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MCO Name Change: Amerigroup to Wellpoint

Effective January 1, 2024, Amerigroup Iowa, Inc., a subsidiary of Elevance Health Serving Medicaid enrollees, has rebranded as Wellpoint Iowa, Inc.



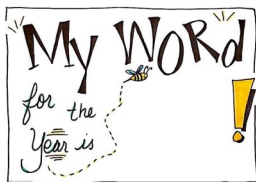
What type of goal fits you?

The new year is often used as a time to reflect and make goals or resolutions. If you have goals for yourself this year, it may be wise to think about the type of goal you are setting.

What motivates you towards self improvement?



SMART Goal: setting a goal that is Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound may work for you if you are the type of person that finds making a following a plan comforting, likes making lists, tracking data, or thinking things through before acting.



Word of the Year: choosing a word of the year is a more abstract way of setting a goal and may work well for people who don't like feeling trapped by a regimented plan. This type of goal may also work well for goals that are not easily measured such as becoming more calm, acting kindly towards others, or gaining pride in oneself. The premise is that by reminding oneself everyday of their word, one is more likely to act accordingly.



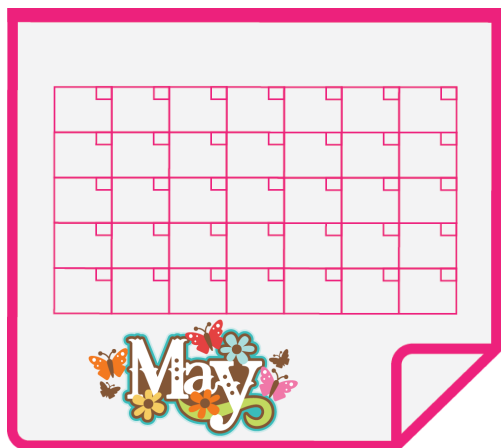
Habit Stacking: popularized by James Clear in his book, *Atomic Habits*, habit stacking is the idea of making very small steps every day to improve ones overall life that are connected to existing routines. For example, if one wanted to become more tidy, they may stack the new habit of making their bed on top of the existing habit of brushing their teeth. This type of goal is helpful for people who like to see small wins.



PITCH Updates



STOP HIV IOWA



2024 ANNUAL
WELLNESS SUMMIT

**MAY
3-5
2024**

Wesley Woods
Indianola, IA

More details including
application coming soon



SAVE THE DATE

Positive Iowans Taking Charge is a nonprofit organization with the mission, “PITCH serves Iowans living with HIV by creating an atmosphere where people living with HIV can unite, advocate, and assist others to achieve better health and wellness.” As always, PITCH is hosting its monthly meet and greets for those living with HIV and their supporters. You may register for these virtual meetings through the website or via the QR code at the bottom of this page. This year, PITCH and the Anti Stigma group of Stop HIV Iowa are teaming up for the annual HIV wellness summit. Wellness summits in the past have focused on living life to the fullest despite a positive HIV status. For more information on the wellness summit, meet and greets, and other resources specific for those living with HIV, please visit the PITCH website at pitchiowa.com

**Iowans living with HIV are invited to our
monthly meet & greets!**



Fourth Thursday of Every Month

Join us via Zoom at 6:30 p.m.

Register at
www.pitchiowa.com



FIND SUPPORT

How it works:

Join us at 6:30 p.m. for a presentation, panel, or conversation structured around a specific topic.



Then, at 7 p.m. the group will split into two via breakout rooms: one for adults 18-35 and another for adults 35+.

& CONNECTION

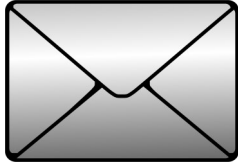
Register to join us each month via Zoom! Iowans living with HIV are eligible for a \$10 gift card after attending a meeting.

PITCH
PO Box 11094
Cedar Rapids, IA



REGISTER NOW

Medical Reminders



Medical premiums, social security letters, and other insurance information are often sent by mail so it is very important to check your mailbox this time of year. Please send a copy any such letters to your case manager or field benefits specialist to ensure continuity of insurance coverage and case management.



