

Chapter 7

Clinical Practice Guidelines

Overview

This chapter covers South Country Health Alliance Clinical Practice Guidelines.

Clinical Practice Guidelines

- Preventive Services for Adults Guideline
- Preventive Services for Children Guidelines
- Prenatal, Routine Care Guideline
- Diabetes, Type 2 Management Guideline
- Asthma, Diagnosis and Management Guideline
- Hypertension Diagnosis and Treatment
- Adult Depression
- Children & Adolescents with Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder

Clinical Practice Guidelines Overview

Clinical Practice Guidelines are systematically developed statements on medical practices that help a health care practitioner make decisions about appropriate health care for specific medical conditions for their patients. South Country adopts and disseminates clinical practice guidelines to:

- enhance patient and practitioner clinical decision-making
- improve health care, and
- reduce unnecessary variation in the health care delivery system.

South Country adopts guidelines to assist health care practitioners in recommended courses of intervention, including possible treatment options. Clinical Practice Guidelines are not a substitute for the advice of a physician or other knowledgeable health care practitioners or providers. Guidelines are one of the tools used in identifying areas of clinical improvement.

Clinical practice guidelines are accepted from nationally or community-based recognized sources. In general, the primary source for these guidelines is the Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement (ICSI). ICSI is a community-based organization which develops and adopts clinical practice guidelines with involvement from community-based physicians and other appropriate health care professionals. The guidelines are based on reasonable medical evidence or a consensus on clinical treatment patterns by physicians in the selected field of practice. If ICSI does not have a guideline for the desired topic, SCHA may choose to review and adopt guidelines from other sources such as medical specialty societies and other professional organizations that develop guidelines.

Each year, the Quality Assurance Committee reviews existing guidelines in consultation with contracting health care professionals, identifies and adopts new guidelines, and determines priority guidelines based on relevance for each of South Country's populations. Priority guidelines include preventive care, chronic disease, and behavioral health practice guidelines that are appropriate for children, adolescents, young adults, and adult populations, including seniors age 65+ years and persons with disabilities. Guidelines for seniors and persons with disabilities are consistent with accepted practices for geriatric age and persons with disabilities. On an annual basis, practice guideline measurement data are used to assess if desired outcomes are being achieved.

South Country and its delegates apply these guidelines to decisions for utilization management, member education, coverage of services, and other areas to which there is application and consistency with the guidelines. SCHA also uses practice guidelines to evaluate the appropriateness, cost-effectiveness, and medical necessity of care by looking at the processes and outcomes of patient care.

The format of South Country practice guidelines includes the primary source with a direct link (in the guideline title) to the source's online content for each clinical practice guideline.

Currently, South Country has 8 priority clinical practice guidelines:

1. [Preventive Services for Adults](#)
Primary Source: U.S. Preventive Services Task Force
2. [Preventive Services for Children and Adolescents](#)
Primary Source: U.S. Preventive Services Task Force
3. [Prenatal Care](#)
Primary Source: American Academy of Family Physicians
4. [Diabetes, Type 2](#)
Primary Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement
5. [Asthma](#)
Primary Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement
6. [Hypertension Diagnosis and Treatment](#)
Primary Source: AHA/ASA Journals
7. [Depression in Adults](#)
Primary Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement
8. [Children & Adolescents with Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder](#)
Primary Source: American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

South Country educates members about current practice guideline recommendations through member newsletters, health promotion, disease management, and quality improvement project materials. Priority practice guidelines are made available on South Country's web site and sent to members and other stakeholders upon request.

Periodically, and as updated, these guidelines will be disseminated through the Provider Page at www.mnscha.org, the *Provider Network News* e-newsletter, as well as South Country's health promotion, disease management program, and quality improvement project provider communications.