



MedStar Family Choice

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Enrollee Newsletter

Fall 2023



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This program is funded in part by the Government of the District of Columbia Department of Health Care Finance.



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A message from Dr. Tu



Raymond Tu, MD



Shanique Cartwright, MD



Dianna Coles Lee-Sam, MHA

If you are new to our plan, welcome to MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia! We are happy to have you and all our Enrollees with us. We strive to treat all our Enrollees with high quality medical care, compassion, and respect. We hope you feel our commitment and enjoy being a part of our plan.

Please join me in welcoming Dr. Shanique Cartwright, MD as our Behavioral Health Medical Director and Dianna Coles Lee-Sam as our Director of Quality and Outreach! Both bring immense experience in their fields and are great additions to the MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia team.

Important reminder: All DC residents with Medicaid, Alliance, and the Immigrant Children's Program must renew their healthcare coverage. The first step is to go to DistrictDirect.DC.gov to update your contact information. When your benefits eligibility end date grows near, you'll receive renewal information. But you won't receive this if your contact information isn't up to date. If you haven't already done so, please visit DistrictDirect.DC.gov today to update your contact information.

Our team is always here to answer your questions, assist you with appointments, and support your healthcare needs. If we can help you in any way, please call Enrollee Services at **888-404-3549** or visit us at MedStarFamilyChoiceDC.com.

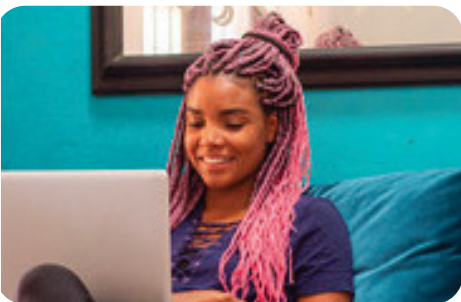
Sincerely,

Raymond Tu, M.D., M.S., F.A.C.R.
Chief Medical Officer, MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia

Benefits... you have them, here's how you keep them

As a MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia Enrollee, it may be time to renew your DC Healthy Families, DC Healthcare Alliance, or Immigrant Children's Program benefits. **All beneficiaries must renew or recertify to keep their benefits.**

Don't wait to update! Visit District Direct at **DistrictDirect.DC.gov** to ensure your contact information is up to date so you will receive important information.



Online

Create an account and complete your renewal or recertification via District Direct at **DistrictDirect.DC.gov**

By Phone

Call the DC Economic Security Administration (ESA) Public Benefits Call Center at **202-727-5355** TTY/TDD **711**

In Person

Visit a DC ESA Public Benefits Service Center near you (see locations below)

DC ESA Public Benefits Service Center Locations

- **Anacostia** – 2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. SE, DC 20020
- **Congress Heights** – 4049 South Capitol St. SW, DC 20032
- **H Street** – 645 H St. NE, DC 20002
- **Fort Davis** – 3851 Alabama Ave. SE, DC 20020
- **Taylor Street** – 1207 Taylor St. NW, DC 20011

Need a Ride?

Did you know as an Enrollee you can receive transportation if you need it? Call Transportation Services at **866-201-9974** to schedule.



Let's Talk Behavioral Health

Welcome to **Let's Talk Behavioral Health**. Here we will share information on MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia's integration of mental and behavioral health into your healthcare coverage. We are committed to offering integrated care, which means care that coordinates mental and behavioral health, substance abuse, primary care, and specialty services. How we feel in our bodies and how we feel in our minds and emotions are often linked, and we want our care to cover all of you.

Behavioral health describes treatment that takes care of emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. While it is normal to have big emotions and negative thoughts from time to time, when they feel out of our control we may be diagnosed with a mental illness and need behavioral health treatment to heal. Just like diabetes or heart disease, millions of people are affected by mental illness. Each year in the US, 1 in 5 adults and 1 in 6 youth between the ages of 6-17 experience mental illness. MedStar Family Choice DC is committed to helping you identify your mental health needs and receive the right treatment. In **Let's Talk Behavioral Health** we will share common symptoms of mental illness and resources on how you can receive treatment.

Spotlight: What does Major Depressive Disorder look like?

Depression is a mental illness that affects more than 20 million people in the US each year. In the District of Columbia, 1 in 5 adults has experienced depression. Depression is the leading cause of disability in the age group 15 - 44 and ranks among the top 3 workplace issues along with family crisis and stress.

