CareFirst
Community Health Plan
Maryland

Health & Wellness

Spring/Summer 2026

Welcome to the Spring/Summer edition of Health & Wellness, the digital newsletter designed for members of CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Community Health Plan Maryland (CareFirst CHPMD). Keep reading to learn more about CloseKnit, a virtual primary care option for you and your family, as well as important information about how we work with your providers to make sure we provide safe and effective pain management for members. With the summer months coming up, you'll appreciate some helpful tips, and a great salmon recipe, that will keep you cool and healthy. We hope you enjoy this issue!

With Care,

CareFirst Community Health Plan Maryland

Renewing your Medicaid benefits

Your coverage with Medicaid and/or the Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP) must be renewed each year. Maryland Health Connection (MHC) will send a renewal communication several weeks prior to your renewal deadline.

To ensure you receive important updates regarding your renewal, make sure your contact information with MHC is current. You can update your contact details by logging into your account at **marylandhealthconnection.gov** or by calling **855-642-8572**.

My Account is your member portal

CareFirst CHPMD members can use My Account to access plan information 24/7. Visit **carefirst.com/myaccount** to learn more and/or register. Through My Account, you can:

- Log in as a member
- View benefits
- Find a doctor
- Look up a pharmacy
- Request a member ID card
- Access your member profile

Please note: MyHealth Portal (members.carefirstchpmd.com) is no longer active. Members attempting to visit MyHealth Portal will be redirected to My Account.

How to contact us

Our Member Services department is here to assist you. We are available from Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or you can leave us a voicemail or email that will be returned the next business day. How to contact us:

- Local: **410-779-9369**
- Toll-free: **800-730-8530** (TTY: 711)
- Email: **CHPMDMembers@carefirst.com**
- Website: **carefirst.com/medicaid**

If you have questions around what healthcare services may require a prior authorization or need help understanding a prior authorization decision, please contact our Member Services Department. We'll be happy to help.

2026 Benefit Guide

For more information about your benefits, view the 2026 Benefit Guide at **carefirst.com/medicaid**.

Community Health and Resource Fairs

Join us for a day dedicated to promoting health, wellness, and community support. These Thursday events provide helpful resources, screenings and educational opportunities that enhance the well-being of our community. Bring your family and friends; you don't have to be a CareFirst CHPMD member to attend!

Registration is not required, but it is strongly recommended. You can register using the Eventbrite links or by calling **410-921-2130**.

Thursday, June 18, 2026

10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Sacred Heart Church
600 S. Conkling Street
Baltimore, MD 21224

Registration: Eventbrite

Thursday, July 30, 2026

10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Randallstown Community Center
3505 Resource Drive,
Randallstown, MD 21133

Registration: Coming Soon

Please visit CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Community Engagement

Engage with CareFirst!

The CareFirst Engagement Center (CEC) brings together community resources to help you live your healthiest life. We offer free fitness classes, CPR and AED training, women's self-defense classes, wellness workshops and more.

Register at **CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield's Engagement Center** and plan to join us at one of our two locations:

CareFirst Engagement Center
1501 South Clinton Street
Baltimore, MD 21224

CareFirst Engagement Center
3201 Tioga Parkway, Suite W
Baltimore, MD 21215

More health fair dates are on the way—check back soon!

Provider Search Tool

Finding a network doctor, specialist, or other provider just got easier for CareFirst CHPMD members. Visit **carefirst.com/medicaid-doctor** to get started. You can search by name, location, or specialty (pediatrics, cardiology, etc.).

If you need to find a Primary Care Provider (PCP), go to the website, type *Primary Care Provider* and enter your zip code to get a list of PCPs nearest to you.

If you need to find a vision care provider, scroll down to Other Types of Care, click *Vision* and enter your ZIP code.

If you need additional help, call Member Services at **410-779-9369** or **800-730-8530** (TTY: 711). You can also make an appointment by calling the provider's office directly.

CloseKnit primary care/virtual visits

With CloseKnit, messaging and video visits with your primary care provider are free.

CloseKnit is primary care designed to help you get care whenever and wherever you need it. Their virtual-first practice offers easy access not only to primary care but also to same-day appointments for urgent needs, mental health support and more.

Whether you're looking for a new provider, feel sick, need emotional support or just have a question, CloseKnit is there for you.

