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OHCA seeking input from 'dual' members

Oklahoma is one of 15 states using federal grant money to design a more coordinated plan for people who receive both Medicare and SoonerCare.

Grant staff is asking members who qualify for both programs for help. They are working on a program that might better serve members needs. The grant staff established Dual Eligible Stakeholder Workgroups. Workgroups are asking members with dual coverage under both programs to share their ideas for improving service. The workgroups include people with many viewpoints. Project staff also share ideas from other workgroups.

The workgroups are open to anyone who is interested. Every workgroup will focus on principles

that support improvements in:

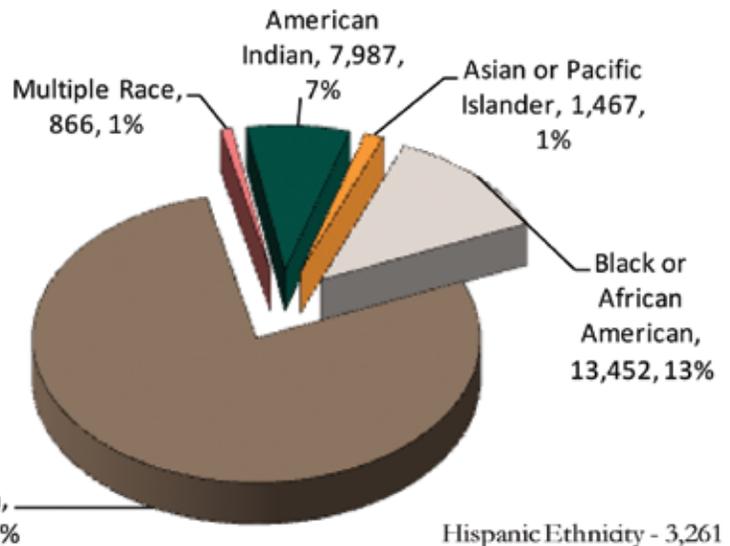
- Access, quality and reductions in Medicare and Medicaid spending over time.
- Actual care experience and lives of qualified members.
- Overall goals of better health, better care, and lower costs through improvement.

Workgroup Descriptions: Behavioral Health Services - June.Logan@okhca.org

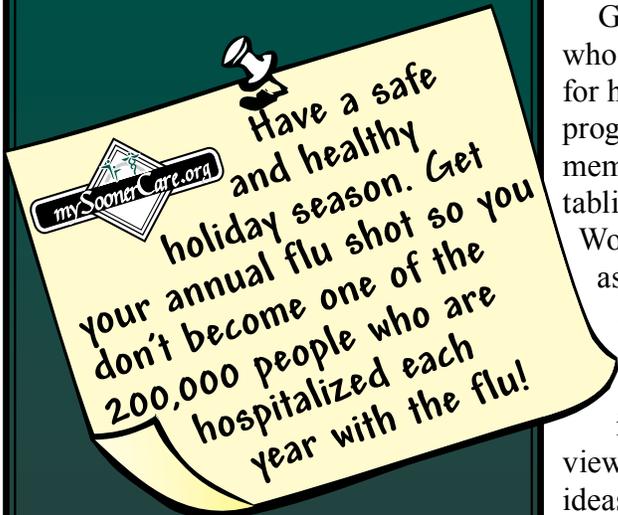
This workgroup will look at current service. They also will look at what other states have done to meet the needs of people who receive benefits from both programs. They will be asked to look at what changes would do for members receiving mental health and substance abuse services.

Continued on page 4

Dual Enrollees by Race



Race is self-reported by members at the time of enrollment. The multiple race members have selected two or more races. Hispanic is an ethnicity not a race. Hispanics can be of any race and are accounted for in a race category above.



This newsletter is just for SoonerCare members. It will tell you about any changes or updates to your SoonerCare benefits. It will also give you other useful news to help keep you healthy. However, if you have specific questions about your health, please talk to your doctor.

Your SoonerCare Companion will arrive in your mailbox about every four months from the Oklahoma Health Care Authority. If you have questions about SoonerCare, please call the SoonerCare Helpline at 1-800-987-7767.

Winter 2011

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Oklahoma City, OK 73107
www.okhca.org



'Safe sleep' tips for infants



With recent recalls of drop-side cribs and other crib designs, many parents may be wondering if their children's cribs are safe.