Everyone can have a depressed mood for a few days from time to time when they feel "down in the dumps" or "blue". It is normal to have feelings of depression at different times, especially when faced with major life events or stress. It is part of life. But you might need treatment for

depression if your “down in the dumps” feelings last for weeks or become so intense that they interfere with your ability to function in everyday life. This is often referred to as clinical depression or Major Depressive Disorder.

What does Major Depressive Disorder look like? It lasts for at least 2 weeks continuously and can come with:

- A low or depressed mood that doesn't seem to go away
- A lack of energy and/or a need to sleep a lot
- A loss of enjoyment in activities that usually bring you pleasure
- Poor concentration or difficulty thinking clearly
- Feelings of guilt or worthlessness, helplessness or hopelessness
- Appetite changes, feeling like you're moving slowly
- Sleep changes
- Thoughts of wanting to harm yourself or end your life

The good news is Major Depressive Disorder is very treatable. Over 80% of those receiving treatment show improvement within 4 to 6 weeks of starting treatment.

If you feel you have become depressed and are having difficulty dealing with it, you are not alone. Help is available and effective. Please call the MedStar Family Choice DC Nurse Helpline at **855-798-3540** or the DC Department of Behavioral Health Hotline at **888-793-4357**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These resources can help keep you safe and get you connected with a provider that can treat your mental health needs.

Notice of Privacy Practices

MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia recognizes the importance of keeping your health information private. MedStar Family Choice DC maintains a Notice of Privacy Practices (Notice). This important document in part describes how we may use and disclose your medical information, how you can access this information, and how to report a complaint if you feel your privacy has been violated.

Our Notice was recently updated.

- We updated the list of entities part of the MedStar Health Affiliated Covered Entity (ACE). MedStar Family Choice DC is part of the MedStar Health ACE.
- We simplified many parts of the Notice.
- We added more information on laws that provide additional privacy protections, including ones protecting behavioral health and genetic information.
- We also updated information on how we may use and disclose your information,



including among clinical observers and to entities such as CommonWell Health Alliance Services, accountable care organizations, or other insurers.

- Information on ways you can opt-out of data sharing with certain recipients were added to the Notice.
- We also added information on how we protect your rights and the rights of parents, minors, and guardians, and on your right to confidential communications with us. We added more information on your right to an accounting of disclosures.
- We added Virginia as a state that MedStar Health is located in.

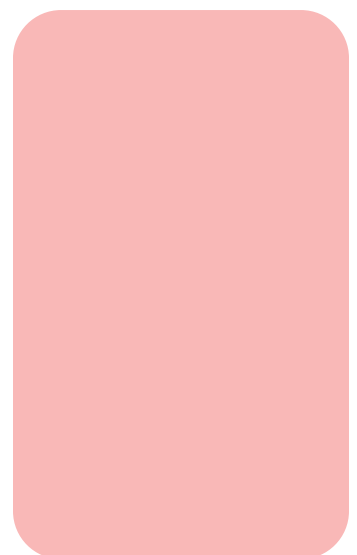
A copy of our revised Notice is available online at [MedStarFamilyChoiceDC.com/Privacy-Practices](https://www.medstarfamilychoicedc.com/Privacy-Practices). If you have any questions related to protecting your health information or would like to request a copy of the Notice contact Enrollee Services at **888-404-3549**.

A friendly reminder to get your Flu Vaccine and COVID-19 Booster

Vaccines are available at local drug stores. During the past 50 years, vaccines have saved more than a billion lives in the United States. They prevent illnesses, disabilities, and viruses.

MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia Enrollees (ages 3 and over) can get shots for free at participating pharmacies such as, CVS pharmacies, MedStar Health retail pharmacies, Target, Walmart, Walgreens, Rite Aid, Giant, Safeway, and other pharmacies in-network. This program includes the flu shot as well as shots for shingles, hepatitis A and B, pneumonia, HPV (to help prevent cervical cancer), chicken pox, and tetanus. Flu shots are given on a walk-in basis.

For other shots, including the COVID-19 Booster vaccination, Enrollees should call the drug store to make sure the shot needed is in stock and to see if an appointment is necessary. Your doctor will be notified when you receive a shot and add it to your medical record. For more information on recommended vaccinations, visit Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [CDC.gov/Vaccines/Index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/Vaccines/Index.html) or talk to your primary care provider.



