



MI Health Link

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## ***SEPTEMBER 2024 BULLETIN***

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### **Monthly Spotlight:**

#### ***Healthy Aging Month***

It's time to celebrate Healthy Aging Month for September, the annual observance month designed to focus national attention on the positive aspects of growing older.

The observance month began more than 30 years ago as part of the [National Healthy Aging® Campaign](#) to continue to draw attention to healthy, active lifestyles at any age.

Carolyn Worthington, president of Healthy Aging, created it in 1992:

“Our goal in creating the month was to draw attention to the positive sides of growing older. We felt there needed to be a second time during the year in addition to [May is Older Americans Month](#). September was chosen because so many people felt they could “get started” more easily at that time. Maybe the back-to-school routine never really goes away.”

Now, after more than thirty years, Worthington sees the national interest in continuing healthy lifestyles well into old age as never been stronger.

“We were pleased to announce that the [U.S. Senate](#) unanimously passed the resolution marking September as National Healthy Aging Month in 2021,” Worthington said. Numerous governors before that proclaimed the national observance month for their states as well. “We are proud of our efforts to continue to build awareness for healthy lifestyles. Since we kicked off the observance month, the myths of aging have been chipping away,” Worthington said. “We are also proud to say the month we started is now on most national health observance calendars. Of course, there are still stereotypes about older adults,” Worthington said. Perhaps the baby boomers embracing aging like no other generation started turning the tide. Seeing people in their 80s and 90s doing spectacular things today is not unusual.”

10 Tips for Healthy Aging:

1. **Move more, sit less.** Why? Physical activity is your weapon to help control blood pressure, help prevent heart disease and stroke, and possibly lower your risk for depression, anxiety, and conditions like certain cancers and type 2 diabetes. What to do? Choose something fun so you can keep at it, like cycling, walking, dancing, swimming, or aerobics.
2. **How much do you need to do?** Current national recommendations are 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week and two days of muscle-strengthening training. That’s only 20 minutes a day, 7 days a week, or around an hour a day if you do three days a week.
3. **Get motivated with free websites** and apps like [All Trails](#) to find parks and trails around the world; [American Heart Association](#) with ideas on how to join a walking club, or The CDC with [ideas for individuals with a disability](#)
4. **Get Those Annual Check-Ups.** Make this month the time to set up your annual physical and other health screenings. Go to the appointments, and then, hopefully, you can stop worrying about ailments for a while.
5. **Volunteer.** ..Being of service is an excellent way to bring happiness into your life and not focus on yourself. Refocus on others and volunteer your

time and expertise. [United Way](#), the [American Red Cross](#), [VolunteerMatch](#), and [AmeriCorps](#) are all helpful resources.

6. **Beat back loneliness.** Don't wait for the phone to ring. Be proactive and call someone for a lunch date. Set up a calendar of lunch dates and challenge yourself to have at least two lunch dates per month (once a week is even better!) It doesn't have to be expensive ... pack a picnic, and head to a park. Try to mix up your get-togethers with old friends and new acquaintances.
7. **Rekindle or follow a new passion.** Take a hard look at what you like to do rather than what other people tell you to do to meet new people. Pick some activities where you might meet new friends.
8. **Get a dog.** If you don't have one, get one and walk. You will be amazed how many people you will meet through your dog. Can't have one? Check your local humane society to see if they need dog walkers
9. **Be realistic about what you can accomplish.** Learn to say no ..., and don't overwhelm yourself with a to-do list. The non-profit [Mental Health America](#) offers more tips for reducing or controlling stress.
10. **Plan for your next passage.** Capitalize on your career experience and start a new one. Yes, enjoy a brief "retirement." Travel, and spend more time with family and friends. Develop new hobbies. Redefining your purpose to maintain a sense of identity and purpose is essential to a healthy lifestyle.

The MI Health Link team supports and encourages everyone to celebrate Healthy Aging Month. The goal of the MI Health Link program aligns with this month as we continue to provide services that empower members to embrace aging and independence.

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## Program and Policy Notes

### MI Health Link Program, Contractual, Policy Requirements and Highlights

Congratulations to MI Health Link team member Kayla Kowal! Kayla has been with the MI Health Link program as a contract manager since 2021 and will now be transitioning into her new role as Policy Specialist for the MI Health Link and HIDE SNP programs within the Waiver Monitoring and Federal Reporting Section of the Integrated Care Division. As the Policy Specialist Kayla will be responsible for policy research and analysis, as well as drafting and promulgating policy including the program minimum operating standards and Medicaid Provider Manual chapter. In addition to serving as the program policy specialist, Kayla will be responsible for the

operational oversight of the program's 1915(b) waiver authority and will support oversight of the 1915(c) waiver authority.

Since August 2021, Kayla has worked as a Contract Manager for the MI Health Link Program within the Integrated Program Management Section where she oversaw the Three-Way Contract between MDHHS and the Integrated Care Organizations participating in the program in partnership with CMS. In this position she monitored ICO adherence to contract provisions, federal and state regulations, rules and reporting requirements as well as program specific guidance and policies. Kayla has a master's degree in Judicial Administration and has previous experience as an Administrative Coordinator at Region 10 PIHP where she led the implementation of various grants and initiatives, including the State Opioid Response (SOR) and as an Administrative Support Coordinator at the Saint Clair County Prosecutor's Office. Kayla is passionate about working to improve public health and wellness. Outside of work, she spends most of her time with her baby nephew, her puppy, and her husband. She loves gardening and spending as much time as possible out on the lake. Please join us in welcoming Kayla to her new role!



## Beneficiary Health and Welfare:

### *Suicide Prevention Month*

September is Suicide Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness on this topic to reduce the stigma, educate and save lives.

