

**Accordant**<sup>®</sup>  
A CVS Caremark Company



Nurses Impacting  
Care Everyday  
**NICE**<sup>™</sup>

**SNAPSHOTS**

# Accordant Health Services

Accordant Health Services, a CVS Caremark company, offers the only comprehensive Care Management product for 17 rare, complex conditions. Accordant supports motivation and behavioral skills that help members manage their complex health issues and successfully follow their physicians' treatment plans.

Supported conditions include:

- Seizure Disorders
- Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)
- Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
- Crohn's Disease
- Ulcerative Colitis
- Parkinson's Disease (PD)
- Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE or Lupus)
- Myasthenia Gravis (MG)
- Sickle Cell Disease (SCD)
- Cystic Fibrosis (CF)
- Hemophilia
- Scleroderma
- Polymyositis
- Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyradiculoneuropathy (CIDP)
- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)
- Dermatomyositis
- Gaucher Disease

Accordant provides members with motivation and behavioral skills that can help them manage complex health issues, by:

- teaching healthy self-management skills to make adherence easier
- understanding their individual life situations in order to build treatment adherence
- assisting patients in the immediate post hospital discharge period to support safe and efficient care transition

Since 1997, we've supported more than 420,000 participating members from more than 100 health plans, employers, and agencies. For more information about the Accordant program and how your organization can benefit from our Care Management programs for 17 rare, chronic conditions, contact:

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# Having the Right Medications

**Medication errors are often simple mistakes that have large unintended costs, such as emergency room visits and inpatient admissions.** For one member who has had lupus for about four years, such an error could have had very serious consequences.

During a recent conversation with their Accordant nurse, **the member reported that since filling a prescription for her anxiety last month, and hadn't been feeling well.** The member reported having no energy, was feeling very tired, and said they'd been taking the medication only half as frequently as they were supposed to. The nurse talked to the member about all of the medications they were taking, including this one, and asked them to get their medication bottles so they could review them together. The member was also taking two other medications for high blood pressure, both of which treated high blood pressure. **When the member spelled out the label of the medication they thought they were taking for anxiety, they spelled the name of another drug commonly used for treating high blood pressure.** The Accordant nurse reviewed the claims information to confirm the member's most recent prescription, which was for anxiety medication. Apparently the member had been given a blood pressure medication with a similar name.

Accordant nurses can bridge relationships between pharmacy providers, health plans, and physicians to help support member needs. The member agreed to have the nurse contact their physician to confirm whether they were receiving the correct medication for their anxiety. The physician confirmed that the member should have received the drug on the original prescription. **The member's physician was grateful and relieved that this had been discovered during the medication review by Accordant.** The physician stated that if the member had continued taking the dose every 6 hours as the container instructed, it could have been deadly. The physician also instructed the Accordant nurse to have the member stop the incorrect medication immediately and to have them monitor their blood pressure for any changes. The Accordant nurse made sure the member understood the importance of checking their blood pressure and following up with their physician.

The member was able to start the correct medication and said they were feeling much better during the follow-up call. They were very grateful for the close collaboration and intervention by the Accordant nurse. The member said that while they normally don't like talking about their health, this particular phone call may have actually saved their life.

Medication errors are one of the most common reasons for emergency room visits in the US. Approximately 1.5 million preventable drug reactions occur annually at a cost approaching \$4 billion.<sup>1</sup> These errors result in approximately 4 million visits to the emergency room, doctors' offices, or other outpatient settings each year.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Food and Drug Administration. FDA's Safe Use Initiative: Collaborating to Reduce Preventable Harm from Medications. Silver Spring, MD: 2009. Available at: <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Drugs/DrugSafety/UCM188961.pdf>. Accessed: July 18, 2012.

# A Critical Call

Even if they know what questions to ask, many people find it very difficult to initiate a discussion with their doctor. **Accordant recognizes that sometimes members need additional support to help them communicate more proactively with their physicians**, since timely communication is often critical to positive health outcomes.

