

To Your Health

PHYSICAL



EMOTIONAL



SOCIAL



FINANCIAL



OCT 2021

Annual Enrollment for 2022 Begins November 1

All employees, including new hires and those declining coverage, must enroll in OPUS, even if you are not changing your elections.

Register now for [Annual Enrollment Virtual Information Sessions](#) beginning October 13 to learn more about the 2022 benefits. There are multiple dates and times to choose from including evenings and weekend. Spouses/domestic partners are welcome to attend.

Quick summary:

NO increase in plan premiums

NO changes in health care coverage

Effective January 1, 2022, Cigna is the new vendor for:

- Medical*
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)*
- Behavioral/mental health*

IMPORTANT: There are no changes in premiums and no change in coverage, despite the change in administrator.

At least 98.1% of current providers are also in the Cigna network.

Same vendors, plans, coverage and premiums for:

- Vision (EyeMed)
- Dental (Cigna)*
- Disability, FMLA (UnitedHealthcare)
- Life insurance (Securian)
- Flexible Spending Accounts (TASC)
- Prescription/pharmacy (Express Scripts – owned by Cigna)*

NEW! [Voluntary supplemental benefits](#) will be available from Aflac for critical illness, accident and hospitalization coverage. The benefits are employee-paid.

To learn more, view the [Annual Enrollment website](#) including the [Vendor Changes FAQs](#). You will receive a home mailer with more information soon. Watch your mailbox.

More questions? Contact Benefits at (727) 464-3367, option 1, or email employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org.

* Pending approval by the Board of County Commissioners on October 12.

World Mental Health Day

The World Health Organization has deemed October 10 World Mental Health Day, which serves to raise awareness of mental health issues and to mobilize efforts in support of mental health.

Mental Health Care for All. Let's Make It a Reality.

The COVID-19 pandemic and other recent events around the world have heightened many people's fears and worries. Add to this, the reality that hundreds of millions of people globally live with a mental health condition.

Worldwide, an estimated:

- 1 in 5 youths have a mental disorder
- 264 million people live with depression, which is the leading cause of disability globally
- 45 million people live with bipolar disorder
- 20 million people live with schizophrenia
- 50 million people live with dementia

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COVID-19 Vaccinations and Mammograms



Your
UHC
Nurse

Amy

By Amy Hertog, RN, BSN,
Clinical Nurse Liaison

Breast cancer screenings are a way to check breasts for cancer before there are signs or symptoms of the disease. Although breast cancer screening cannot prevent breast cancer, it can help find it early, when it is easier to treat.

The vaccine that prevents COVID-19 may temporarily cause swollen lymph nodes under the arm in which the shot was given. Getting a mammogram within a certain time frame after vaccination may cause difficulty interpreting the mammogram because swelling under the arm can also be a sign that cancer cells have spread to the lymph nodes.

Lymph nodes are part of your body's germ-fighting immune system. Swelling in that area is a sign that your body is responding to the vaccine and building up defenses against the virus that causes COVID-19. They should return to normal size a few weeks after the vaccination regimen is complete. Other vaccines that activate the immune system may change the appearance of your lymph nodes, including shingles, pneumonia, and diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis (D-TaP) shots.

If you are due for a mammogram and have been recently vaccinated for COVID-19, ask your doctor how long you should wait after vaccination to get your mammogram.

Be sure to tell your doctor about your vaccination, the date it occurred and which arm was affected. This information will be helpful for understanding the mammogram images.

If lymph node swelling is found on your mammogram and you've recently received the COVID-19 vaccine, the doctor who interprets your mammogram images (radiologist) will consider this when recommending whether additional imaging or follow-up is needed.

Read [COVID-19 Vaccine: Can It Affect Your Mammogram Results?](#) from Johns Hopkins Medicine.

Visit [Amy's web page](#) or contact her at 464-5579 or by email at amy_hertog@uhc.com.

Friday,
October 22

Wear pink on October 22 to help raise awareness of breast cancer.

Breast cancer is still here, still taking the lives of women and men we love.

Send a selfie or a group photo of your coworkers (following social distancing guidelines) by October 26 to wellness@pinellascounty.org and we'll put it in the next To Your Health!

Annual October/November Mammo Days Screening

The Wellness Program is offering another 3D mammogram screening event for employees and eligible spouses in October and November. These preventive screenings are 100% covered any time during the calendar year.

- There is no need to wait 365 days from last year's mammogram date.
- Please bring your health insurance card and a photo ID to the appointment.

[View the flyer](#) for more details and to register.

Susan Cheek Needler Breast Center

Morton Plant Hospital
Axelrod Pavilion
400 Pinellas St., Clearwater

Wednesday, October 13 | 2:30 - 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 2 | 2:30 - 6:00 p.m.

