

## PrEP Provider Toolkit supports health care professionals in HIV prevention efforts

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has unveiled a new PrEP Provider Toolkit to support health care providers in expanding access to pre-exposure prophylaxis, commonly known as PrEP. This initiative is part of Michigan's broader strategy to reduce new HIV infections and empower health care professionals with resources to help protect at-risk populations.

PrEP is a once daily oral medication or long-acting injectable that can reduce the risk of acquiring HIV. When taken consistently, it is over 99% effective in preventing HIV transmission through sexual contact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Despite its effectiveness, barriers such as lack of awareness, stigma, and gaps in provider education have limited its widespread adoption. The CDC recommends that physicians offer PrEP to patients who are HIV negative but at high risk of getting the infection. High-risk populations for HIV infections include men who have sex with men, transgender individuals, people who engage in unprotected sex, individuals with multiple sexual partners, and those who inject drugs.

The PrEP Provider Toolkit aims to bridge these gaps by equipping health care providers with the knowledge and tools necessary to offer this lifesaving intervention. The PrEP Provider Toolkit includes:

- clinical guidelines
- patient education materials
- insurance coverage and billing
- cultural competency training
- summary of PrEP efficacy trials
- patient eligibility criteria
- guide to discussing a patient's sexual health

Health care providers across Michigan are encouraged to utilize the PrEP Provider Toolkit to integrate PrEP into their practices. For more information and to access the PrEP Provider Toolkit, go to [mibluccrosscomplete.com](http://mibluccrosscomplete.com) > Provider Resources > Training, then click on the LGBTQ+ educational material and resources tab. You can also visit the MDHHS HIV and STIs in Michigan website for additional information.

If you have any questions, contact your Blue Cross Complete provider account executive or call Blue Cross Complete Provider Inquiry at 1-888-312-5713.

## Treating Patients with RSV

As respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, continues to impact populations nationwide, health care providers play a critical role in protecting and treating patients. Groups such as infants, children, older adults, and those with underlying health conditions are particularly vulnerable, making prevention and treatment efforts even more vital.

RSV is highly contagious and causes respiratory infections ranging from mild cold-like symptoms to severe illnesses such as bronchiolitis and pneumonia. Most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can be serious. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is the leading cause of hospitalization among young children and can exacerbate conditions like asthma, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, in adults.\*

With seasonal surges typically occurring in the fall and winter, and peaking in January or February, health care systems often face increased patient loads, making prevention and early intervention important. Blue Cross Complete provides the following vaccine coverage for RSV to enrolled members:

- Arexvy and Abrysvo vaccines are available to members and have shown promising results in reducing severe cases. Arexvy is limited to members 60 years and older. Abrysvo is available to members under the age of 60, including infants and children.

o Coverage is also available for pregnant members at 32 through 36 weeks gestational age for the prevention of RSV in infants from birth through six months.

- Nirsevimab, a monoclonal antibody, can be given to infants postnatally to prevent RSV. In all infants younger than eight months who are born during the RSV season or are entering their first RSV season, the CDC recommends one dose of nirsevimab prophylaxis rather than no prophylaxis unless the birthing parent received the RSV vaccination at least 14 days prior to birth.

The CDC recommends all babies be protected from severe RSV by one of two immunization options: Abrysvo or Nirsevimab. Most babies do not need both.

In addition, health care providers are encouraged to discuss preventive options with patients and caregivers. These options include reinforcing the importance of frequent handwashing, covering coughs, and avoiding close contact with sick individuals. Medical professionals are encouraged to identify high-risk patients, including premature infants, individuals with weakened immune systems and older adults with chronic health conditions to provide tailored advice to mitigate exposure risks.

While RSV prevention and treatment requires a coordinated approach, health care providers are at the frontline of RSV management, with opportunities to make a lasting impact through prevention, early treatment, and evidence-based treatment strategies. For more information about RSV, go to [michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://michigan.gov/mdhhs).\* If you have any questions, contact your Blue Cross Complete provider account executive or call Blue Cross Complete Provider Inquiry at 1-888-312-5713.

\*Our website is [mibluccrosscomplete.com](http://mibluccrosscomplete.com). While website addresses for other organizations are provided for reference, Blue Cross Complete doesn't control these sites and isn't responsible for their content.