Parents may unknowingly be choosing unsafe alternatives for their babies. The chance of death among infants is higher when adult beds, standard size mattresses, couches, futons and recliners are used. There is an increased risk of death caused by accidental suffocation and strangulation, according to the Oklahoma State Department of Health.

A safe crib, bassinet or portable crib is still the safest place for an infant to sleep. To help reduce the number of infant deaths related to unsafe sleep places:

- Infants should sleep only in cribs or bassinets approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- Infants should sleep on a firm sleep surface, such as on a safety approved crib mattress, covered by a tightly fitted sheet.
- Keep soft bedding, quilts, comforters, bumper pads, pillows, sheepskin and toys out of the crib.
- Keep the infant's sleep area close, but separate from where you and others sleep.
- Always place the infant on his or her back to sleep.

For more information go to "Preparing for a Lifetime, It's Everyone's Responsibility" at <http://iio.health.ok.gov> and click on Safe Sleep, or view the AAP website at www.aap.org.

Making an appointment

Call your medical home doctor as early in the day as possible. Appointments fill up quickly.

If you are unable to get an appointment within the next day, and you are sick, ask to speak to the triage nurse at your doctor's office.

Be sure to tell the triage nurse all of your symptoms.

Your doctor may offer you home-care advice until your appointment. Your medical home doctor will decide when you need to be seen.

If you have a problem getting an appointment with your medical home doctor and you are sick, call the SoonerCare Helpline at 1-800-987-7767.



Soda or pop? It's trouble for your teeth either way

People use different words to describe sugary, carbonated soft drinks. But whatever you call it, they are talking about something that can cause real oral health problems.

Soft drinks are one of the most common sources of cavities and they affect people of all ages. The sugar and acid in soft drinks soften tooth enamel, which can lead to cavities. Sugar-free and diet soft drinks can cause problems too! It is best to stay away from all kinds of sugary drinks if you can.

We're Drinking More and More...

Studies show we are drinking more soft drinks than ever, especially children and teenagers. Some teens drink as many as 12 soft drinks a day!

We can all benefit from cutting down on the number of soft drinks we take in.

- Stock the fridge with less sugary drinks, such as water, milk and 100 percent fruit juice.
- Rinse your mouth with water after drinking a soft drink.
- Use fluoride toothpaste; fluoride reduces cavities and makes your teeth stronger.
- Your dentist can apply fluoride during your twice yearly visits.
- Your pediatrician can apply fluoride varnish.
- Be certain to brush your teeth well before going to sleep!

Dealing with S.A.D, depression at holidays

As summer has turned into fall and fall is now turning in to winter, we are losing daylight. Loss of daylight can make people sad. Not just sad - as in feelings of unhappiness or regret - but an actual emotional condition that mirrors the change of season.

S.A.D., or seasonal affective disorder, is a mental health condition associated with a decrease in the amount of sunlight received.

S.A.D. may look like regular depression in many ways but affects most people during the periods of shorter light, such as winter. Symptoms of seasonal affective disorder may include anxiety, feelings of depression, loss of energy, hopelessness, irritability and other symptoms.

Treatment is available for seasonal affective disorder. One recommendation is to increase the amount of sunlight received.

Since most of us don't have the option of moving closer to the equator during the winter, though that is effective, there are other alternatives.

One form of therapy is to increase the amount of light received using light therapy. With this technique, a doctor prescribes using a light box for a fixed amount of time each day.

Another alternative may be for your doctor to prescribe anti-depressant medication alone or in conjunction with psychotherapy. Various types of psychotherapy have been shown to be effective with treating depression and this may be an option.

Getting out and exercising is also beneficial.

