



WellCare Health Plans, Inc.
WELLCARE OF GEORGIA, INC.
A member of the WellCare Group of Companies



Announcing New Clinical Practice Guidelines Related to Obesity in Children and Adolescents

The prevalence of obesity is reaching epidemic proportions. Obesity is a risk factor for Type 2 diabetes mellitus, hypertension, dyslipidemia, coronary artery disease, cerebrovascular disease, and osteoarthritis. While obesity is related to a positive energy balance (intake > output), other factors contribute to the increasing prevalence (environmental, cultural, and genetic). After reaching the age of six, an obese patient has a 50% chance of being obese in adulthood <http://www.aafp.org/afp/990215ap/861.html>

WellCare of Georgia recently adopted WellCare Health Plans, Inc.'s *Clinical Practice Guideline for the Management of Obesity in Children and Adolescents*. Per the guidelines, the measurement of BMI (see <http://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts>) and select laboratory tests are recommended in diagnosing obesity in children and adolescents. The recommended laboratory tests are as follows: fasting glucose, lipid profile (including LDL-C, HDL-C, HDL-C/TC and triglycerides.) The guidelines are based, in part, on the Expert Committee Recommendations Regarding the Prevention, Assessment, and Treatment of Child and Adolescent Overweight and Obesity released in December 2007 (Summary Report, Barlow SE and the Expert Committee, *Pediatrics* 2007;120;S164-S192).

WellCare of Georgia has been monitoring provider BMI documentation through randomly selected medical charts in the medical record reviews conducted each quarter. Please be advised that in first quarter 2009, WellCare of Georgia will begin monitoring for the documentation of laboratory tests in children ages 10-20 years in addition to documentation of BMI. Although we will begin assessing the rate of lab test documentation in the medical record reviews, we will not begin to score the measure until fourth quarter 2009.

Should you have any questions, please contact Mimi Harvey, RN the QI Project Manager leading this project at 678-327-0939, extension 3003.