Accordant's assistance proved valuable for a member who has had scleroderma for about ten years and recently had a hospital admission for atrial fibrillation. **Accordant's readmission prevention strategy includes a post-discharge call** to discuss and assess a member's understanding of the discharge plan. During this member's post-discharge call, they mentioned that their blood pressure had been below the target range and that they had experienced dizziness since they had started some new blood pressure medications.

The Accordant nurse recognized that these symptoms needed to be brought to the cardiologist's attention right away, particularly since the member had recently been released from the hospital on a new combination of blood pressure medications. **The Accordant nurse encouraged the member to call their cardiologist to report their symptoms and receive appropriate guidance. The nurse also offered to call the physician on the member's behalf if the member was uncomfortable initiating this discussion.** The nurse and the member also talked through the steps of identifying a change in their health status and the appropriateness of promptly informing the cardiologist. The member agreed to call their doctor and discuss their symptoms.

At a scheduled follow-up call with the member the next day, the member said that their cardiologist had changed the medications in hopes that the dizziness would improve and that their blood pressure would return to a more desirable range. **They had also discussed an appropriate blood pressure goal** and the member was able to report their most recent blood pressure measurements during the call.

Accordant understands the importance of analyzing individual situations and proactively identifying a plan of action to help members positively impact their health outcomes. **The motivational dialogue and rapport that the Accordant nurse developed with this member played a vital role in empowering them to follow up with their cardiologist.** The nurse also reminded the member that because of their proactive and thorough follow up with the cardiologist, they likely **avoided potential complications, such as another costly hospitalization or an emergency room visit.** The member said that without the education and strong encouragement from the nurse, they **"would not have been as aggressive"** in getting their health concerns addressed, and that the Accordant nurse was a **"godsend"** during this challenging time.

# Protecting Health in Unexpected Ways

Osteoporosis is a costly and serious health concern for both women and men. A recent survey from the Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research found that osteoporosis-related fractures cost hospitals and health plans over \$2.4 million annually and that two thirds of these costly fractures are evaluated and treated in an emergency room<sup>1</sup>. This risk is especially significant with a chronic illness like lupus, where long-term corticosteroid use may contribute to the weakening of bones. Regular education and encouragement can empower members to proactively address their risk for osteoporosis by talking with their doctor. Accordant nurses are vigilant to evaluate members who may benefit from additional motivation to address the potential for osteoporosis, especially if they have age, family history, or medication related risk factors.

For one member, who has had lupus for about a year, ***this knowledge and a conversation with their Accordant nurse empowered them to talk to their doctor and receive a bone density scan to evaluate their bone health.***

During their most recent assessment, the member told their Accordant nurse that they had been taking low-dose prednisone for about a year and that they'd never had a bone density scan. The nurse identified an important opportunity to educate this member on the risk of osteoporosis, particularly with corticosteroid use, as well as the importance of a bone density scan, a quick and painless way to assess bone health. The nurse also gave the member critical information about osteopenia (lower than normal bone mineral density that is considered a precursor to osteoporosis) and ways to slow or stop this from happening. ***The member was encouraged to speak with their physician about the risk for osteoporosis,*** whether they should consider having a bone density test performed or adding a calcium plus vitamin D supplement to their treatment regimen. After the phone call, the Accordant nurse mailed the member two brochures with health tips on preventing and managing osteoporosis.

At the scheduled follow-up call, the member told their Accordant nurse ***that they discussed bone health with their physician as result of the education they received from Accordant.*** A bone density scan was completed and it revealed that the member did have osteopenia. To help support bone health, the member said they are now taking a calcium plus vitamin D supplement. The member told the Accordant nurse that they were thankful for the education, which motivated them to talk to their physician about taking better care of their bones. ***By taking steps now to protect bone health, the member may slow or stop the progression of osteopenia and ultimately prevent osteoporosis.*** This can help prevent injury while also keeping health care costs lower for them and their health plan.