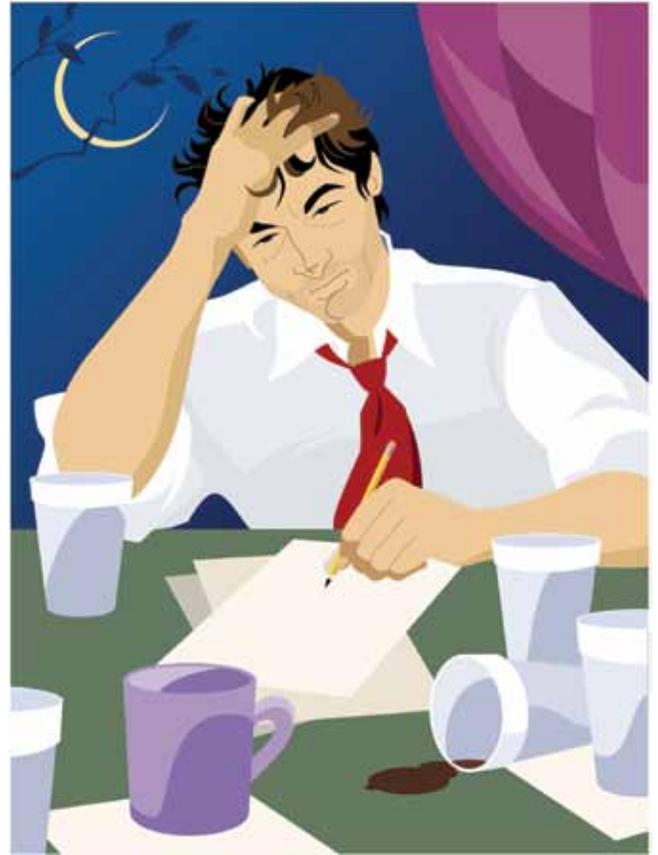
Foot Problems & Diabetes

Nerve damage, blood flow problems and infections can cause serious foot problems for people with diabetes. Nerve damage can cause you to lose feeling in your feet. Nerve damage also can deform or change the shape of your feet and cause blisters, sores or ulcers. Poor blood flow can make these injuries slow to heal.

Signs of Foot Problems

See your doctor right away if you have any of these symptoms:

- Your feet tingle, burn or hurt.
- Your feet cannot feel heat, cold or touch.
- Loss of hair on feet, toes or lower legs.
- Dry or cracked skin on your feet.
- Toenails turn thick and yellow.
- Blisters, sores, ulcers, infected corns and ingrown toenails develop.



Being active can boost energy and you may feel less depressed.

Exercise gets blood pumping and increases delivery of oxygen to the brain and other parts of the body. Of course, all of these approaches only should be started after consulting with your primary care doctor to make sure it is safe.

How Can I Protect My Feet?

- Keep your blood sugar as close to normal as possible.
- Do not smoke or use tobacco.
- Ask your doctor to check your feet at every visit.
- Ask your doctor how to care for your feet.
- Check your feet each day for scratches, cracks, cuts or blisters.
- Call your doctor if you have a sore on your foot.
- Wash your feet daily. Dry them carefully, especially between the toes.
- Rub lotion or cream on the tops and bottoms of your feet, but not between the toes. Ask your doctor what kind of lotion to use.
- Do not soak your feet. Soaking your feet can lead to infections.

Proper use of antibiotics urged

OHCA seeks input continued from page 1

Total Dual Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Percent of Total
107,161	743,354	14%

Total Enrollment excludes Insure Oklahoma.

Dual Enrollees by Gender and Age			
	Child	Adult	Total
Female	12	67,165	67,177
Male	23	39,961	39,984
Total	35	107,126	107,161

CHILD is defined as an individual age 18 and under.

Coordination of Care and Benefits

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This workgroup will look at proposals for provider education. The group will talk with providers as they consider the impact of the proposed changes. The group will also make sure prevention and transitions are part of the proposal.

Communication: Outreach and Public Information

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The communications workgroup will come up with a plan for communicating with members and others.

Financing Strategies and Quality Medical Outcomes

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This group will look at performance, outcomes, financing and other parts of the existing programs. Their recommendations will include information about the plan's effectiveness, quality and cost outcomes for the target group.

The third SoonerCare Sooner Silver meeting is Jan. 19, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at OHCA – South in the Seminole Conference Room. For more information contact Brandie Candelaria at brandie.candelaria@okhca.org.

Benefits of using one pharmacy

Your pharmacist is a very important part of your health care team. Your pharmacist can:

- Tell you how your medicine works.
- Tell you the best way and right time to take your medicine.
- Warn you about side effects.
- Check to make sure that all your medicines work together safely.
- Help your doctor get prior authorization for the medicines that need approval. Prior authorizations only work at one pharmacy.

