To: AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Providers

Date: July 2, 2020

Subject: Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Screening and Pharmaceutical Treatment Initiative

Summary: Update to providers regarding new CDC recommendations for HCV screening and authorization requirements for Epclusa®.

**Hepatitis C virus (HCV)** is the most common blood-borne disease and the leading cause for liver transplant in the United States (LDH, 2019a). HCV prevalence in Louisiana is estimated at 1.6% to 1.8%, with higher rates among urban residents, men and women aged 45-54 years, with highest rates among males in all age groups and among African American males aged 45-54 years (LA OPH, 2015).

Louisiana ranks fifth in the U.S. for HCV/HIV co-infection; an estimated 6% of individuals with HCV in Louisiana are co-infected with HIV, and 18% of individuals with HIV as a result of intravenous drug use are also diagnosed with HCV co-infection (LA OPH, 2015).

**New CDC Recommendations**

As of April 2020, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) now recommends universal hepatitis C screening at least once in a lifetime for all adults aged 18 and older, as well as screening all pregnant women during each pregnancy.

In addition, the CDC recommends:

- **A one-time hepatitis C testing**, regardless of age, for people with recognized conditions or exposures. (For a complete list of these recognized conditions or exposures, please refer to the CDC’s ABCs for Health Professionals.)
- **Routine periodic testing** for people with ongoing risk factors and any person who requests Hepatitis C testing.

Click to view the CDC’s recommended testing sequence for identifying current hepatitis c virus infection and also the recommended interpretation of test results and further actions.
Epclusa®

As of summer 2019, Healthy Louisiana enrollees have access to safe and effective treatment for hepatitis C. The authorized generic (AG) to which they have access is Epclusa®, which has proven effective in curing 95% of persons living with HCV (LDH, 2019a). Epclusa® is the preferred direct-acting antiviral (DAA) and does not require prior authorization unlike other available treatment regimens (LA Medicaid, 2019).

For more information regarding Epclusa®, please view the Epclusa prescribing information here.

Questions:
Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the care of our members. If you have questions about this communication, please contact AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana’s Provider Services department at 1-888-922-0007 or your Provider Network Management Account Executive.

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Where can I find more information on COVID-19?
AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana has updated its website to streamline communications and important notifications about COVID-19. Please visit http://amerihealthcaritasla.com/covid-19 for update-to-date information for both providers and members, including frequently asked questions, cancellations and postponements, and important provider alerts from AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana and the Louisiana Department of Health.