

Resources for maternal mental health screening

Quick reference guide for prescribers

Based on California law,¹ UnitedHealthcare has developed a maternal mental health program. The purpose is to encourage licensed health care professionals who provide prenatal or postpartum care to offer maternal mental health screening during the second and/or third trimester and/or at the postpartum visit.

Guidelines for maternal mental health screenings

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends OB-GYNs and other obstetric health care professionals **screen patients for depression and anxiety** at least once during the perinatal period using a standardized, validated tool.

You should screen patients for depression and anxiety again during the postpartum period. Clinical staff should be prepared to start medical therapy and/or refer patients to appropriate behavioral health resources.

How to perform maternal mental health screenings

The state of California and ACOG recommend you use the following guidelines when performing maternal mental health screenings:

- Use the **Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) tool** during pregnancy and/or the postpartum period
 - Read the PHQ-9 instructions before giving and scoring the test
- Refer the member to behavioral health and/or substance abuse services as needed
 - Monitor the referral process to help ensure the member successfully receives treatment

Behavioral health contacts

Please refer to resources that assist patients who may need mental health and/or substance abuse treatment:

- Mental Health and Substance Abuse (OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions of California)
 - Support Line: **866-209-9320**
 - **[Providerexpress.com](https://www.providerexpress.com)**

Support services for members

Please have members check with their employer group to verify their maternity benefit. If an Administrative Services Only (ASO) customer wants a deeper reach on maternity support, please refer them to the Personal Health Support page. We offer maternal health support services, such as:

- **Maternity Support Program**
 - Maternity management program that promotes healthy birth outcomes for pregnant members, through telephone maternal coaching and online maternity educational videos
- **High-Risk Solutions**
 - This is a program that promotes healthy birth outcomes for pregnant members, especially those with high-risk pregnancies. Maternity nurse engagement will engage the member with their health plan and their health care provider as needed.

Quality monitoring for maternal mental health care

The UnitedHealthcare of California quality team reviews medical records to help ensure you are complying with maternal mental health screening requirements. They assess records for mental health screening during the patient's second or third trimester and/or at the postpartum visit.



Questions? We're here to help.

Please email ca_pr_team@uhc.com to contact a provider advocate.

¹Cal Ins Code §10123.867* and *Cal Health & Saf Code § 1367.625.

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