

PRESS RELEASE

12th February 2015

Bermuda Health Council announces success of Home Medical Services (HMS) Benefit

(Hamilton, Bermuda 12th February 2015) – A pilot health benefit has provided invaluable medical care for patients in their homes, while saving the Island’s health system an estimated \$100,000.

The Home Medical Services (HMS) pilot benefit was launched by the Bermuda Health Council (Health Council) in collaboration with stakeholders in October 2013.

Feedback on the pilot benefit from patients has been positive and an evaluation of the services provided during this period found significant savings to the health system. Due to this success the benefit will be available on a permanent basis.

The HMS benefit allows patients to receive specific medical procedures in their home as part of their insurance policy. It was introduced under the Health Insurance (Standard Hospital Benefit) Regulations and the covered procedures and their fees are set and regulated by the Health Council.

In order to qualify for the benefit, a patient must be referred by a physician to a Health Council-approved HMS agency, for an approved medical treatment. The care must be provided by a Registered Nurse, and it must be needed for a limited period of time.

Claims for HMS benefits are covered by all health insurers, including the Government’s plans HIP and FutureCare, without additional charges to the patient. Some of the services and procedures that are offered include: IV antibiotic therapy, pain management, wound care, catheter changes, infusion therapy, nutrition therapy and patient education and training.

The full list of benefits are found on the HMS Fee Schedule, which is available on the Health Council’s website: <http://www.bhec.bm/for-professionals/fee-schedules/> The HMS benefit does not include services performed by a non-medical person, such as home support for daily activities, meal preparation, personal care services and home maker services.

Tawanna Wedderburn, the Health Council’s Director of Health Regulation stated: “We are excited about Home Medical Services and the quality of care patients are receiving in the home setting. The feedback from patients has been positive and we are grateful to the physician

community who assess patient needs and appropriateness for home medical services. We are also indebted to Bermuda Hospital Board for their collaboration in making this a success.”

Jennifer Attride-Stirling, CEO of the Health Council stated: “The HMS benefit has been an important addition to the Standard Benefit mandated in all insurance policies. We are pleased that it realized cost savings as anticipated, and are confident that continued appropriate use will generate more material benefits in terms of costs and patient experience”

Simone Barton, Chairman of the Health Council added: “I am extremely pleased that this service is now available for patients and covered by insurance. We need to see more changes in local healthcare delivery that truly drive care to the most appropriate setting to derive the best outcomes for patients and the health system. The Health Council is here to ensure this for Bermuda’s public.”

For more information about HMS and whether it may benefit your patients or your family please visit our website: <http://www.bhec.bm> or contact the Health Council on 292-6420.

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About Bermuda Health Council

Established in January 2006, the Bermuda Health Council (Health Council) is tasked with regulating, coordinating and enhancing the provision of health services in Bermuda. The Health Council is a Government QUANGO that works with health system stakeholders towards a sustainable healthcare system for the Island.