If you switch to a different pharmacy, you may have to wait for a new prior authorization before your prescription can be filled.

Mixing the wrong medicines can be very dangerous. If you take your prescriptions to different pharmacies, the pharmacist will not be able to make sure all your medicines work together safely. Allow the pharmacy and pharmacist to work for you. Stick with one pharmacy!

Antibiotics are powerful medications that save lives when used correctly. Antibiotics kill bacteria, not viruses. Viruses cause colds, influenza and most sore throats. Antibiotics are not a proper course of treatment for these illnesses. When antibiotics are used improperly, they can result in antibiotic resistance or even serious side effects such as allergic reactions. Incorrect antibiotics use results in thousands of emergency room visits each year.

Infections caused by antibiotic-resistant bacteria have become increasingly common in both health care and community settings. Treatment of illnesses caused by antibiotic-resistant organisms can result in lengthy and repeated treatments and hospitalizations.

Patients, health care providers, hospital administrators and policy makers must work together to utilize safe and effective programs to ensure correct use of antibiotics.

Use antibiotics correctly

Take the antibiotic exactly as the doctor prescribes. Do not skip doses. Complete the prescribed course of treatment, even if you start feeling better.

- Only take antibiotics prescribed for you; do not share or use leftover antibiotics. Antibiotics treat specific types of infections. Taking the wrong medicine may delay correct treatment and allow bacteria to multiply.
- Avoid saving antibiotics for the next illness. Discard any leftover medication once the prescribed course of treatment is completed.
- Prevent infections by practicing good hand hygiene and getting recommended vaccines.
- Do not ask for antibiotics when your doctor thinks you do not need them. Remember antibiotics have side effects. When your doctor says you don't need an antibiotic, taking one may do more harm than good.

Vaccine records provided

Remember the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) Immunization Service distributes the state's official vaccination record, OSDH Form No. 218B. This record is designed for parents to keep a personal record of their child's vaccinations from birth through adolescence. It is made of tear and water resistant paper and folds to credit card size. When signed or stamped by a physician or clinic this record is accepted for a child to attend childcare or school in Oklahoma and many other states.



Safe Use of Acetaminophen

Acetaminophen is the generic name for Tylenol®. It is found in many different over-the-counter cold medicines. It is also in other drugs that require a prescription, such as Lortab® and Vicodin®. It is used to reduce fevers and to relieve pain.

Acetaminophen is safe and effective when used correctly, but it can cause liver damage if you take too much. Liver damage is very dangerous and can lead to serious illness, or even death.

Look for the ingredients listed on the side of the box or on the prescription printout to see if any of the medicines you take contain acetaminophen. An abbreviation for acetaminophen is “APAP,” so be sure to look for this too. If more than one of your medicines has acetaminophen, check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking them.

To protect yourself, the FDA recommends you:

- 1) Follow dosing directions and never take more than directed. Even a small amount more than directed can cause liver damage.
- 2) Don't take acetaminophen for more days than directed.
- 3) Don't take more than one medicine that contains acetaminophen at a time. For example, your risk of liver damage goes up if you take a medicine that contains acetaminophen to treat a headache and you take another medicine that contains acetaminophen to treat a cold.
- 4) Don't take acetaminophen if you are drinking alcohol, or after drinking three or more alcoholic beverages.

If you think you may have taken more acetaminophen than directed, contact the poison control center (800-222-1222). For more information about using acetaminophen safely, check with your pharmacist, doctor or nurse.



Healthy snacks

Provide healthy ingredients and let kids help in the kitchen!

Homemade Berry Banana Smoothies

Blend fat-free, low-fat yogurt or milk with fresh or frozen berries. Blend with bananas and ice for a tasty treat. For a dairy-free alternative, try soy milk.

To add extra sweetness to your smoothie, try adding a little 100 percent apple or orange juice to the mix!

Fruit kabobs

Assemble pieces of melon, apple, orange, pear and banana on skewers for a fruity kabob.

Homemade trail mix

Look to your pantry for some ingredients to use for a healthy alternative to store bought trail mix.

