

Screening for perinatal and postpartum depression

This communication applies to the Medicaid and MMP programs for Anthem Blue Cross (Anthem).

Beginning July 1, 2019, providers of obstetrical care are required to screen or offer to screen women for perinatal mood disorders, including depression.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists has outlined depression screening instruments to be used during the pregnancy and postpartum periods, including:

- *Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale*
- *Patient Health Questionnaire-9*

A complete list of acceptable screening instruments can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/perinatal-depression-screening>.

Anthem recommends the following successful best practices:

- Screen patients at least once during the perinatal period for depression and anxiety symptoms and document in the medical records.
- Complete a full assessment of mood and emotional well-being during the comprehensive postpartum visit as well as the prenatal period.
- All assessments and referrals should be documented completely.
- Women with depression or anxiety, a history of perinatal mood disorders, risk factors for perinatal mood disorders or suicidal thoughts warrant close monitoring, evaluation and assessment.
- Refer members to mental health care providers (if needed) to offer the maximum support or to Anthem's Care Management team to assist with using the Customer Care Center number below.
- Reference and use appropriate community behavioral health resources (call Postpartum Support International at **1-800-944-4773** to speak with a volunteer who can provide support and resources in your area).
- Ensure systems are in place for follow-up diagnosis and treatment. Documentation of process needs to be present in medical records.

If you have questions about this communication or need assistance with any other item, contact your local Provider Relations representative or call our Customer Care Centers at the following:

- Medi-Cal Customer Care Center — **1-800-407-4627** (Outside L.A. County)
- Medi-Cal Customer Care Center — **1-888-285-7801** (Inside L.A. County)
- MMP Customer Care Center — **1-855-817-5786**