Why else should you choose CloseKnit?

- Quick Access: Get care whenever you need it, often on the same day.
- Easy to Use: Access care through your computer or the CloseKnit mobile app.
- Care Team: Get help with prevention, diagnosis, treatment and management of health conditions.

CloseKnit offers:

- Primary Care: Full-service primary care from a dedicated team, for help with preventive care, chronic disease management and more.
- Same-Day Appointments for Urgent Needs: Quick treatment for minor injuries and illnesses.

Visit carefirst.com/medicaid/members/ck-virtual-visits.html for more information.

Every Step of Your Pregnancy as a CareFirst CHPMD Member

A Helpful Site for Expectant Parents

CareFirst CHPMD is proud to share a new, mobile-friendly pregnancy resource made for Medicaid members: the **Every Step of Your Pregnancy Guide**.

The website is designed to help you find trusted information, understand your benefits and get support along the way—during pregnancy and after your baby arrives.

On the site, you can find:

- Clear, trusted guides and practical tips for a healthy pregnancy and newborn care
- Easy-to-follow information to help you understand your health coverage and benefits
- Details on CareFirst CHPMD programs that support a healthier pregnancy, including **Mommy Meals**
- Transportation assistance, so you can get to your doctor's appointments
- Information about other support and incentives that may be available, such as gift cards and care initiatives
- How to request a care manager

You can also use this site to get an idea of questions that may be good to ask during your next appointment. Ready to explore? Visit the **Every Step of Your Pregnancy Guide** anytime to get support throughout your journey.

If you have questions about your pregnancy, your provider is your best source for medical guidance. If you have questions about your benefits, call Member Services at **410-779-9369** or **800-730-8530** (TTY: 711), Monday to Friday from 8 a.m.–5 p.m. ET.

Did You Know?

As a CareFirst CHPMD member, you get six (6) free one-way rides for all non-emergency medical needs. Visit **carefirst.member.saferidehealth.com** or call **833-509-0250** to book a ride. You can review the 2026 Benefit Guide for more information on all the benefits available to you.

Care management services

Care Management Services are available through our Baby Steps Program to help you with your pregnancy care needs. Our care management team consists of both registered nurses and care coordinators.Your OB nurse care manager will make sure you are getting the care you need when you need it, including assistance with arranging required special consultations or tests. They will also provide you with pregnancy health information and connect you to community resources.

Members with complex medical conditions can call Member Services at **410-779-9369** or **800-730-8530** (TTY: 711) or email **CHPMDMembers@carefirst.com** for information on care management services. Members, their caregivers, or their healthcare providers can request care management services. These programs are voluntary and are provided at no cost to you. Members with certain needs may be automatically enrolled or contacted, but it is always your choice to participate in the program.

You can get more information in your Member Handbook, which can be found on our website at carefirst.com/medicaid in the "Members" section.

Pharmacy corner

Education on Opioid Risks and Alternative Treatments

Prescription opioids are medicines that doctors give to help with pain. They are often used after surgery or serious injuries. These medicines can help, but they also have risks. People can get addicted to them, and there is a danger of taking too much, which can cause overdoses and even death.

Using opioids for a long time can make your body get used to them; you'll need more to feel the same pain relief. You can also become dependent, which means you feel sick if you stop taking them. Even when taken the right way, prescription opioids can cause side effects like constipation, vomiting, dry mouth, dizziness, confusion, sadness, irritability, and trouble breathing.

What treatment options don't involve opioids?

Chronic pain can often be managed without opioids, and many other options have been shown to work better with fewer side effects. Examples include:

- Over-the-counter medications like Tylenol (acetaminophen), Advil (ibuprofen) and Aleve (naproxen)
- Non-opioid prescriptions such as lidocaine and Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDS)
- Physical therapy and exercise
- Some medications that are also used for depression or seizures

For CareFirst CHPMD members, the quantity of opioid products prescribed (including those that are combined with acetaminophen, aspirin or ibuprofen) will be limited to up to 90 morphine milligram equivalents (MME) per day based on a 30-day supply. Prescriptions that exceed 90 MME daily limits will be subject to utilization management, such as prior authorization. Members who have not taken opioids before, or have taken them infrequently, may be subject to additional step therapy requirements; for instance,

use of an immediate-release (IR) formulation will be required before moving to an extended-release (ER) formulation and quantity limit restrictions will be in effect (first fill will be limited to seven days).