<sup>1</sup> Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research News and Numbers. *Osteoporosis-Linked Fractures Rise Dramatically*. Bethesda: MD. 17 Jul 2009. Available at: <http://www.ahrq.gov/news/nn/nn071709.htm>.

# Collaborative Care Supports Me

For one member with RA (rheumatoid arthritis) for about four years, **Accordant's customized approach made the difference in helping her on the path to wellness.** It's important to note that this member also has several comorbidities, including Crohn's disease and Type 2 diabetes, with a history of frequent inpatient admissions for these issues. The Type 2 diabetes, coupled with the medications they received for their RA, drastically slowed their healing time. Therefore, wound management was of critical importance in improving this member's quality of life and health. In addition to the amputation of two toes, this member had previously been hospitalized for both a worsening ulcer on their foot and questionable skin integrity and possible ulcerations on multiple areas of their body as a result of poor circulation. The member also had a past history of worsening cellulitis and MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*).

During a recent call, **the member told their Accordant nurse that their crutches, which were used daily to help support their body weight, were bowed and in danger of breaking.** The member was unable to stand or transfer from their bed due to concern about the stability of the crutches. The lack of mobility increased this member's risk for additional pressure wounds. The member was obese and a good candidate for bariatric crutches, which had been previously recommended. But the member told the nurse that they were **never sure of how to follow-up and get the new bariatric crutches.** The Accordant nurse reinforced the importance of these crutches for personal safety. Not only would they better support the member's weight, but they would also improve their mobility.

Obesity has a far-reaching impact, not only as a factor in individual health and quality of life, but also as a significant national economic burden. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control) estimates that **the management and treatment of obesity and related complications in the US costs about \$147 million annually**<sup>1</sup>. There are multiple direct and indirect costs associated with treating and managing obesity and its potential complications, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and, when complicated by reduced mobility, dangerous pressure related ulcers.

**Accordant's approach is designed to help members with chronic conditions and comorbidities on the path to better health.** It starts with our team of specialized registered nurses, who provide interventions and education to help improve immediate quality of life, while working with the member to address underlying issues that may keep them from achieving their health goals. Our nurses also advocate for the appropriate use of resources, like durable medical equipment, to promote member safety. They also deliver skilled interventions to proactively address immediate concerns, such as wound management, to help keep acute complications from becoming even more severe. Working through the many variables that influence each individual member's overall health, Accordant nurses focus on optimizing utilization of resources and care with the ultimate goal of improved health outcomes.

# Member Wellness One Step at a Time

## **The nurse immediately identified two critical concerns:**

- a need for close collaboration between the member's multiple health care providers to **obtain the bariatric crutches**
- a need for collaboration with the member's current home health nurse team to **proactively monitor their current wounds and help avoid further complications**

## **The nurse immediately took action to help improve this member's situation by:**

- contacting the member's physician and physical therapist to secure information about obtaining the bariatric crutches,
- locating an in-network vendor who could supply the crutches,
- giving the member **clear instructions** about the next steps they would need to take to get the crutches delivered,
- contacting the member's home health agency to discuss a social work evaluation that would address some **underlying issues in the member's home environment, nutritional status, and to more closely monitor** the care and support of this member as it related to their non-healing wounds,
- participating **in a collaborative team conference call to form an interdisciplinary plan that would address the member's multiple issues.** As a result of this plan, the member received weekly skilled nursing visits, mental health consultations, and physical therapy to support their health and well-being.

