



OFFICE OF THE HEALTHCARE ADVOCATE

We're In Your Corner

A Message from your Healthcare Advocate



Welcome!

Hope. It's a powerful word and is often used in reference to the dawn of a new year, a personal renewal or a call for change.

But this time, it's about the coronavirus pandemic that has been ravaging our families and economy for nearly a year. It's created long term health effects for some; heartbreaking sorrow due to the death of a loved one for others; and fear and uncertainty for many more due to jobs and businesses lost. But in a remarkable development, multiple double dose covid 19 vaccines have been developed and approved by the Federal Drug Administration. A single dose version is close to approval. We have the approved vaccines here in Connecticut and it's being distributed to all the residents in a systematic, thoughtful process, though issues of equity in vaccine distribution are real and need to be addressed and improved even as the vaccination program continues on at full pace. This vaccine brings hope that a horrible medical chapter will soon end or be significantly diminished.

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As your healthcare advocate, I urge you to get vaccinated when it's your turn. Protect yourself and your family. Maintain the covid protocols regarding washing your hands, not touching your face, distancing and masking. This has bent the curve on the infection rate and the vaccines will help bend it even further so that some time soon, we'll return to a more normal future. That's our collective hope and that in the meantime, you stay well.

Ted Doolittle

Healthcare Advocate, State of Connecticut



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Vaccination Now!

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system, and though early delays are being addressed, remember that there is also a separate sign-up route by making an account and scheduling with one of the four Connecticut providers who are not using VAMS.

Walgreens:

<https://www.walgreens.com/topic/covid19vac/CT.jsp>

Yale:

<https://covidvaccine.ynhh.org/>

Hartford HealthCare:

<https://hartfordhealthcare.org/health-wellness/covid-vaccine>

UConn Health:

<https://health.uconn.edu/coronavirus/covid-vaccine/>



Cervical Health Awareness

Congress designated January as the national Cervical Health Awareness month. Each year, more than 13,000 women are diagnosed with invasive cervical cancer. This type of cancer spreads from the surface of the cervix deeper into the tissue of the cervix or

disease.

Medical experts are urging all women to get their well checkups including the Pap Test which can provide earlier detection of cancer cells in the cervix. This is also a great time to talk about human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines which can help prevent cancer.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) HPV infections and cervical precancers (abnormal cells on the cervix that can lead to cancer) have dropped significantly since the vaccine has been in use in the United States.

Among teen girls, infections with HPV types that cause most HPV cancers and genital warts have dropped 86 percent.

Among young adult women, infections with HPV types that cause most HPV cancers and genital warts have dropped 71 percent.

Among vaccinated women, the percentage of cervical precancers caused by the HPV types most often linked to cervical cancer has dropped by 40 percent.

Cervical cancer was once the leading cause of cancer death for women in the United States.





Email Sign-Up

OHA has saved consumers tens of millions of dollars since the agency was launched - and we've become a trusted resource and consumer advocate on all matters of healthcare insurance here in Connecticut and on developments in Washington, D.C. that can affect us. We share these changes and information in many ways - social platforms like our page on [Facebook](#) and Twitter, press conferences and via this newsletter. If you know somebody who is not getting this newsletter on a regular basis - or is only getting it because it's shared with them - OHA invites one and all to join our exclusive email list. Sign up for the [newsletter](#) here.

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OHA: We're in YOUR Corner

The parents of a toddler called OHA for help when their health insurance denied coverage for the durable medical equipment she required. The child experienced severe respiratory distress. After 128 days of care in the CT Children's Medical Center Neo-Intensive Care Unit, she was discharged with several interventions and instructions for peripheral airway clearance techniques. However, these interventions proved not intensive enough, and she required emergency room services for acute respiratory distress and was hospitalized three times for a total of six weeks of PICU level of care for various conditions during her first year of life.

Considering these hospitalizations and the infant's susceptibility for respiratory illnesses, Yale Medicine Pediatric Pulmonologists ordered a High Frequency Chest Wall Compression (HFCWC) vest to assist with airway clearing and help her mobilize lung secretions. The vest was immediately and significantly effective. The child went from being in a perpetual state of illness and distress to thriving from the airway clearing technique afforded by the HFCWC vest. The family's health insurance carrier, however, denied coverage of the vest, deeming it "not medically necessary."

OHA collected clinical documentation from the infant's parents and healthcare providers and wrote an appeal to the insurance carrier. The carrier's decision to deny

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reviewer for appeal. At this level of appeal, the denial was overturned so that coverage would be allowed. The family saved \$7,500 this year by having exercised their right under law to appeal the insurance carrier’s denial of coverage.

Savings: \$7,500.00



The OHA will help you during this crisis get you the assistance you need.

[OHA Resources](#)



Many other services are covered by the Department of Social Services (DSS).

[Department of Social Services](#)



Compare the cost of non-emergent healthcare treatments before you get the bill.

[Healthscore CT](#)

Our New Website

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We invite you to visit our new website!

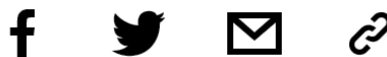
It can be found here: <https://portal.ct.gov/oha>

Notice the new address. It's slightly different than the old one but no worries if you happen to forget, it will automatically redirect you to our new one. Read, enjoy, be informed and know your rights and responsibilities in the fast moving world of healthcare insurance. There are many helpful tips, links and great information you'll find useful.



Our Mission

The mission of the Office of the Healthcare Advocate (OHA) is to assist consumers with healthcare issues through the establishment of effective outreach programs and the development of communications related to consumer rights and responsibilities as members of healthcare plans. OHA focuses on assisting consumers in making informed decisions when selecting a health plan; assisting consumers to resolve problems with their health insurance plans and tracking trends of issues/problems, which may require administrative or legislative intervention, or advocacy with industry, the public, or other stakeholders



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