If you have any questions about your benefits or how to get care, please call Member Services at **410-779-9369** or toll-free at **1-800-730-8530** (TTY:711) Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

To learn more, visit the Pharmaceutical Management Procedures page on our website.

Get rid of unused drugs safely

Unused medicine can find its way into the wrong hands, and the results can be dangerous and even tragic. Drop off expired and unwanted medications at **CVS drop boxes** for safe disposal.

Food is medicine

The notion that what you eat (and don't eat) can affect your general health is hardly a new one. But the idea that "food is medicine" has become an important topic for medical professionals and their patients.

What does "food is medicine" really mean? It means that food is a powerful element for promoting health and combating disease. It recognizes that the right food can help your immune system and reduce your risk for chronic conditions. It's all about focusing on the role of nutrition in preventing and managing illness and how you feel.

Broiled salmon on rice with broccoli

Salmon and rice is a classic summer combination, but this one serves up a few twists you'll love. The salmon is broiled, soy sauce adds some great flavor, and broccoli gets added while we cook the rice, saving a pot and making cleanup faster. Those are more than enough reasons to pull out this recipe on your next busy weeknight.

Directions

1. Preheat broiler with oven rack six inches from heat. Stir together sugar, soy sauce, and vinegar in a microwave-safe measuring cup or bowl. Microwave, stopping to stir every 20 seconds, until mixture is syrupy and reduced to about 1/4 cup, about two minutes.
2. Cook rice according to package directions, adding broccoli during the last three minutes. Remove rice and broccoli from heat. Cover and let stand until broccoli is tender, about five minutes. Fluff with a fork and season with 1/4 teaspoon salt.
3. Meanwhile, place salmon and onion on a baking sheet lined with aluminum foil. Drizzle onion with oil and season with 1/4 teaspoon salt. Season salmon with pepper and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt.
4. Broil until salmon is opaque throughout, seven to eight minutes. During the last two minutes of cooking, brush soy sauce mixture over salmon, reserving two tablespoons for serving.
5. Serve salmon, onion, and broccoli-rice mixture drizzled with reserved soy sauce mixture.

Ingredients

- ¼ cup light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce or tamari
- 1 tbsp rice vinegar
- 1 cup long-grain white rice
- 1 small head broccoli, florets only, chopped (about 2 cups)
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 4 salmon fillets (1¼ pounds total)
- 1 large red onion, cut into 1 inch-thick wedges (about 2 cups)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/4 tsp. ground black pepper

Food resources

- MD Food Bank: Find Food Near Me
- CareFirst Find Help

Summertime Safety

Every season in Maryland can bring challenges to health and wellness, but the hot and humid summers may be the time when you most need to pay attention. Kids especially will want to be outside as much as possible, but everyone should protect themselves even if their outdoor time is limited.

- Stay hydrated! Drink plenty of water, even if you don't feel thirsty, and especially if you've been active in the heat.
- Wear lightweight and light-colored clothing, and put on a hat and sunglasses for protection from the sun.
- If possible, limit your outdoor activities to cooler morning and evening hours. When you're not outside, stay in air-conditioned places as much as possible.
- Be aware of the symptoms of heat-related illnesses, and seek help immediately if you or someone else are exhibiting signs.
- Prepare for potential power outages, during heat waves and the summer thunderstorms that often happen in the heat.

It's important to visit your PCP at least once per year for a check-up, even if you aren't sick.

You can schedule an appointment with your PCP by calling their office directly. Your PCP's number is on your member ID card. We encourage new members to schedule an appointment with your PCP as soon as they are enrolled.

If you need help making an appointment, call Member Services at **410-779-9369** or **800-730-8530** (TTY: 711). We are happy to assist you.

Who do I call when I need help?

Call CareFirst CHPMD Member Services if you need help. We are here to talk to you Monday to Friday from 8 a.m.–5 p.m. at **410-779-9369** or **800-730-8530 (TTY: 711)**. If you think you need emergency care, call 911.

Interpreter services are available at no cost for doctor's office visits.

After-hours care assistance

If you think you need care after normal business hours, the best number to start with is your PCP office phone number. Your PCP's office will have an answering service or message center that can assist you in accessing the care or medical advice you need.