At a follow up call, the member sounded very upbeat and optimistic about their improving wounds and increased mobility. **The member's wounds had already decreased in number by a third and had also decreased in size and depth.** They were excited to be able to stand on their own several times a day and told the Accordant nurse that they were even able to take a few steps to and from the dresser to put away clothes. In addition, **the member's weight had decreased by over 20 pounds and they have not had any further hospitalizations, falls, or emergency room visits.**

The member expressed their appreciation for the new crutches and their gratitude for the Accordant program, saying that working with their Accordant nurse had **"really knocked down some pillars that were blocking my healing."**

**Accordant nurses serve as vital links for collaborative care with members' service providers, in addition to providing vital education to support member care and well-being.** Accordant's quick and thoughtful action gave this member a solid footing on their path to better health.

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Overweight and Obesity: Causes and Consequences*. Atlanta, GA. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/adult/causes/index.html>. Accessed: 19 May 2012.

***With a chronic illness like MG (myasthenia gravis), it is important to be vigilant with concomitant medication use, as some medications, even antibiotics for a common infection, can be unsafe for people with MG.*** Some medications could cause a sudden weakening of the muscles, which could precipitate MG crisis (a life-threatening condition during which the muscle weakness from MG is exacerbated and may result in respiratory distress). Accordant works diligently to educate members on the importance of understanding medications they take (and identifying those that should not be taken with MG). Part of that education includes providing a contraindicated medication wallet card. Members with MG are instructed to carry a contraindicated medication card at all times, as it could help prevent an MG crisis or even save their life.

For one Accordant member recently diagnosed with MG, this wallet card became a critical educational tool. The member called their Accordant nurse to discuss their prescribed urinary tract infection treatment. After reviewing their wallet card and prescription, ***the member realized that ciprofloxacin (their prescribed medication) was listed on the wallet card and may exacerbate weakness.*** The member told the Accordant nurse that their neurologist had said they could use the ciprofloxacin with close monitoring; however, they were still concerned and wanted more information from the Accordant nurse about the potential risks.

The Accordant nurse researched this issue by consulting Accordant's Drug and Technology Guidelines, as well as the Clinical Pharmacology website, to learn more about the contraindication warning for this antibiotic. A cautionary statement on the pharmacology website discouraged the use of systemic quinolones, such as ciprofloxacin, in patients with MG. The Accordant nurse then reviewed information on the FDA's website and found that the use of ciprofloxacin could incite extreme muscle weakness and difficulty breathing (i.e., MG crisis) in people with MG.

# Treatment Options

**One powerful additional research tool to which Accordant nurses have access is the Accordant Medical Advisory Board, a panel of physician experts who provide industry-leading disease expertise** on a variety of topics and issues that affect our members. The Accordant nurse contacted the consulting neurologist, who serves on Accordant’s Medical Advisory Board, to discuss the issue and **confirmed that ciprofloxacin is not advised for people with MG** unless the infection is severe and no other treatment options exist.

The Accordant nurse gave the member additional education on the possibility of an MG crisis and commended them for consulting the wallet card and calling to clarify concerns about the medication before taking it. The nurse strongly encouraged the member to contact their physician right away to request an alternate medication. As a result of the support from the Accordant nurse, the member followed-up with their physician and received a medication that was not contraindicated in MG patients. The urinary tract infection resolved without complications and the member told the nurse that they were especially grateful for the resources and support that were always available from Accordant. They thanked the nurse for **“always looking out for [them].”** **The ability to obtain fast, accurate information relevant to their MG may have helped this member prevent potential exacerbation, a costly trip to the emergency room, or even hospitalization.**

## Know Your Medicines!

Fill out this handy medicine list and take it with you to your doctor visit.