2023 Enrollee Handbooks are available

The 2023 Enrollee handbook was mailed recently to head of household Enrollees. It is also available on our website in English, Spanish and Amharic. Please review the Enrollee handbook in detail to learn about your benefits, services, programs, and Enrollee rights and responsibilities. The handbook also explains policies on billing; appeals; fraud, waste, and abuse; and more. Important phone numbers for Enrollees are included in the handbook as well.

You can download the Enrollee handbook by visiting our website at [MedStarFamilyChoiceDC/Enrollee/General-Benefits.com](https://www.MedStarFamilyChoiceDC/Enrollee/General-Benefits.com) and choosing either the DC Healthy Families Benefits or DC Healthcare Alliance Benefits option. If you would like to receive a printed copy by mail at no cost to you, please call Enrollee Services at **888-404-3549**.

Albuterol MDI inhalers now have updated limits

On October 1, 2023, the MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia Plan Drug Benefit changed. Albuterol MDI inhalers now have a limit on how many inhalers you can fill. You can get up to 2 inhalers every 60-days, up to a total of 6 inhalers every 365 days. These inhalers are for rescue use when you have trouble breathing. There are different inhalers that may be used every day to prevent you from needing your Albuterol inhalers so much.

If this applies to you, please contact your provider who prescribes this medicine for you before your current supply of medicine runs out. This will ensure you have the medicines you need to control your breathing.

MedStar Family Choice DC is dedicated to providing the best health care available to all Enrollees. We believe this change in our Pharmacy Drug Benefit will not affect the quality of your care. If you have any questions, our Enrollee Services department will be happy to assist you. You may contact Enrollee Services at **888-404-3549**.





Join the MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia Facebook Group!

To help keep you informed and provide a space for you to learn and share information about your health plan, we created a Facebook Community Group.

This Facebook Group features posts about:

- Health plan updates
- Community events and educational programs
- Healthcare incentives (free gift cards!)
- Enrollee benefits and wellness services
- Pharmacy updates
- Health tips and more!



Join the conversation at [Facebook.com/Groups/3345653428815826/](https://www.facebook.com/Groups/3345653428815826/) or scan the QR code.



You are invited to attend our classes and events

MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia offers monthly virtual classes and in-person events for you and your family. Please visit our website at [MedStarFamilyChoiceDC.com/Enrollees/Events-and-Outreach-Programs](https://www.MedStarFamilyChoiceDC.com/Enrollees/Events-and-Outreach-Programs) for information on all our educational classes and events.