Insurance Premiums and Social Security letters

Urgent! If you work with a case manager or field benefit specialist, it is important for you to get a copy of your 2024 insurance premium statement (bill) for Medicare Part D, Medicare Supplement, ADAP sponsored insurance (ASI) and/or 2024 Social Security Benefits letter to them as soon as possible. You can send this via text, email, mail, or bring your letter and cards with you to your next appointment.

MEPD Premiums Are Back!

During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE), Iowa Medicaid suspended cost sharing, including premiums and copays. Premiums for the Healthy and Well Kids in Iowa (Hawki) program and Medicaid for Employed People with Disabilities (MEPD) have been reinstated as of January 1, 2024, and copayments for all enrollees will be reinstated June 1, 2024. If you are case managed and receive assistance paying these premiums, please send your MEPD statement to your case manager or FBS Eliza Rose as soon as possible. You may text a picture of your premium statement to Eliza's cell: 319-333-8714 or email at deros@uiowa.edu.

UIHC's Support Group for People Living with HIV

Consider joining UIHC's Support Group for People Living with HIV. We are focused on connecting with others. Share experiences, resources, coping strategies, or just chat to get to know others.

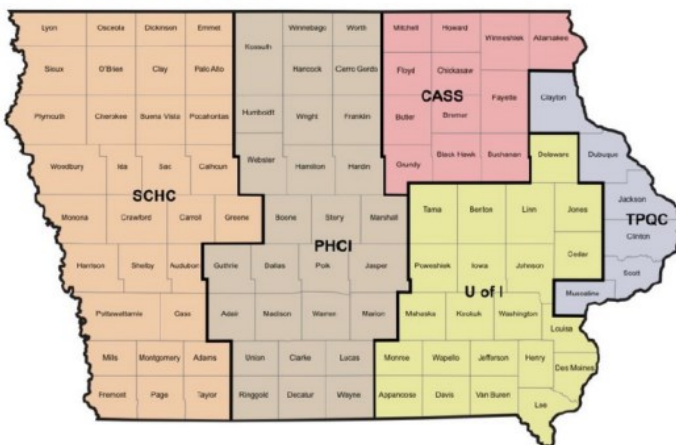
Who: Kari Vrban, LMSW hosts a virtual group for those living with HIV

What: a monthly meeting for connecting with others who may share experiences

When: First Wednesday of the month from 4:00-5:30pm

Where: online for now

How: contact Kari Vrban to register. (319) 467-5655 or kari-vrban@uiowa.edu



HOPWA (Housing Opportunity for People with AIDS)

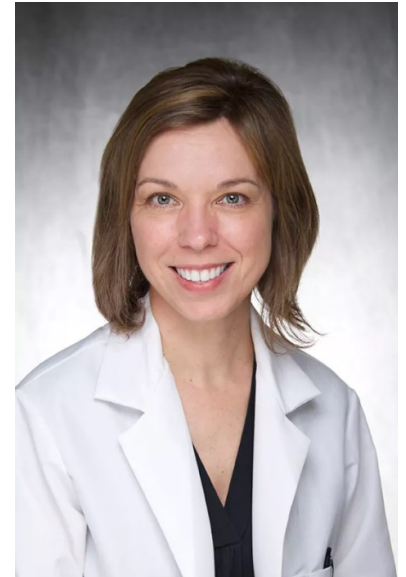
Are you in need of financial assistance to get or maintain housing? You may be eligible for services provided by HOPWA such as Long-Term Rental Assistance, Short-Term Rent, Mortgage and Utility Assistance, or Permanent Housing Placement. Eligibility is based on your income and limits vary by county. Please direct questions to Viri Estudillo at 319-353-8951 or viridiana-estudillo@uiowa.edu

Staffing Updates

Farewell and good luck!

Robin Hayward, PA-C (she/her/hers)

It is with mixed emotions that I share the news with you all that I plan on leaving my current position here and moving to Arkansas sometime in early spring. I've lived in Iowa my whole life (Iowa City for the past 33 years!) so this will be a big change. I'm excited for the new adventures this move brings including biking, hiking, and other outdoor adventures. But I'm also very sad to be leaving this remarkable group of patients and co-workers that I've grown to deeply care about. It's been an honor to be part of your lives for the past 7 years, thank you for everything.