Pharmacy name and address: Local Pharmacy, 123 MAIN STREET, ANYTOWN, USA 11111, (800) 555-5555, Pharmacy phone number

Number used by the pharmacy for your refills: Rx#: 0060021

Person who gets this medicine: JANE SMITH, 455 MAIN STREET, ANYTOWN, US 11111

How much to take each time: TAKE ONE PILL BY MOUTH WITH BREAKFAST, LUNCH, AND DINNER

Name and dose of medicine: AMOXICILLIN 500MG CAPSULES

How much medicine I took home in the bottle: QTY: 30

How many times I can refill it: NO REFILLS- DR. AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED

Pharmacy phone number: (800) 555-5555

Doctor's name: DR. C. JONES

Day my doctor asked me to take the medicine: DATE: 02/15/11

Number of times a day and when to take it: USE BY: 3/22/11

Don't use this medicine past this date

Medicine label adapted from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## My Medicine List

Write down prescription and over-the-counter medicines, herbal remedies, vitamins, and food supplements.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and dose of medicine	How much to take each time	Number of times a day and when to take it	Health problem or reason I take this medicine
Example: Amoxicillin, 500 mg	1 pill	1 pill each with breakfast and lunch and dinner	Infection in right knee

# Promoting Proactive Care

**Transitioning to one's own home from a skilled nursing facility can be both exciting and anxiety-provoking for all involved in the move.** For one member who has had RA (rheumatoid arthritis) for more than 20 years, this transition was complicated by a recent stroke that had resulted in significant memory loss.

The member's partner, who has been their primary caregiver for the past six years, speaks regularly with the Accordant nurse. During a recent conversation with the nurse, the member's partner had confided that **they had fears about being able to manage the member's care once they were discharged**. The partner told the nurse that they could never consider a nursing home for the member. The nurse reassured the member's partner that there were resources they could explore that would help the member stay in their own home and allow the two of them to keep doing the things they enjoy together.

**The Accordant nurse discussed the post-discharge needs with the member's partner and proactively reached out to an Accordant Resource Specialist** to ensure that the assistance would be ready in advance. The Resource Specialist outlined the benefits of several possible options to the member's partner and confirmed their understanding. They were also encouraged to contact the Discharge Case Manager at the member's skilled nursing facility and to make an appointment to talk about various assistance options as soon as possible. Both the Resource Specialist and the Accordant nurse stressed the importance of being proactive with scheduling in-home services and accessing other resources the member needed prior to their discharge from the facility.

**Accordant understands that empowering members and their loved ones to be proactive in their care starts with knowledge and understanding of their options.** We don't take for granted that members or their caregivers know where to start, or even that they've been given assistance for this journey by their medical providers. Accordant's team provides customized care to members and their families through individualized resource options so that they can more effectively utilize resources. **As a result of the Accordant team's help, the member's partner was able to schedule in-home nursing care for the member five days a week for four hours at a time.** They told the Accordant nurse that were very satisfied with this arrangement and with the support Accordant provided. The partner said that they felt better prepared to care for the member and less isolated. **They knew that they had the confidence to make this work, because they always had Accordant's support.**

During the last conversation with the Accordant nurse, the member's partner mentioned that they had just made fudge with the member – an activity they both enjoy and had not been able to do together for several months. Details like this—that deeply influence member quality of life—are just small examples of the considerations that influence Accordant's attention to the complete member experience. Accordant's detailed intervention can lead to improved member satisfaction, a sense of caregiver confidence for proactive intervention and skill, and an opportunity to improve health outcomes.

# Protecting Against Falls

Falls are a particularly important concern with MS (multiple sclerosis), but the chance for a fall and a hospital admission can be prevented or lessened with the appropriate combination of education and support. **Accordant recognizes the importance of fall prevention and delivers customized interventions to members** to promote safe environments and use of durable medical equipment, as appropriate. These effective interventions can significantly reduce the number of ER visits and inpatient admissions and represent a valuable opportunity to lower costs for our members and the health plan.

For one member with MS, the education and support they received from their Accordant nurse helped reduce the number of falls they experienced. At an assessment call, the member told their Accordant nurse that **they had experienced multiple falls in a 3-month period, resulting in two trips to the emergency room.** While they hadn't yet required an inpatient admission, this was clearly a significant concern for the member and the health plan.