Friday, November 5 | 2:30 - 6:00 p.m.

BayCare Imaging - Carillon

900 Carillon Parkway
St. Petersburg

Friday, October 22 | 12:30 - 5:00 p.m.

#In our hands





World Mental Health Day, continued from page 1.

Words matter

Help increase awareness and reduce stigma — use these stigma-free ways to talk about mental health. Let’s work together to destigmatize situational and chronic mental health issues — and get people the help they need.

1. REMOVE

If you use words like crazy, nutty, head case, lunatic, psycho, schizoid, etc., you’re reinforcing stereotypes and minimizing the importance of understanding mental health conditions. Simply remove these words from your vocabulary. Instead, be specific.

2. REWORD

Rephrase how you describe the situation, keeping in mind a mental health condition does not define the person. So, for example, say: “someone who lives with a mental health condition” or “someone who is affected by a mental health condition.” Don’t say: “Someone who suffers from a mental health condition.”

3. RETHINK

Use a person-first approach. For example, say: “a person living with schizophrenia” or “someone diagnosed with schizophrenia.” Don’t say: “A schizophrenic person.”

Don't Say	Do Say
Abuse, abuses	Use, uses <i>Example: Person who uses drugs</i>
Addict	Person with substance use disorder
Alcoholic	Person with alcohol use disorder
Alcohol problem	Alcohol use disorder <i>More broadly: Substance use disorder</i>
Clean	Abstinent, not actively using
Committed suicide	Died by suicide
Dirty drug screen	Tested positive for substance use
Drug abuse	Drug misuse, harmful use
Drug abuser, drug addict, druggie, etc.	Person with substance use disorder
Drug problem, drug habit	Substance use disorder
Former/reformed addict/alcoholic	Person in recovery, person in long-term recovery
Mentally ill, mental illness	Diagnosed with a mental health condition, mental health condition
Problem	Concern, condition, issue (depending on context) <i>Example: His wife was concerned he was living with alcohol use disorder.</i>
Suffers from	Living with, diagnosed with, with, who has, etc.
Victim of	Living with, diagnosed with, with, who has, etc.

From your [EAP provider, Optum](#), and the [World Health Organization](#).



Using a COVID-19 Rapid Test at Home

By Amy Hertog, BSN, RN

COVID-19 at-home rapid tests have been available as over-the-counter products in stores or online for several months. Test results are obtained in about 15 minutes.

These tests work by detecting viral proteins using a nasal swab, a paper strip, and a reagent. A reagent is a substance that creates a chemical reaction or response. The testing kit will come with specific instructions.

Rapid tests are designed to identify cases with a high enough viral load in the nasal passage to be transmissible. There is a chance that a test may be negative if there is not enough of the virus present to trigger a positive result. Those who are infected but take a rapid test before or after the viral load peak may get a negative rapid test result – meaning that even though they are infected, they are not currently infectious.

One way to reduce the risk of false negatives is with a second rapid test. A second rapid test performed 24-36 hours later may help catch any infectious cases that were missed with the first test.

If you have a positive result, immediately take precautions to slow transmission such as self-isolating and informing close contacts of potential exposure.

The at-home rapid tests won't detect 100% of infectious cases, so it's possible for a small number of cases to not be detected or for some cases to become infectious after the test. If you have symptoms or a known exposure, it's a good idea to do a follow-up rapid test or PCR test just in case the first test was a false negative.

The PCR test, typically administered in a clinical setting, is still the “gold standard” when it comes to COVID-19 testing. The PCR test detects RNA (or genetic material) that is specific to the virus and can detect the virus within days of infection, even those with no symptoms. Results usually take a few days.

For more information about COVID-19 tests, please visit [Coronavirus Disease 2019 Testing Basics | FDA](#).

WELLNESS CHAMPION SPOTLIGHT

Jennifer Wright
Administrative Support Specialist
Human Services

Every department has a [Wellness Champion](#) who helps to communicate important wellness events, reminders and updates, as well as support you. They do amazing work and we'd like for you to get to know them!

How long have you worked for Pinellas County? I began my employment with the Pinellas County Human Services Department in 2014.

Tell us a little about yourself. I'm a native of Pinellas County but lived in California, Utah, and Colorado where I discovered my love of the mountains and nature. This passion eventually led to my employment with the Florida Park Service, where I met my husband. He's a wildland firefighter and is out west for most of the year putting out wildfires. He travels to beautiful places that I get to view through the small screen of my cell phone. We're almost empty nesters and have two Blue Heelers.

Why did you want to serve as a Wellness Champion? I'm a cheerleader at heart and like encouraging people to embrace what really moves them. For me, participating in a physical activity is exciting! Whether it's something I'm good at or not, I enjoy movement that gets my heart pumping – it's an important component to living a long life.