Welcome!



Mike Lawler, BSW (he/him/his)

Hello, my name is Mike and I am excited to join the Ryan White Program. This is my second stint as a social worker within the UIHC system, having worked with the Health Care Benefits Assistance Program for over 4 years. I've also worked in community non-profit agencies working with individuals and families with limited resources to gain access to housing, food, emergency financial assistance, and other needs. I'm looking forward to bringing these experiences to an already well established multi-disciplinary team.

I live here in Iowa City with my wife and son, as well as our dog, Lemon. In my free time I enjoy going outdoors and finding good live music around town. I look forward to getting to know our team and clients in the coming months.

Welcome!

Cassidy Chalupa, ARNP (she/her/hers)

Hello everyone, my name is Cassidy and I am a new ARNP within the infectious disease department at UIHC. I completed my nurse practitioner schooling with Walden University and graduated in May of 2023. I have been a part of the UIHC family since 2018 and very excited to continue my career here with this team. In my free time, I enjoy spending time with my family and dogs. I am looking forward to working with everyone.



Community Resources

LIHEAP

LIHEAP

A reminder that applications for LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) are being accepted now through April 30, 2024 for households under 200% of the 2023 federal poverty guidelines. Eligible households will have a lump sum payment made directly to their account with the utility company responsible for their heat. Contact your local community action outreach office to apply.

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services will begin accepting applications for Rent Reimbursement claims for 2023 starting Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 8am. Low-income Iowans aged 65 or older or low-income disabled adults may be eligible for partial reimbursement of rent paid up to \$1,000. You can apply online at <https://benefits.stateofiowahhs.org/program/rentreimbursement> or call LifeLong Links: Iowa's Aging and Disability Resource Center for assistance at 1-866-468-7887. You will need to be able to provide verification of identity, disability, income, and rent paid. Claims for 2022 can be filed until December 31, 2024; claims for 2023 can be filed until December 31, 2025.



Health & Human Services



(319) 351-0326

Since 2014, Shelter House has opened a low-barrier Winter Emergency Shelter at a temporary location from December through March. This satellite facility is intended for individuals for whom homelessness has become a chronic condition. Barriers to entry such as sobriety, participation in programs, and other requirements are removed. With our expanded winter shelter capacity, individuals who would have otherwise been incarcerated or sleeping in encampments, parking ramps and hallways of apartment buildings are instead ensured a safe, warm place to sleep.

(Choosing Life, Empowerment, Action and Results)

CLEAR is a program open to those living with HIV interested in increasing or enhancing behaviors that support a healthy life. The program specializes in topics such as medication adherence, disclosure of HIV status, managing sexual risks and self advocacy in health care, but the program is personalized to fit your needs and wants. Your program will consist of 6 or more one hour sessions at UIHC or virtually. For more information, please contact Kari Vrbanc at 319-467-5655.

Behind the Scenes of the Ryan White Program



Rina Chaudhary, Clinical Trial/Grant Specialist (she/her/hers)

Rina has been supporting folks who live with HIV for many years by working on research data and keeping detailed track of our grant funding that provide the many services we offer. You may have spoken to her if you receive nutritional supplements. Rina is known for her generosity and for being a warm, caring presence in the office.

Fun fact:

Rina almost always has candy to share.

A Year in Review by Mike Bates

The dawn of 2024 is a great time to look ahead to an exciting future, but also to take one last look back at everything we accomplished together in 2023. For instance, 833 patients (94 of whom were new to us) met 1,735 times with their providers, both here at the University and at our outreach clinic in Cedar Falls. And 96.5 percent of those patients were virally suppressed. There is certainly reason to celebrate the fact that Iowa has the highest percentage of people living with HIV who are virally suppressed among all the states.

We realize that our patients do the most important work leading to those incredible numbers! Our Ryan White team goal is to provide support and coordinate medical care to contribute to your health. Our case managers spent almost 3,500 hours working directly with and for their clients this year and we were fortunate to have the resources to provide more than \$25,000 in food assistance, nearly \$59,000 in utilities assistance, and more than \$65,000 in housing assistance to make sure our patients remain stably housed and nourished, allowing them to focus on their health. We were also able to assist with insurance premiums, transportation assistance and cover many medical costs for our clients to help them remain in medical care.