The Accordant nurse and the member discussed ways to make the member's home safer and consistent use of a cane to help improve mobility and limit the chance for a fall. **Together, they created a care plan for using a cane more often and taking additional steps to ensure safety at home.** The Accordant nurse also mailed the member an Accordant Web Library Article – *Falls Are a Serious Health Concern* – along with three brochures on falls at home, fall prevention tips, and gait issues with MS. The member and the nurse also talked about the importance of an appropriate exercise plan to improve balance and mobility. A follow-up call was scheduled for continued support and reinforcement of strategies for improving mobility and preventing falls.

During the follow-up call, **the member recalled that they had not fallen or had any hospital admissions since their last assessment and that they were now exercising a couple of times a week.** They also reported using a cane and Accordant's safety tips regularly to navigate safely in at home. The nurse commended the member for the important steps they had taken to maintain personal safety and prevent falls.

It can be a challenge to manage a chronic illness, like MS. Multiple factors can exacerbate disease problems, such as fatigue, stress, heat, or dehydration. **Accordant nurses understand the importance of helping members feel empowered with the knowledge and tools they need to stay well and safe at home.** As this story demonstrates, Accordant nurses not only identify immediate safety concerns for members; they also work with them to implement collaborative plans for on-going care. For this member, that has meant a significant reduction in falls and injury over the past eight months.

Falls are a serious health concern that cost the US health care system approximately \$28.2 billion in 2010 alone, according to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). One in 3 adults over the age of 65 will fall and visit the ER (emergency room) or require an in-patient admission.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Cost of Falls Among Older Adults. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Falls/fallcost.html>. Accessed: 23 May 2012.

# A Coordinated Approach to Comp

Accordant provides care coordination for members with complex chronic conditions. This allows close collaboration with a member's providers and other available resources while continuing to build on the knowledge and behavioral skills the member needs to have improved quality of life and wellness.

For one member with hemophilia type A (without inhibitors), the coordination provided by Accordant has made a difference in their care.

## Brief Clinical Overview

- PICC (peripherally-inserted central catheter) line in place for twice-daily factor infusions to prepare the member for surgery
- Knee is target joint exhibiting repeat, poorly controlled bleeds with any weight bearing activity
- Scheduled for leg amputation (above the knee) to stop cycle of bleeds and PICC line removal in favor of a port-a-cath device

The Accordant nurse analyzed this complex case and immediately identified several opportunities for

advocacy and collaboration to ensure that

- the member was **adequately prepared for surgery** (including review of current treatment and preoperative knowledge),
- **health care costs were minimized** by using in-network providers, and
- the treatment plan and follow-up **interventions were adequately communicated across the spectrum of vendors** providing support to this member before and after amputation.

## Advocacy and Coordination for Optimal Care

An initial referral of this case was made to the Accordant MAB (Medical Advisory Board) specialist for hemophilia to seek input on the treatment and surgical plan for this member. The MAB specialist agreed with the approach for this member and provided recommendations on following-up with the hemophilia treatment center such as the possible value of performing a fall-off study. (Fall-off studies can be helpful in determining treatment regimen and factor level needs, particularly in the face of impending surgery.) **The MAB specialist also provided specific recommendations for treatment to ensure this member was adequately covered in the months after amputation.** The Accordant nurse contacted the treatment center and confirmed that a fall-off study had been completed

### Identified Educational Needs

- Review benefits and risks of amputation to discuss with the hematologist
- PICC line education – including the need for short-term use because of increased risk for infection or blood clots
- Risk for bleeds post-operatively – even with amputation – and the role that pressure plays in stimulating bleeds as the stump heals and prosthesis is applied.
- Self-care after amputation

# Ilex Hemophilia Care Management

and that the member's current factor regimen was adequate for support before and after surgery (A stable factor regimen is vital to a successful surgical procedure.)