What do you do to take care of yourself? I maintain an active lifestyle by biking, running, the gym, paddle boarding, and kayaking. I try to keep a high protein diet but am not too restrictive, just mindful. If I need a reset, I log back into my WW (Weight Watchers) app for a few months to find great recipes that get me back on track.

About three years ago, my coworkers and I started a Run Club that includes staff from a few different departments in downtown Clearwater. We meet up on Thursdays after work and run over the bridge to the beach and back. It's encouraging to bring our camaraderie from the bridge runs to races we have run together – the motivation of friends keeps us moving!



Jennifer holding award for 1st place in her age group at the Honeymoon Adventure Race, 2020.



Mark Your Calendars: Wellness Activities for You

All About Breast Cancer

A Webinar with Moffitt Cancer Center

1 in 8 women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime; men can, too.

Learn the risk factors, potential signs and the current screening recommendations. [View the flyer](#) to register. **October 12**, 12:00 p.m. and **October 20**, 1:00 p.m.



Power Pairing Food Webinar



Did you know that eating certain foods together can boost their benefits, while some combinations may actually prevent nutrients from being absorbed into the body? Make the most of your mealtime. [View the flyer](#) to sign up. **October 13**, 12:30 p.m. and **October 15**, 12:00 p.m.

Tobacco Cessation Programs

To avoid a tobacco premium of \$500, employees on the Pinellas County medical plan who use tobacco have between August 1, 2021 and March 31, 2022 to complete a qualified tobacco cessation program. The premium does not apply to spouses.



[Tobacco cessation program options](#)

include virtual and in-person classes from **Tobacco Free Florida's Group Quit**.

Current Classes

VIRTUAL:

Mondays, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m., October 11 - November 1

Fridays, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., November 5 - December 3

IN-PERSON:

Wednesdays, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., Planning Department, 310 Court Street, Room 126, Clearwater, October 20 - November 10

To register for a class series, call the local Tobacco Free Florida agency, Area Health Education Center, at (813) 929-1000.

See [additional resources](#) for quitting.

Financial Aspects of Healthcare



Join UnitedHealthcare Nurse Amy for a simple and easy-to-understand overview of the financial aspects of healthcare including basic terminology, consumer rights, and strategies to help you save money. **October 19**, 12:00 p.m. and **October 21**, 1:00 p.m.

[View the flyer](#) to register.

Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination

Don't forget to submit a copy of your COVID-19 vaccination card to Benefits **no later than November 8** using one of the following options:

- Email a scan or photo of your vaccination card to employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org
- Fax a copy of your card to (727) 464-5291
- Drop off a copy of your card on the first floor of the Annex, 400 S. Fort Harrison Avenue in Clearwater between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

The Benefits team is processing the vaccination cards to ensure payment in the November 24 paycheck. All employees who provided a copy of their card will receive confirmation but it will not be immediate due to the high volume of submittals. Please allow us the time to review each submission and contact you once confirmed.

October Blood Drives

October 19, 9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

STAR Center, 7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo

October 21, 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Downtown Clearwater Courthouse, 315 Court Street, west parking lot

October 28, 12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m.

Public Works, 22211 U.S. Hwy 19 North, Clearwater

Learn more about donating blood at www.oneblood.org/learn/.





Caregiver Corner

Being a Caregiver

By Rebecca Fiesbeck, Administrative Support Specialist, Contractor Licensing

My mom, like many people during the medical drug boom of the 1970's, thought prescription drugs weren't "drugs" because they came from doctors. For over 45 years, she endured many surgeries and diagnoses, eventually developing a substance use disorder. The disorder negatively affected most of the relationships in her life, including ours.

In 2019, my brother called with news that our mom was in the hospital and the situation was serious. She needed medical attention and was too weak to care for herself. After a couple of weeks in the hospital, she was transferred to a rehab facility. During that time, one of her neighbors encouraged my mom to go to an assisted living facility (ALF).

Since I lived out of state, everything had to be coordinated over the phone. Although I didn't realize it at the time, these conversations moved us forward in repairing our relationship. I was shocked when she asked me to be her Power of Attorney (POA). She was simply worn out struggling on her own, and so wanted me back in her life that she was willing to do whatever it took to make that happen. Sometimes, our best decisions happen in the moment and we don't realize how impactful those decisions will be in future.

As I began making arrangements from 1,200 miles away—contacting the ALF, having conversations with doctors and caregivers, learning how to execute a POA from afar, etc.—everything started falling into place.

It was a lot to handle, and I relied on my faith and help from God. Although there is usually a waiting list for ALF entry with a Medicaid waiver, my mom got both a waiver and a living space at one of the best facilities in Indiana a couple of days prior to being released from the rehab facility! I travelled to Indiana to help.

