

## **Substance use disorders in pregnancy and neonatal abstinence syndrome programs available for members**

Substance use disorders are on the rise and are of particular concern in women of child-bearing age who are or may become pregnant.

Women are at risk for delivering babies who are born preterm, low birth weight and with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS)/neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome (NOWS) if they:

- Take prescribed opioids for pain or addiction treatment.
- Misuse prescribed opioid medications.
- Use opioids illicitly.
- Use opioids in combination with benzodiazepines, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) or tobacco.

### **UniCare Health Plan of West Virginia, Inc. (UniCare) NAS program**

In response to the opioid epidemic, UniCare developed a comprehensive NAS program that seeks to improve outcomes for women and newborns affected by substance abuse disorders, including opioid use and misuse before and during pregnancy. The program includes primary and secondary interventions including efforts to prioritize pregnant women for screening, increase member engagement in treatment and recovery, increase access to reproductive counseling and preconception care, and increase familiarity of evidence-based standards of care for newborns with NAS.

### **Support for your patients**

UniCare is committed to supporting women of reproductive age in an effort to reduce the incidence and impact of NAS. If you have a UniCare patient with a substance use disorder who is a nonpregnant female of reproductive age (15 to 44), we can provide them with peer-based social and emotional support. Our Women's Wellness & Recovery Program provides support to nonpregnant women with or at risk for substance use disorders.

A Women's Wellness & Recovery (peer support) specialist will reach out to your patient in an effort to:

- Connect her to care, recovery and social support services.
- Engage her in reproductive life planning.
- Offer peer-based social and emotional support.

Our Substance Use in Pregnancy OB Case Management Program can provide your at-risk pregnant UniCare patients with support and coordination throughout their pregnancy. A dedicated case manager will reach out by phone to pregnant patients with or at risk for substance use disorders to provide intensive, wraparound case management through six months postdelivery. The case manager will support your patient by:

- Providing coordination for overall health and wellbeing including social determinants.
- Facilitating access to treatment.
- Preparing the member for delivery, NAS treatment, discharge and postdischarge newborn care.
- Providing interconception (family planning) coaching.

If you would like more information on UniCare's NAS Program, or if you have a patient who would benefit from speaking with a Women's Wellness & Recovery specialist or a Substance Use in Pregnancy OB case manager, please call the Customer Care Center at **1-800-782-0095** to ask about the programs or to ask for a Case Management referral for the member.