Use unsalted peanuts, cashews, walnuts, or sunflower seeds mixed with dried apples, pineapple, cherries, apricots, or raisins. Include whole-grain cereals or 100 percent cocoa powder to the mix, too.

Source: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet11KidFriendlyVeggiesAndFruits.pdf>



Paper Plate Snowman

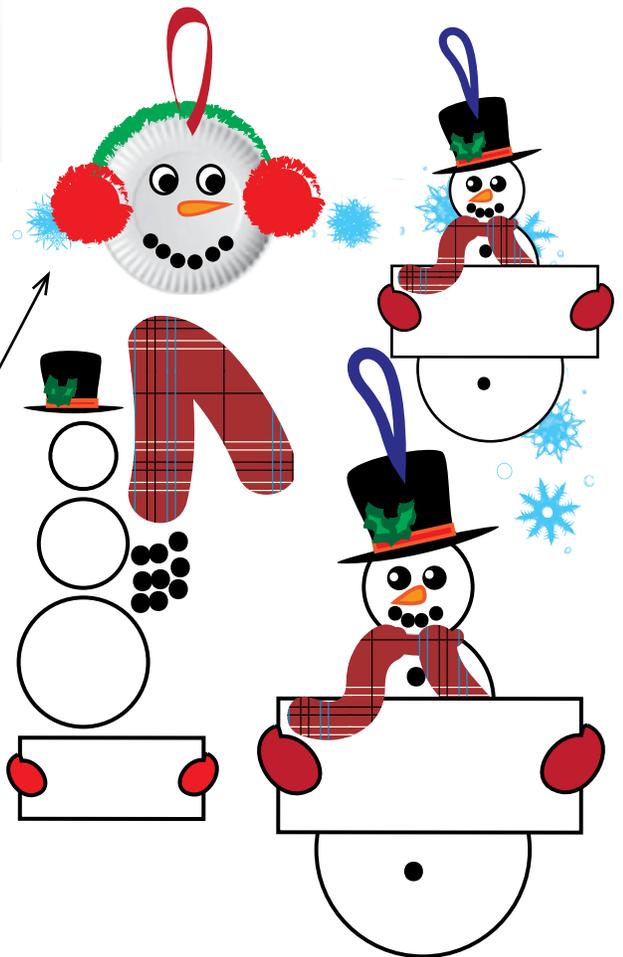
What you'll need:

- three paper plates, dinner or dessert size
- construction paper - black and colors
- pipe cleaners
- 2 large red pom pom balls for earmuffs
- scrap material for scarf
- ribbon or yarn for hanger
- three to five large buttons
- black marker
- white craft glue
- tape

Directions:

1. Line up the paper plates, one above the other. Plates should be front side down. Poke a hole at the bottom of the top plate, about a half inch above the lip of the plate. On the second plate, poke one hole at the top and one hole at the bottom, again about a half inch above the lip. Poke a hole at the top of the last plate.
2. Cut one pipe cleaner into three equal pieces. Thread one through each of the holes to attach the three plates together.
3. Draw or make the face from construction paper and glue to top plate.
4. Make a hat from construction paper. Glue on a band and holly leaf. Cut a hole at the top of the hat to attach a ribbon or yarn hanger. Instead of a hat you can make ear muffs from a pipe cleaner and pom pom balls. Glue to the top plate.
5. Add the hanger to the top plate.
6. Tie a scrap of fabric between plate one and two.
7. Make holes in the plate to insert pipe cleaners for arms and tape to the back of the plate.
8. Glue or draw on buttons.

Hang your snowman on your door.



Snowman Ornament or Gift Tag

Supplies:

- * white poster board
- * black, red, green and orange construction paper
- * scrap cloth and yarn

Directions:

1. Cut three circles and one sign from the white poster board. Overlap circles and glue together.
2. Cut mitten shapes, hat, band, holly, scarf and nose.
3. Use hole punch to cut black circles for eyes, mouth and buttons.

Glue the snowman pieces together.

Punch a hole at the top of the hat and add a yarn loop.



Visit www.okhca.org/kids-corner for patterns.

Si usted quiere leer este artículo en español, visite la pagina web del OHCA al <http://www.okhca.org/sooner-care-companion>.

