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ACCESS EAST RECEIVES PROMINENT NATIONAL CASE-MANAGEMENT ACCREDITATION

Greenville-based, community-focused nonprofit meets highest standards for its case-management processes

Greenville, N.C. – Access East, Inc., in tandem with its primary service line Community Care Plan of Eastern Carolina (CCPEC), has received a three-year accreditation for intensive case management provided to Medicaid patients, from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), among the nation’s leading health-care accreditation agencies.



Covering 27 eastern North Carolina counties, Access East is the regional affiliate of the North Carolina Community Care Network (NCCCN), which serves 1.4 million Medicaid recipients. NCCCN itself also received the three-year NCQA accreditation, along with its other 13 state affiliates, the only North Carolina agencies to have hit this top-tier mark; in total, Access East is one of fewer than 30 Case Management organizations nationwide to have achieved this level of NCQA accreditation.

Three-year accreditation is the highest accreditation status NCQA gives in Complex Case Management, recognizing “strong performance” of the functions outlined in NCQA’s case-management standards, as well as dedication to care-coordination, a focus on primacy of the patient, and continuous quality improvement.

“We are just tremendously gratified to have attained this important distinction,” said Ronald Gaskins, Access East Executive Director. “I commend our staff, whom I sincerely regard as the best in the east, not only for their incredibly hard work these past three years to obtain this accreditation, but also for their daily commitment to improving the care given to our Medicaid patients across eastern North Carolina.

“We’ve reached excellence,” Gaskins added. “That was our destination.”

Case Management Accreditation, noted NCQA President Margaret E. O’Kane, “demonstrates an organization’s commitment to the highest degree of improving the quality of its patients’ care.”

NCQA Case Management Accreditation is the culmination of a nearly three-year voluntary review process for Access East, as well as for NCCCN and its other affiliates. NCQA’s high standards (see the 10 benchmarks included on the following page) encourage case-management organizations to continuously enhance the quality of services they deliver, and NCQA Case Management Accreditation is the only program that focuses on care transition, the management of patients moving between providers or treatment settings.

“This accreditation adds to the significant body of evidence supporting the value of NCCCN’s statewide, community-based ‘medical home’ system,” noted Thomas Wroth, M.D., NCCCN Acting President and Chief Medical Officer.

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Ten Standards of NCQA Case Management Accreditation

1. Program Description: Uses up-to-date evidence-based information to develop its case management program, and regularly updates the program with relevant findings and information.
2. Patient Identification and Assessment: Systematically identifies patients who qualify for its programs.
3. Care Planning: Coordinates services for patients through the development of individualized care plans.
4. Care Monitoring: Has systems in place to support case management activities and monitors individualized care plans.
5. Care Transitions: Has a process to manage care transitions, identify problems that could cause care transitions and prevent unplanned transitions, when possible.
6. Measurement and Quality Improvement: At least annually, measures patient satisfaction, program effectiveness and participation rates.
7. Staffing, Training and Verification: Defines staffing needs, provides staff with ongoing training and oversight and verifies health-care staff credentials.
8. Rights and Responsibilities: Communicates its commitment to the rights of patients and its expectations of patients' responsibilities.
9. Privacy, Security and Confidentiality Procedures: Has procedures to protect the privacy of patients' health information.
10. Delegation: Provides written documentation of each delegated arrangement.

About Access East, and Community Care Plan of Eastern Carolina (CCPEC):

The nonprofit Access East coordinates patient-focused, provider-driven health-care for the Medicaid and uninsured populations across eastern North Carolina, in addition to supporting other community initiatives and services designed to enhance the health status of this region's most vulnerable. CCPEC is Access East's largest service line, and geographically the largest of the 14 nonprofit North Carolina Community Care Networks (NCCCN), providing cost-effective coordinated care to more than 133,000 eastern N.C. Medicaid enrollees through a network of primary-care "medical homes" across a 27-county service area.

About North Carolina Community Care Networks (NCCCN):

NCCCN is a community-based, public-private partnership that takes a population-management approach to improving health care and containing costs for North Carolina's most vulnerable populations, with 14 affiliates statewide, including Access East and its Community Care Plan of Eastern Carolina (CCPEC). NCCCN creates "medical homes" in all 100 counties for Medicaid beneficiaries, and for individuals who are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid, privately-insured employees and uninsured people. (To learn how NCCCN saves North Carolina millions of dollars every year, visit www.CCNCcares.com.)

About the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA):

A private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving health-care quality, NCQA accredits and certifies a wide range of health-care organizations, as well as recognizing clinicians and practices in key areas of performance.