

Advantage Dental

From DentaQuest

Policy Name: Member Correspondence	Policy Number:
Type of Policy: Operations	Effective Date: 12/1/18
Responsible Department: DCO Operations	
Page Number (s): 3	Revised Date:
Approved By: QI Committee	Approved Date: 11/14/18
<p>PURPOSE:</p> <p>Communication with members is essential to engaging the member in the member’s health. Advantage Dental Services, LLC’s (“Advantage”) policy when drafting correspondence or other communication and educational materials directed to members is to use plain language in order to provide better readability and communicate in a respectful, accurate and effective manner. Improving Health Literacy, which is the members capacity to obtain, process and understand basic health information, will improve the member’s ability to make appropriate health decisions regarding their need to prevent or treat their illness.</p> <p>This policy applies to all Advantage correspondence (both electronic and paper) and educational materials sent to or intended for OHP members to read and understand. This policy is applicable at all times and is intended to provide a framework for improving Health Literacy with our members and foster effective communication.</p>	
<p>DEFINITIONS:</p> <p>“Correspondence” means letters, educational materials, and brochures sent to OHP members from someone inside the organization either via paper, fax or electronically (email).</p> <p>“Health Literacy” means the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information needed to make appropriate health decisions regarding services needed to prevent or treat illness.</p> <p>“Culture Competency” means the process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, disabilities, religions, genders, sexual orientation and other diversity factors in a manner than recognizes, affirms and values the worth of individuals, families and communities, and protects and preserves the dignity of each.</p>	
<p>POLICY:</p> <p>HOW TO DRAFT CORRESPONDENCE TO MEMBERS</p> <p>When drafting Correspondence, the following guidelines shall be followed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use standard practice of writing all correspondence as if everyone may have limited Health Literacy. You cannot tell by looking at someone if they have a 	

higher or lower Health Literacy. Anxiety when trying to understand a written communication can reduce the ability to manage and retain health information. Everyone will benefit from having written communication that is clear and concise.

2. Use plain language when writing all correspondence. The use of plain language includes being clear, brief and friendly. When applicable, address the reader directly and use an active voice when writing. Communicate the message efficiently.

- a. Example of use of Plain Language

“If there are any points on which you require further explanation, we would be happy to provide additional details by phone.”



“If you have any questions, please call.”

- b. Example of use of Active Voice

“If there are any points on which you require further explanation, we would be happy to provide additional details by phone.”



“If you have any questions, please call.”

3. Use consistent terminology and standardize materials. For clinical wording, use the Oregon Health Authority approved wording for tooth numbers and dental procedure explanations as set forth in the Oregon Understanding Medical Terminology Guide.
4. Avoid using idioms (i.e. “clean bill of health”), cultural references or cultural-specific vocabulary, Slang and Jargon without layman definition (i.e. “dental caries”)
5. When drafting correspondence, be inclusive, respectful of difference, responsive to differences and be welcoming.

HOW TO REVIEW DOCUMENTS FOR READABILITY

1. Member correspondence and educational materials have to be at a sixth (6th) grade reading level and written in a language sufficiently clear that a layperson could understand the notice and make an informed decision.
2. All correspondence and educational materials to members should be reviewed using the Flesch-Kincaid standard in Microsoft Word to determine the readability level. When running the Flesch-Kincaid test, follow the following guidelines:
 - a. Review the freeform sections of a template letter
 - b. Remove names (member, provider, clinic, etc)
 - c. Remove dates and numbers

- d. Shortening sentence length can help improve readability
- e. Use layman’s definitions to define complex medical terminology

PROCEDURES

APPROVAL OF MATERIALS

All correspondence and educational materials being sent to the member directly by Advantage Dental Services, LLC must be approved by the Coordinated Care Organization (CCO) and Oregon Health Authority (OHA) prior to being sent to the member. All correspondence and educational materials that have been approved by the CCO and OHA shall include an approved document number that shows the OHP-ADS, then the year and the version number. For example: OHP-ADS-18-001 for a document drafted in 2018 and the first version.

MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

Advantage’s staff draft member correspondences that include member handbooks, member welcome letters, correspondence related to grievances and appeals, correspondence related to preauthorizations of services and referrals and finally educational materials. The DCO Operations team will be responsible for drafting communications that follow this policy and the VP of DCO Operations will be responsible for monitoring the DCO Operations team’s correspondence for compliance with this policy and communicate any issues to the personnel involved and recommend suggestions for improvement. In addition, Advantage’s Compliance Department will audit member correspondence and educational materials for compliance.

REVISION HISTORY

11/15/18	
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