Suicide is a major public health concern, with more than 700,000 deaths each year globally. In 2021, suicide was the 11th leading cause of death overall in the United States. In 2022, 13.2 million people reported seriously considering suicide, 1.6 million reported a suicide attempt, and millions more supported someone close to them who was in distress. Suicide is complicated and tragic, but it is often preventable. Learn about the behaviors that could be a sign someone is thinking about suicide.

**Warning signs that someone may be at immediate risk for attempting suicide include:**

- Talking about wanting to die or wanting to kill themselves

- Expressing feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Feeling unbearable emotional or physical pain
- Talking about being a burden to others.
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Giving away important possessions
- Saying goodbye to friends and family
- Putting affairs in order, such as making a will
- Engaging in risky behavior

**Main risk factors for suicide are:**

- Depression, other mental disorders, or substance use disorder
- Chronic pain
- History of suicide attempt(s)
- Family history of suicide
- Social Isolation/Loneliness
- Exposure to violence
- Financial issues
- Criminal/Legal problems
- Intergenerational Trauma

**Action Steps to take if you think someone may be in danger of suicide:**

- **Call 911**, if danger for self-harm seems imminent.
- **Call or text 988** to reach the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) to talk to a caring professional.
- **Ask them** if they are thinking about killing themselves. This will not put the idea into their head or make it more likely that they will attempt suicide.
- **Listen** without judging and show you care.
- **Stay with the person** or make sure the person is in a private, secure place with another caring person until you can get further help.
- **Remove any objects** that could be used in a suicide attempt.

Suicide and Suicide Attempt are types of critical incidents that are required to be reported to MDHHS for MI Health Link Members.

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## Education and Support Opportunities

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**Crisis Intervention in Behavioral Healthcare**

**Tuesday October 8th, 2024 12:00PM**

The Michigan Center for Rural Health brings this learning opportunity on crisis intervention. After attending this session, participants will report an increase in knowledge of working with clients in crisis situations, risk assessment, de-escalation, safety planning, evidenced-based practices in treatment and the discharge planning process. Click [here](#) to register and learn more.

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**Physical Activity and Dementia**

**Thursday October 10th, 2024 1:00PM**

American Society on Aging brings this learning opportunity on physical activity and dementia. Physical inactivity is one of the known modifiable risk factors for dementia. Numerous studies have highlighted the positive impact of exercise on cognitive function and the risk of developing dementia. This course provides actionable guidance and tools to help providers effectively address this opportunity with patients and families. Click [here](#) to register and learn more.

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**Trauma and Aging: Engagement of Older Latinx Individuals Using Trauma Informed Clinical and Research Practices**

**Tuesday October 15th, 2024 1:00PM**

American Society on Aging brings this learning opportunity on trauma and aging. After attending this session, participants will be able to list three reasons for incorporating trauma-informed principles into clinical and research practice with older Latinx communities, identify three key reflexive questions when addressing trauma in older Latinx communities, and discuss at least 3 strategies to employ trauma-informed principles in clinical and research settings. Click [here](#) to register and learn more.

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## Resource Link:

### ***Creative Uses of Assistive Technology***

Everyday there are new innovations in Assistive Technology. This year at the *ADvancing States HCBS Conference* in Baltimore, Maryland, many new innovative technologies and devices were on display and in discussions.

One group of items that were discussed in multiple ways were smart home devices, including smart doorbells, locks, lights and adjustable thermostats. While our waiver does not allow for the internet to support the Alexa connectivity, this can be a useful tool for members who have the ability to obtain or already have internet access at home. There are even devices to assist with social isolation through interactive devices. Along the same digital lines, there are innovations in technology including ADL assistance programs and brain development games.

Some technologies may be available to assist medical monitoring that can be accessed by medical professionals if needed. While a Continuous Glucose Monitor may be a more common item thought of, other items may be available and beneficial for some individuals such as a sleep mat, pulse ox, blood pressure monitor or scale. These items may provide more information in real time in order to identify or rule out issues of health concerns being experienced by the member. It can also include items such as a fall detection sensor, room sensors, and smart stoves.

With each of the highly technical innovations, there are also simple approaches. Some states and organizations discussed their creation of personalized items using 3D Printers. These have been used to create key holders, pencil grips, attachments for non-adaptive items, and many more personalized items. The wonderful part of these is each is unique and creative in their own rights.

While each device may have more benefits for some members than others and are not a “one-size fits all” approach, exploring these new innovations and technologies can be helpful in meeting our members’ needs in new ways. If you have found an innovated approach to meeting a member’s need, consult with the MOS or email the waiver team to explore potential coverage.

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## Q & A: Your Questions About MI Health Link

*If you have a question about the MHL program we want to hear from you. We will work to get you the information you need.*

**Q: If I have already reported abuse/neglect/exploitation or another incident involving a MI Health Link member to Adult Protective Services, do I need to report it to MDHHS?**

**A: Yes, the ICO must report critical incidents to MDHHS and other required authorities according to state policies and processes and as approved in the MI Health Link HCBS waiver application.**

Please send any questions for future bulletins to [Integratedcare@michigan.gov](mailto:Integratedcare@michigan.gov).

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## Topic Submission

If you have suggestions for topics to be addressed in future additions of the MI Health Link Bulletin, please send them to [Integratedcare@michigan.gov](mailto:Integratedcare@michigan.gov)



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## Quick Links

[MI Health Link Website](#)

[CMS Financial Alignment Website](#)



[MI Health Link Minimum Operating Standards](#)

[MDHHS Medicaid Provider Manual](#)

### **Previously Released MHL Bulletins**

Previously released MI Health Link Bulletins can be found by visiting the [MI Health Link Website](#).

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[Become a foster parent through Michigan Department of Health & Human Services foster care program.](#)



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