The first few months of her being in the ALF were a flurry of activity, both logistically and emotionally. The facility did a full assessment, physical and mental, and diagnosed my mom with dementia, delusional disorder and paranoid personality disorder. PPD can be caused by mental trauma early in life, among other things, and causes the person to believe everyone is out to get them.

The diagnosis helped me understand how her brain works and helps me not to take her words and actions personally. It doesn't make every interaction perfect, but it helps me to give her space for grace.

While I was there, I emptied her apartment, moved her furniture, and made her comfortable in her new home. I also got to know the nurses and ALF staff, which was so important to ensure she was taken care of. I schedule all her doctor appointments, then make certain the nursing and transportation staff have the dates and times.

My mom usually thanks me at the end of every phone conversation and tells me how much she appreciates me taking care of everything. It's been amazing how our relationship has improved and I'm so grateful. Are there still challenges?

Of course, there are! I'm at peace knowing she is receiving the best care possible and has a wonderful place to live where she feels as safe as her mind allows.



Rebecca and her mom

6 Ways for Caregivers to Take a Break

Caring for someone we love or care about is hard, tireless work that can leave us drained, depleted and exhausted. Sometimes, even if we have help and an opportunity to take a break, it may feel difficult to allow ourselves the time. Over time, this heightened state of stress and exhaustion could lead to reduced quality of life and even serious health issues. For most of us, caregiving is a long haul, and enduring means taking care of our own needs as well as those of our loved one.

To learn how to step away, recharge and reset, read [6 Ways to Make It Easier for Caregivers to Take a Break](#)

24/7 Helpline:

alzheimer's association®

800.272.3900 | alz.org®

Through this free service, specialists and master's-level clinicians offer confidential support and information to people living with dementia, caregivers, families and the public.



'Tis the Season to MAINTAIN Healthy Holiday Habits

Registration opens
Wednesday, October 27th

You are unlikely to experience snow this winter, but you are very likely to experience piles of food, to-do lists, and stress!

The **Maintain Campaign** is a fun 8-week challenge that provides tools and team support to help you maintain your weight and keep healthy habits during the holiday season.

Get Ready

1. Create a team
2. Designate a captain
3. Come up with a name

Need a Team?

If you don't have a team but would like one, contact Wellness at wellness@pinellascounty.org. We will do our best to match you with a team. Watch your email for the registration information on October 28th. The Challenge dates are **November 15 through January 9, 2022**.

We hope you are as excited as we are!

Don't Wait - Get Your Biometric Screening Now!

There is a new and improved process for getting your biometric screening ahead of the December 31 deadline.

Before you go, make sure to familiarize yourself with the two options available (Quest or Physicians Results Form), and the steps for the option that suits you best.

1... 2: Invest in You!
Step 1. Biometric Screening
Step 2. Health Survey

Many resources are available to help you.

- The [Biometric Screening and Health Survey web page](#)
- The [Biometric Screening Process video](#)
- Cheat Sheets for both the [Quest Lab](#) and the [Physician Results Form](#)
- The [August To Your Health](#) newsletter
- The [Rally Help Guide](#)
- The [Biometric Screening and Healthy Screening FAQs](#)

Employees who complete an annual biometric screening and Rally health survey earn a preferred health plan premium which will save \$500 in the upcoming year.

Holiday Budgeting Webinar

To reduce holiday stress and a credit card hangover in January, start planning your spending now. Explore ways to budget for gift giving, travel and entertaining and put together a plan of action so that you can enjoy the spirit of the season rather than worry about overspending. [Watch the Holiday Budgeting Webinar](#) and start today.



FREE Onsite Flu Shots, Oct. 14

You can still register for the October 14 clinic in downtown Clearwater. Complete the [waiver form](#), and bring your insurance card.

[Thursday, Oct. 14, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.](#)

Planning Department, 310 Court St., Clearwater

Watch UnitedHealthcare Nurse Liaison Amy's [5-minute video](#) on flu shots and [see the FAQs](#).



Is Spicy Food Good For You?

Spice may really be the key to life. Embracing a balanced diet with a bit of a kick can do more than just leave your mouth a little tingly. Turns out there is evidence showing that adding more zing into your diet can aid weight loss, boost heart health, and help support a healthy gut! Looking to spice up your life? Whether you're a hot pepper eating champion or just looking to add a little extra flavor to your diet, explore the many health benefits of a fiery flavored diet in the Rally article [Is Spicy Food Good for You?](#)



Wellness Center Orientations

To access the Wellness Center, schedule an orientation by using the [Orientation Sign-up](#).

Questions? Contact Wellness at wellness@pinellascounty.org or 464-4049.



To Your Health

A monthly publication by the Pinellas County Wellness Program. Contributors: Jane Grannis and Amy Hertog. Layout: Mary Sault. Contact us at wellness@pinellascounty.org or (727) 464-3367, option 1.