Urgent care services

Urgent care is for conditions that aren't an emergency but require medical attention soon. When you need urgent care:

- Visit an Urgent Care center or walk-in clinic before going to the emergency room or hospital.
- Contact your PCP's office. They may be able to schedule you for an appointment within 24 to 48 hours.

Remember: If your emergency is life-threatening, call 911 immediately.

MyHealth Rewards Program

How MyHealth Rewards works

As a CareFirst CHPMD member, you can earn rewards for taking steps to stay healthy. This program is called MyHealth Rewards. It is free to join and can help you earn hundreds of dollars.

- You must complete all qualifying activities between January 1 and December 31, 2026.
- You have until January 31, 2027, to claim your reward(s).
- To claim your reward, call the Quality Team at **410-921-2130** (TTY: 711), Monday–Friday from 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. You will need:
  - ☐ Your CareFirst CHPMD member ID number
  - ☐ The date of your doctor visit or class
  - ☐ You provider's name
- Your reward(s) will be mailed to you as a prepaid Visa card. Allow 6–8 weeks for delivery.

Wellness activities

Adult			
Activity	**Description**	**Gift card amount**	**Eligible members**
Doctor visit (preventive or routine visit)	Visit your doctor for a regular checkup	$75 January–July; $50 August–December	CareFirst CHPMD members ages 22–64
A1C Test	A blood test that shows your average blood sugar level over time	$50	CareFirst CHPMD members ages 18–64 who have diabetes
A1C control	Shows that your blood sugar level is within a healthy range	$80	CareFirst CHPMD members ages 18–64 who have diabetes
Kidney health evaluation[1]	A urine test that checks for early signs of kidney problems	$50	CareFirst CHPMD members ages 18–64 with type 1 or type 2 diabetes
Diabetes eye exam	An eye exam to check for vision problems caused by diabetes	$50	CareFirst CHPMD members ages 18–64 who have diabetes
Breast cancer screening	Test to check for breast cancer	$50	CareFirst CHPMD members ages 50–64 who had a mammogram in the past two years

Adult (continued)			
Activity	**Description**	**Gift card amount**	**Eligible members**
Cervical cancer screening	Test to check for cervical cancer	$50	CareFirst CHPMD members ages 24–64 who had a screening in the past three years
Colorectal screening[2]	Test to check for colon cancer	$50	CareFirst CHPMD members ages 50–75

Pediatric			
Activity	**Description**	**Gift card amount**	**Eligible members**
Well-child visit (first 30 months)	Regular doctor visits for infants and toddlers	$15 per visit; no more than eight visits before the age of 3	CareFirst CHPMD members ages 0–3
1-year-old lead test	A blood test to check for lead exposure	$50	CareFirst CHPMD members who turn 1 that year
2-year-old lead test	A blood test to check for lead exposure	$50	CareFirst CHPMD members who turn 2 that year
Well-child visit (school-aged children 9–13)	Routine checkups for school-aged children	$30	CareFirst CHPMD members aged 9–13 years old
Well-child visit (older children 17–21)	Routine checkups for older teens and young adults	$75	CareFirst CHPMD members aged 17–21 years old
Immunizations (0–2 years)	Completing all recommended vaccines, including the flu shot	$30	CareFirst CHPMD members up to 2 years old
13-year-old vaccine review	A check to confirm required vaccines are complete	$30	CareFirst CHPMD members who are 13 years old[3]
HPV vaccine	Completing the full HPV vaccine series by age 13	$50	CareFirst CHPMD members ages 9–13

Maternal			
Activity	**Description**	**Gift card amount**	**Eligible members**
Prenatal education classes	Attend classes such as breastfeeding, childbirth or infant care	$125	CareFirst CHPMD members who are pregnant
Baby Steps Program	Help covering safety and health needs for your newborn	$125	CareFirst CHPMD members who have a newborn

[1] Defined by an estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) and a urine albumin-creatinine ratio (uACR), during the measurement year.

[2] To earn this reward, you must complete one of the following tests within the required time: Stool test (past year), sigmoidoscopy (past five years), colonoscopy (past ten years), CT colonography (past five years), stool DNA test (past three years).

[3] To get this gift card, 13-year-olds need to have: one dose of the meningococcal vaccine and one Tdap vaccine.