**Significant support and education were provided to the member during the period leading up to surgery.** The Accordant nurse coordinated weekly calls between the orthopedic surgeon, the health plan case manager, and the treatment center for updates until a surgery date was scheduled. **This close collaboration helped reduce the possibility for communication break downs and also helped ensure that the member had an advocate for support and to answer questions through this process.** More than 15 informative Accordant Web Library Articles were mailed to the member, including articles on the signs and symptoms of infection, recognizing blood clots, safety guidelines with hemophilia, joint bleeds and osteoarthritis, when to call the doctor with hemophilia, and information on amputation and post-surgical care.

## Service Coordination to Reduce Utilization

With the member's permission, the Accordant nurse also referred this case to the health plan's case management department to identify cost-saving opportunities, such as obtaining the member's factor from the preferred provider. **In 2011, the member had significant, high-dollar claims for factor infusions.** The Accordant nurse requested that the treating hematologist write an order to permit factor from the preferred provider to be delivered to the hospital pharmacy for this member. **The Accordant nurse advocated for this member by explaining to the treatment center the opportunity for significant cost savings with a change in factor supplier.** The pharmacist, when contacted by the Accordant nurse, agreed to work with the hematologist on the details of the order for factor once the member's surgery was scheduled. The Accordant nurse also collaborated with the preferred provider's case manager to have the pharmacist contact the hospital to discuss the feasibility of either the member bringing factor or the preferred provider directly shipping factor to the hospital pharmacy.

The Accordant nurse knew that the member would require additional post-operative care and education to help maintain the port-a-cath that would be inserted once their PICC line was removed. The nurse collaborated with the health plan to locate in-network home health agency vendors who could provide these services while also contacting the hospital discharge planner to ensure the vendor information was added to the member's record. The Accordant nurse also contacted the vendor to advocate for this member's complex clinical needs and to confirm that they had appropriate staff to provide the needed education and support. All of the information was provided to the health plan case manager for additional coordination. **The close collaboration with the home health vendor will help ensure that the member receives education to build knowledge skills post-operatively with the goal of avoiding a costly post-operative readmission due to infection or noncompliance with post-operative treatment plan.**

# Breathing Easier With Resource Support

Inability to clear the lungs with ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) is a common problem that, if untreated, can quickly progress to a life-threatening situation. But the durable medical equipment needed to assist members with coughing and airway clearance is often costly to obtain and repair. For one member who has had ALS for about seven years, the lack of a properly functioning thoracic vest and cough assist device was adversely affecting their health. During a recent call with their Accordant nurse, the member's voice was audibly "wet" and congested and they complained of shortness of breath. The member also had experienced a concerning decline in pulmonary function test since their last assessment.

The member told the Accordant nurse that **their thoracic vest and cough assist device had not been working and they had been unable to contact the vendor for assistance because they had gone out of business.** The Accordant nurse discussed with the member the importance of prompt intervention to prevent their lung function from worsening and requiring hospitalization. The member was also given support and positive encouragement. Together, they also were able to discuss some end-of-life issues pertinent to the member and their family. The nurse introduced the member to an Accordant Resource Specialist, who researched the situation and discovered that another vendor had agreed to service the equipment, but **repairs to the cough assist device alone would be \$1,400 and that it would be significantly more to repair the thoracic vest.** The Resource Specialist and vendor discussed the availability and cost of other equipment on the market and the vendor confirmed that with an order from the member's physician the new equipment could be delivered as early as the same week.

The Resource Specialist quickly contacted the health plan to confirm that the member's benefits would cover the cost of replacement. In addition, they also reached out to the member's physician to provide an update on this member, including their end-of-life preferences, and instructions on where to send the order for their medical equipment. The physician opted to replace the equipment instead of having the member's old equipment repaired. **The new equipment was delivered within 3 hours after the vendor received the order.** The Accordant nurse followed up with the member to make sure they understood airway clearance with the new device. The member confirmed understanding and told the Accordant nurse that they had already used the device once with no problem. They were even able to sleep flat on their back for the first time in years. The member told the nurse that **they felt greatly relieved to have the new medical equipment and were highly satisfied with this outcome.** Prompt action from the Accordant team and the delivery of needed medical equipment helped decrease this member's risk of hospitalization or serious airway complications, as well as resulting in an improvement in their condition and quality of life.

