The Implications of Long COVID for Patients & the Health Care System
Florida Blue’s pandemic response

Initial key strategies and initiatives

- Weekly member/community webinars
- Clinical pandemic response team formed
- Site support for content, resources, website information
- Data analysis to support COVID risk identification, strategy and decision making
- Inpatient and outpatient member support
- Targeted outreach to those with social vulnerability and poly-chronic conditions
- Issue identification for members, providers/network
Analytical insights to support clinical decisions

Data Science team created a self-service capability to pull member lists for clinical outreach

Facility bed & ICU capacity, census, and Florida Blue member utilization. View by segment, state, region and facility. Leverages information from multiple sources to provide real-time analytics to potential COVID impacts. Weekly trends and insights for the state of Florida.
COVID focused member outreach and provider campaigns

Poly-chronic condition multi-channel outreach to identify those at highest risk of poor outcomes. Florida Blue nurses/clinicians called thousands of vulnerable members.

Phone calls for inpatient member support with identification of member admitted with COVID.

Clinician outreach for member support and education to those diagnosed in an outpatient setting.

Partnered with network team to contact members impacted by provider office closures.

Outreach to providers to provide PPE, resources and information.
Clinical, care partners, virtual health changes

Waived prior authorization requirements for patients transferred from inpatient acute to outpatient care facilities.

Carried out new Federal Guidelines and reviews to relieve documentation burden on hospitals.

Accelerated many COVID vendors.

Implemented virtual health Teladoc® and home health visits.

Implemented COVID-19 section on FloridaBlue.com website with chatbot.

Launched 24/7 free to all Floridians emotional support helpline with New Directions Behavioral Health.
Benefit changes in response to COVID-19

- Early refill of prescription drugs, encourage 90-day mail order.
- Extension of time to pay premiums.
- $0 cost-share for COVID-19 testing, treatment and vaccine admin costs.
- Teladoc® at $0 cost-share.
- All members can use FB network providers offering virtual visits.

Effective September 1, 2021, Florida Blue reverted to the member’s contractual benefits for the treatment of COVID-19 for all commercial fully insured and Florida Blue Medicare business.
COVID-19 Ongoing Care Survey

- 25% suffering symptoms beyond 60 days
- 6% of survey respondents hospitalized
- 18% have a reduced quality of life
- 67% said they are not getting the health care they need to manage their symptoms
- Of the 33% who said they were getting the care they needed, two thirds said it was not from their primary doctor

Note: Florida Blue began surveying members about long COVID in late September 2021 in live webinars and during the engagement process.
Member interaction started when he attended our Long COVID webinar. He reached out to us in response to the follow up email asking for guidance on managing his diagnosis.

Connected with Care Team LCSW and other resources.

Doing much better. Using Facebook support groups.

“When you have all these weird symptoms, and you go to see a specialist and he looks at you like you’re a nut case, it’s the worst thing.”
Long COVID Florida Blue resource site

- In-Network providers/specialists
- Evidence based educational materials
- Care pathways and protocols
- Behavioral health support
- Webinars, Florida Blue Center support programs
- Community health resources and support
- Financial assistance resources
- GuideWell assets and sponsored programs
- Member feedback
Long COVID care payer recommendations

A comprehensive plan is needed to alleviate the burden of long-term complications and treatment of COVID-19. Policy evaluations at the payer level should include:

- Access to physical therapy
- Mental health services for those at increased risk of depression, anxiety or PTSD
- Timely access to treatment
Thank You