Non-discrimination notice & language accessibility

CareFirst CHPMD complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. CareFirst CHPMD does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

CareFirst CHPMD:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
  - Qualified sign language interpreters
  - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
  - Qualified interpreters
  - Information written in other languages

Notice of privacy practices, protected health information use & disclosure

This notice is available at the bottom of our website under Notice of Privacy Practices and HIPAA. If you would like to have the notice mailed to you, please contact Member Services. This notice tells you:

- How CareFirst CHPMD protects your protected health information
- When CareFirst CHPMD is able to disclose protected health information
- Your right to access your protected health information
- Responsibilities CareFirst CHPMD has in protecting your protected health information

How to obtain language assistance

Interpreter services are available at no cost to CareFirst CHPMD members for doctor office visits.

If you need these services, contact Member Services at **410-779-9369**, or toll-free at **1-800-730-8530**, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday. TTY users should call 711.

Rights & responsibilities

CareFirst CHPMD provides health coverage to our members on a nondiscriminatory basis, according to state and federal law, regardless of gender, race, age, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, or any type of illness or condition. To review a full list of CareFirst CHPMD Member's Rights and Responsibilities, visit the **CareFirst CHPMD website** or call Member Services at **410-779-9369** or **800-730-8530** (TTY: 711) to request a copy of the Member Handbook.

Questions or concerns about your care or coverage?

If you have a concern or disagree with a decision about your care, services, or benefits, you have the right to file a complaint (grievance) or request an appeal.

You may contact Member Services by phone at **410-779-9369** or **800-730-8530** (TTY: 711) or by mail at:

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield
Community Health Plan Maryland
Attn: Appeals & Grievances Dept.
P.O. Box 915
Owings Mills, MD 21117

We will review your concern and respond within required timeframes.

Help stop fraud, waste and abuse

At CareFirst CHPMD, we work hard to make sure you get the care you need. Fraud, waste, and abuse (FWA) can make healthcare more expensive and harder to get. You can help stop it.

What is Fraud, Waste, and Abuse?

- **Fraud:** Providers being dishonest to get Medicaid benefits or money, like billing for a visit that never happened.
- **Waste:** Using too many services or supplies that are not needed.
- **Abuse:** Providers may charge too much for a service.

How to Spot FWA

Look for these warning signs:

- You are billed for a visit or service you did not receive.
- A provider gives you medicine or equipment you don't need.
- Someone asks for your Medicaid ID or CareFirst CHPMD Member ID card to get free care.
- Changing medical records to hide dishonest actions.

How to Report FWA

If you think someone is doing something wrong, report it immediately! You can:

- Call **410-998-5480** or toll-free at **800-336-4522** (Phone calls can remain anonymous.)
- Complete the **online form**.

Member handbook

Your benefits through the Maryland HealthChoice program are explained in the CareFirst CHPMD Member Handbook. You can find the handbook in the Members section of our website at **carefirst.com/medicaid**. If you'd like a printed copy mailed to you, contact Member Services at **410-779-9369** or **800-730-8530**, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday.
TTY users should call 711.

CareFirst Community Health Plan Maryland

P.O. Box 915
Owings Mills, MD 21117

410-779-9369
carefirst.com/medicaid

HealthChoice is a Program of the Maryland Department of Health.

CloseKnit is the shared business name of Atlas Health, LLC, Comprehensive Primary Care and Associates, LLC, and CKNMG, LLC. Atlas Health, LLC and Comprehensive Primary Care and Associates, LLC provide in person and telehealth services to CareFirst members and are corporate affiliates within the CareFirst, Inc. corporate umbrella of companies. CKNMG, LLC is an independent company providing in person and telehealth services to CareFirst members.

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Community Health Plan Maryland complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

Spanish: ATENCIÓN: Si usted habla español, tenemos servicios de asistencia lingüística disponibles para usted sin costo alguno.
Llame al 800-730-8530 (TTY: 711).

Chinese: 小贴士：如果您说普通话，欢迎使用免费语言协助服务。请拨 800-730-8530 (TTY: 711).

Haitian Creole: ATANSYON: Si w pale Kreyol Ayisyen, gen sevis ed pou lang ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele 1-800-730-8530 {TTY: 711).

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