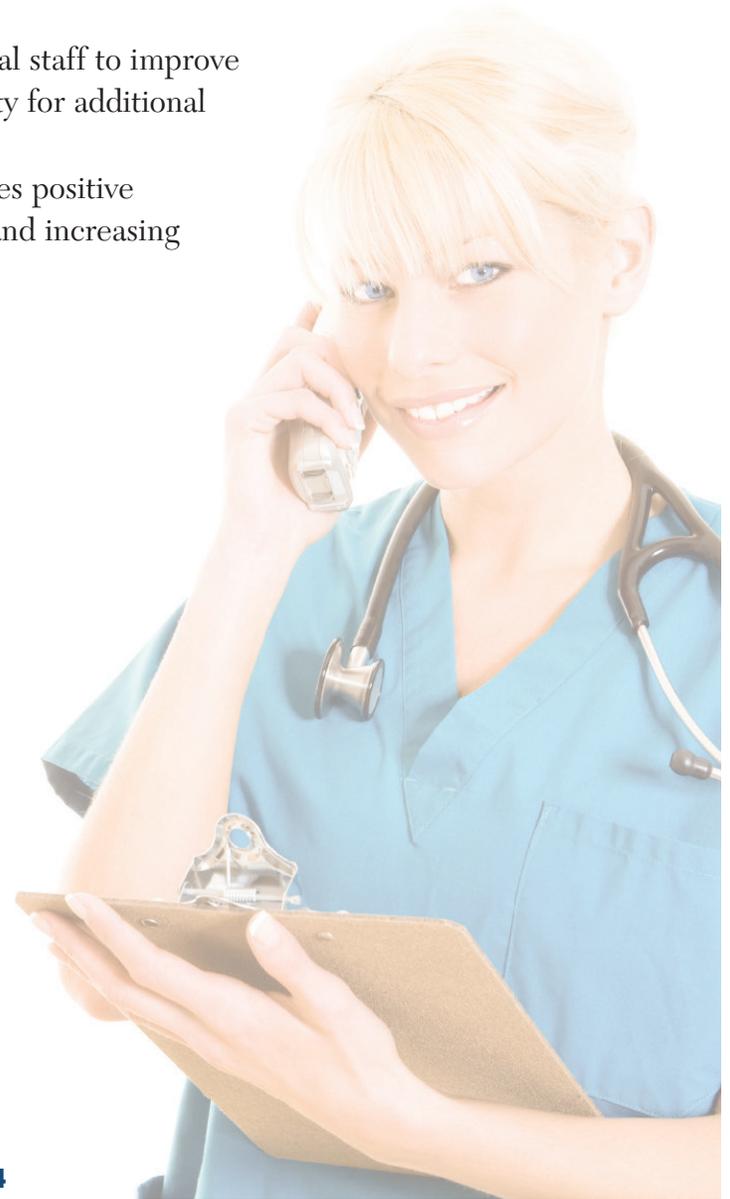
# Proactive Member Management®

Providing support *before* it's needed.

Proactive Member Management® (PMM) supports member and customer outcomes by organizing claims information to consistently and immediately facilitate critical intervention. PMM supports ongoing member management initiatives and is designed to provide:

- Earlier identification of needs for program intervention through medical and pharmacy claims data reporting
- An internal claims-based information source for clinical staff to improve communication with members and provide opportunity for additional outreach
- Tracking of high cost or critical members that promotes positive effect on annual outcomes by reducing readmissions and increasing interventions

**Talk to your Accordant Account Executive today to learn more about how members benefit from Proactive Member Management.**





# Accordant<sup>®</sup>

A CVS Caremark Company



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