Our mental health providers were also kept busy this year, as we know how important mental health is to being able to address physical health. Those providers completed 300 appointments in clinic in 2023, while our Behavioral Health Coordinator spent more than 150 hours meeting individually with clients outside of clinic. We helped our patients complete almost 524 dental appointments here at the university as well.

There was also so much going on behind the scenes with our program, from our new Administrative Services Coordinator, who greets new patients and connects them to care, to our new Field Benefits Coordinator who helps clients manage their insurance, to our data team who generates, tracks, and verifies all the numbers above.

We are very pleased that we helped Iowa lead the nation in viral suppression in 2023 and that we were able to contribute to our patients health, and we hope you are too. We strive to do even better in 2024.



Shout Out to Mike Bates, Data Quality Manager (he/him/his)

Mike works support our clients living with HIV by tracking all sorts of data such as patient demographics, appointment statistics, financial support services, and much more. Keeping detailed track of the program is essential for maintaining the high standards needed to better the health outcomes for our patients. Mike is currently leading a project to improve health equity by identifying and reducing barriers to attending medical appointments.

Fun facts:

Mike is a great singer, enjoys karaoke and is excellent at trivia.

Contact Us and Questionnaire



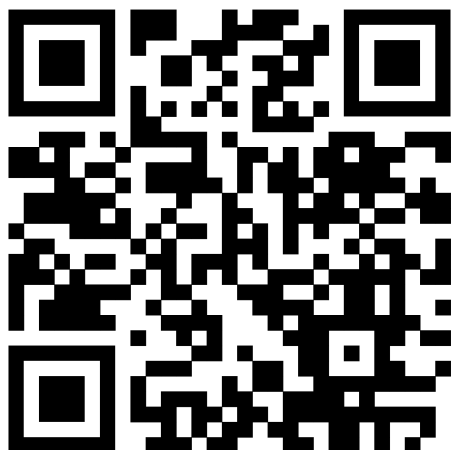
Contact Us!

Tricia Kroll	Program Coordinator, Case Manager	319 384 7307	tricia-kroll@uiowa.edu
Malory Dreasler	Case Manager	319 356 1545	malory-dreasler@uiowa.edu
Kari Vrbanc	Behavioral Health Consultant, Case Manager	319 467 5655	kari-vrbanc@uiowa.edu
Viri Estudillo Gil	HOPWA Manager, Case Manager	319 353 8951	viridiana-estudillo@uiowa.edu
Lisa Dye	Case Manager	319 335 7309	lisa-dye@uiowa.edu
Megan Mineart	Case Manager	319 335 7218	megan-mineart@uiowa.edu
Mike Lawler	Case Manager	319 335 7449	michael-j-lawler@uiowa.edu
Eliza Rose	Field Benefits Specialist	319 467 5662	deros@uiowa.edu
Rina Chaudhary	Clinical Trial/Grant Specialist	319 335 7437	rina-chaudhary@uiowa.edu
Mike Bates	Data Quality Manager	319 335 7442	michael-c-bates@uiowa.edu
Ashley Brennan	Administrative Services Coordinator	319 335 7520	ashley-brennan-1@uiowa.edu

UIHC Virology Newsletter Questionnaire

Do you have feedback on the newsletter? Is the information presented helpful? Please fill out this anonymous google form to help us improve! You may fill out the online form by going to <https://forms.gle/Za4sWok5aqH1uFNC7> or by opening the camera of your smartphone and scanning the QR code below. If you need assistance accessing the form, please ask a social worker at your next appointment.

This is not a method of contacting a healthcare provider!



University of Iowa Virology Newsletter Questionnaire

This form is for feedback on the University of Iowa Virology Newsletter. Thank you very much for participating. We will use this feedback to improve the quality of our quarterly newsletters. **This form is anonymous.**

Not shared

* Indicates required question

This is not a method for contacting a health care provider. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 911. If you need to contact our Medicine Specialty Schedulers, please call (319) 356 - 8133. Our HIV Program Office can be reached at (319) 335 - 7520.