should include your contact information and the desired location and date for the presentation or training.

### For More Information and the Latest News

More information about Healthy Connections Prime can be found on our website at <http://www.scdhhs.gov/prime>. The website contains helpful information such as member FAQs, a provider toolkit and program data.

Our [Member and Advocate Materials page](#) provides numerous resources, such as a plan comparison chart and an explanation of important terms. Also included on this page are short videos that can help caregivers and their loved ones learn more about Healthy Connections Prime. Click on [this link](#) and scroll down to “Interactive Scenarios” to access the videos.



Program questions can be directed to the SC Thrive Customer Service Center at (800) 726-8774, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. TTY users call 711. This call is free. Providers can also email questions to [primeproviders@scdhhs.gov](mailto:primeproviders@scdhhs.gov).