Disclaimer: Clinical, legal and other comments are offered for general information only. Please talk to your doctor about specific health concerns.

This publication, printed by O. U. Printing Services is issued by The Oklahoma Health Care Authority as authorized by Title VI and Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. 257,000 copies have been prepared and distributed at a cost of \$18,300.00. Copies have been deposited with the Publications Clearinghouse of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. [74 O.S.2001 § 3105 (C)] Download additional copies on the OHCA website <http://www.okhca.org/sooner-care-companion> - SNLENG-COMPAN-Winter 2011

Amy Rather, 31 | Smoked 5 years | Smokefree 3 years



"I made it one minute. I made it ten minutes. And then all of the sudden, I made it an hour. I made it two. And then, I made it a whole day. I said, 'I can do this'."



Make a New Year's resolution to quit nicotine

Call the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW to work with a Quit Coach on the best quit plan for you. The call is free, the coaching is free and you may be eligible to receive free gum or patches.

Five Day Countdown

Start by visiting your health care provider and asking them for help with quitting. Then make your home and vehicle a tobacco free zone.

5 Days Before Your Quit Date

Think about your reasons for quitting. Write them down.
Tell your friends and family you are planning to quit.
Stop buying cigarettes.

4 Days Before Your Quit Date

Pay attention to when and why you smoke.
Think of other things to hold in your hand instead of a cigarette
Think of habits or routines to change.

3 Days Before Your Quit Date

What will you do with the extra money when you stop buying cigarettes?
Make a list.
Think about who you can contact when you need help.

2 Days Before Your Quit Date

If you are using prescription medications or other quit smoking aides, make sure you have those filled and you understand how to use them.

1 Day Before Your Quit Date

Put away lighters and ashtrays.
Destroy all cigarettes and matches.
Clean your clothes to get rid of the smell of cigarette smoke.

Quit Day

Think of yourself as a non-smoker.
Remind family and friends that this is your quit day.
Stay away from alcohol.
Do something special for yourself.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

SoonerQuit Facts

Save Money

The average price for a pack of cigarettes in Oklahoma is approximately \$4.80.

At a pack a day, that adds up to about \$1,752 a year. Over 10 years, that's \$17,520.

Save Time

On average it takes seven minutes to smoke a cigarette. At a pack a day, that's just over two hours and 20 minutes. Over 10 years, that's 354 days or almost one entire year spent smoking.

Feel Better (Source: American Lung Association)

Within 20 minutes of quitting: Blood pressure decreases and pulse rate drops.

Within 8 hours of quitting: Oxygen level in blood returns to normal.

Within 24 hours of quitting: Chance of a heart attack decreases.

Within 48 hours of quitting: Ability to smell and taste is enhanced.

Within three months of quitting: Circulation and lung function improve.

Within nine months of quitting: Coughing, sinus congestion, wheezing, fatigue and shortness of breath decrease.

Within one year of quitting: Risk of coronary heart disease is lowered to half of that of a smoker.



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Seven-year-old Piper Johnson's mother, Barbara, says the call she got from a SoonerCare outreach staff member reminding her to renew her daughter's health insurance came not a moment too soon. A few days later, Piper had been flown from her Wilberton home to a Tulsa hospital, diagnosed with severe complications from diabetes.

"The call and appointment came at just the right time to save her life," Barbara Johnson said. "She's a happy, healthy child and we didn't know anything was wrong."

Piper's story and her mother's call to thank a SoonerCare outreach employee inspired OHCA's new campaign, "Tell Us Your Story." The agency is asking SoonerCare members to share their SoonerCare stories and how it has made a difference in their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

More than 472,000 Oklahoma children are currently enrolled in SoonerCare. It provides medical, dental and vision coverage for children who qualify.

SoonerCare provides quality health care for 1 in 4 Oklahomans. If you are one of the more than 700,000 members, or a former member, OHCA wants to hear from you! What has SoonerCare done for you or your child? Whether it is life-saving medical treatment or the ability to provide much needed care for your child, we would like to hear how SoonerCare made a difference in your life.

OHCA is asking SoonerCare members across Oklahoma to share their SoonerCare stories and put their stories on SoonerCare's map.

Go to <http://www.okhca.org/tell-us-your-story.aspx> and share your story.