Compliance Corner

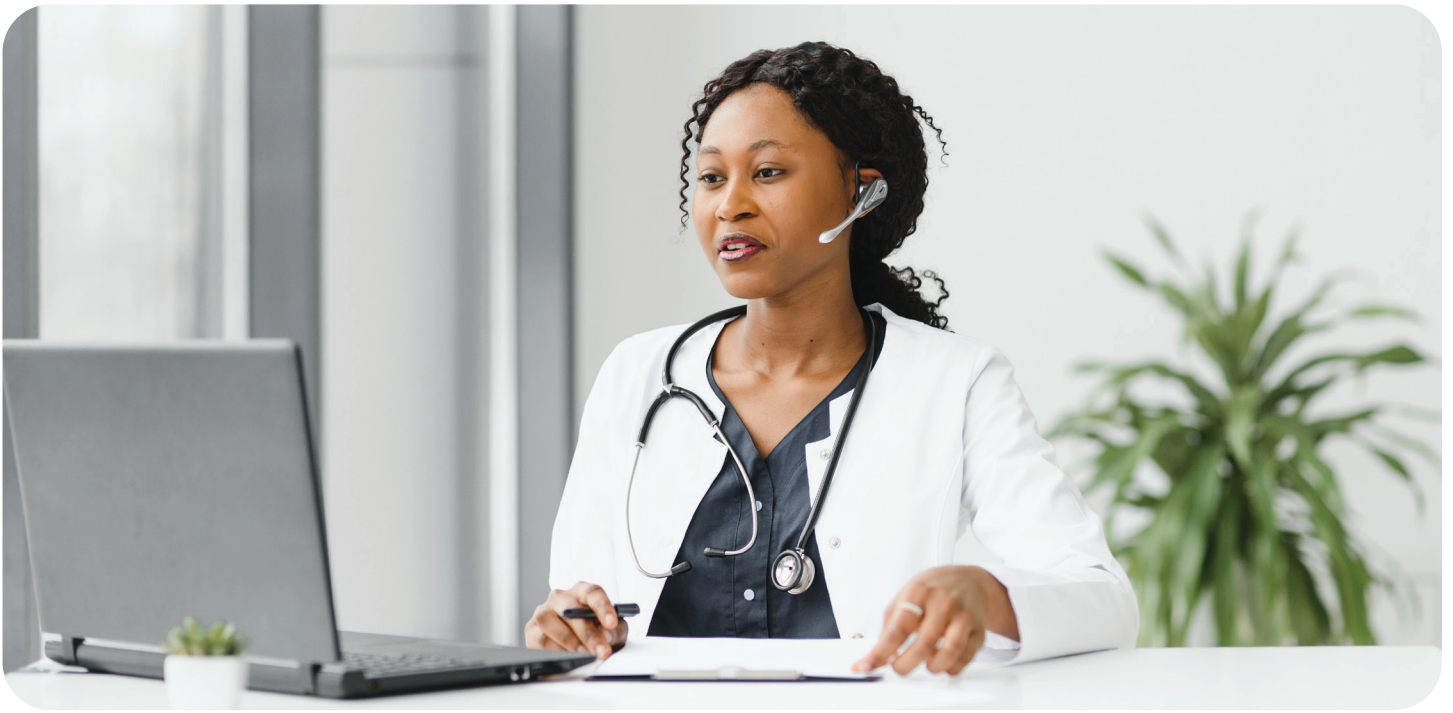
Protect yourself from Medicaid fraud

To protect yourself from Medicaid fraud, remember:

- Guard your Medicaid card like it is a credit card.
- MedStar Family Choice DC will never contact you by phone and ask for your Medicaid Number or other personal information.
- MedStar Family Choice DC will never call you to sell you anything including products or services.
- You may get calls from people promising you things like prizes if you give them a Medicaid Number, Social Security Number, or other personal information. **Don't do it!**
- Medicaid Family Choice DC is required to legally report all incidences of Medicaid benefits being requested or obtained by non-enrolled and other persons using an approved beneficiary's card.

If you have questions about your healthcare benefits, or to review information you have received, please call Enrollee Services at **888-404-3549**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.





Call the Nurse Helpline 24/7

If you are feeling sick or need medical or behavioral health advice, call the free Nurse Helpline at **855-798-3540**. Registered nurses are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to answer your healthcare questions and assess your symptoms. Nurses can help you decide whether to call your doctor, go to urgent care, visit the ER, or treat your symptoms at home. All calls are answered live. For medical emergencies, call 911.

MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or sex.

If you do not speak and/or read English, please call **888-404-3549** between 8:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. A representative will assist you.

Si no habla o lee inglés, llame al **888-404-3549** entre las 8:00 a.m. y las 5:30 p.m. Un representante se complace en asistirle.

Nếu bạn không nói và/hoặc đọc tiếng Anh, xin gọi **888-404-3549** từ 8 giờ 00 sáng đến 5 giờ 30 chiều. Sẽ có người đại diện giúp bạn.

‘영어로 대화를 못하시거나 영어를 읽지 못하는 경우, 오전 8시 00분에서 오후 5시 30분 사이에 888-404-3549번으로 전화해 주시기 바랍니다. 담당 직원이 도와드립니다.’

Si vous ne parlez pas ou lisez l'anglais, s'il vous plaît appeler **888-404-3549** entre 8:00 du matin et 5:30 du soir. Un représentant vous aidera.

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‘如果不能講和/或不能閱讀英語，請在上午 8:00 到下午 5:30 之間給 888-404-3549 打電話，我們會有代表幫助’



3007 Tilden Street, NW, POD 3N
Washington, DC 20008

MedStar Family Choice

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The Enrollee Newsletter is a publication of MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia. For more information on your plan or anything in this newsletter, please visit [MedStarFamilyChoiceDC.com](https://www.MedStarFamilyChoiceDC.com). or call Enrollee Services at **888-404-3549**.

Leslie Lyles Smith, Executive Director, MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia
Raymond Tu, MD, Chief Medical Officer, MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia
Lisa McDonough, Communications Manager, MedStar Family Choice District of Columbia



MedStar Family Choice

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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[MedStarFamilyChoiceDC.com](https://www.MedStarFamilyChoiceDC.com)



3 YEARS

It's how we **treat people.**