



## Dr. Katy Ostermaier joins Texas Children's Health Plan as Medical Director for STAR Kids

This past fall, Texas Children's Health Plan was thrilled to welcome Dr. Katy Ostermaier as the new Medical Director for STAR Kids. Dr. Ostermaier joins us from Texas Children's Hospital, where she started the Special Needs Primary Care Clinic and served as the Clinic Chief for the Spina Bifida Clinic and the Down Syndrome Clinic. She completed medical school and her pediatric residency at Baylor College of Medicine, where she joined the faculty after completing her training. Dr. Ostermaier is excited to be part of the Texas Children's Health Plan family and eager to partner with providers to optimize health for our medically complex members.

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**Take a look inside!**

- 2 New Year's resolutions
- 2 SAD and antidepressants
- 3 Texas Standard Prior Authorization Request Form reminder
- 3 Service Coordination
- 4 MDCP waiver enrollment

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# Help your patients keep their New Year's resolutions in 2019

Texas Children's Health Plan offers two programs that can help your patients stick to their New Year's resolutions well into 2019!

**The Keep Fit program** is available to STAR and CHIP patients ages 10-18 with a BMI of 28+. This program helps kids learn fun, easy ways to stay active and make smart food choices. It offers health coaching, four health and fitness sessions, at-home workout materials, and a quarterly newsletter – all at no cost to the member's family. If you have patients who are interested in the Keep Fit Program, they can call **832-828-1580** or visit [TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org/KeepFit](http://TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org/KeepFit) for more information.

**The Smoking Cessation program** is available to tobacco-dependent parents/caregivers of STAR, CHIP, and STAR Kids patients. As a provider, you are able



to refer a parent or caregiver to the Texas Children's Health Plan Care Management Program for stop-smoking counseling. They will also be able to receive up to \$75 per month to go toward nicotine replacement products. If you have parents or caregivers who are interested in the Smoking Cessation program, they can call Texas Children's Health Plan Member Services at **1-866-959-6555 (CHIP)**, **1-866-959-2555 (STAR)**, or **1-800-659-5764 (STAR Kids)** for more information.



## Identifying and treating Seasonal Affective Disorder

Season Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that appears related to seasonal changes. This recurrent depression may happen every year and occurs most commonly in the fall and winter when the daylight hours shorten, but it may also occur in the spring and summer. SAD may affect up to 5% of the population and seems to be more common in Northern climates and in individuals with a personal history of depression and those with a close relative who has depression. Symptoms include feelings of depression, hopelessness, or worthlessness, as well as sleep and appetite disturbances, low energy, and suicidal ideas or thoughts of death. Theories

about etiology include consideration of the effect of fewer daylight hours, which may lead to a disruption of circadian rhythms and changes in serotonin and melatonin levels. Like other types of Major Depressive Disorder, SAD can contribute to poor functioning at work or school and in social situations. Substance use may increase in individuals with SAD. Individuals with SAD are also at risk for suicide.

It is important to treat SAD when symptoms are causing functional impairment, include suicidal thoughts, or are associated with risky substance use patterns. Assessment should include review of a physical examination and indicated laboratory evaluations. DSM-5 criteria are used to make the definitive diagnosis. In addition to antidepressant medication and psychotherapy, there is a body of evidence showing the efficacy of phototherapy or light therapy, which may be first line of defense for some patients with fall/winter SAD. Phototherapy involves exposure to a light box that emits light similar to natural outdoor light. This appears to cause an alteration in the neurotransmitters that are impacted by reduced exposure to sunlight. Light therapy has few side effects and may bring improvement in a few days, but can take a few weeks to take effect.

References:

[www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/seasonal-affective-disorder/index.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/seasonal-affective-disorder/index.shtml)  
[www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/seasonal-affective-disorder](http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/seasonal-affective-disorder)

# Texas Standard Prior Authorization Request Form compliance grace period has ended

Starting January 1, 2019, the 90-day grace period for compliance with the exclusive use of the Texas Standard Prior Authorization Request Form has ended. From this date forward, providers must use the Texas Standard Prior Authorization Request Form, which can be found at <https://www.texaschildrenshealthplan.org/for-providers>. Click on Downloadable Forms on the left-hand side, then click Standard Prior Authorization Form or Behavioral Health Authorization Form to download.

As a reminder, the following essential information is required to start the authorization process:

- Member Name, Member Date of Birth, and Member Medicaid/CHIP ID
- Requesting Provider's Name and Requesting Provider's NPI Number
- Rendering Provider's Name and Rendering Provider's NPI Number
- Service Requested CPT code, Number of Units Requested, and Dates of Service Requested



Texas Children's Health Plan may return an incomplete prior authorization request when the form does not contain all of the essential information listed above and request that the provider resubmit the request with all of the appropriate information included. Processing of the authorization will not begin until all essential information is received.

## What does Service Coordination mean for your STAR Kids patients?

As a provider, you may have questions regarding the role Service Coordination plays in the lives of our STAR Kids members. At Texas Children's Health Plan, the goal of Service Coordination is to optimize health to ensure that the member's tomorrow is better than his or her today. Service Coordination is a person-centered approach to care and each of our members is assigned an appropriately licensed Service Coordinator. In order for that to happen, our Service Coordinators are responsible for the following:

- Providing each member with initial and ongoing assistance identifying, selecting, obtaining, coordinating, and using Covered Services and other supports to enhance the member's well-being, independence, and integration in the community.
- Working with the member and the member's Legally Authorized Representative (LAR) and other caretakers in the design of an Individual Service Plan (ISP) with clear needs, goals, objectives, and interventions that are continually reviewed and enhanced during each touchpoint with the family.
- Helping remove barriers to preventative, well, and episodic care (i.e. transportation, education, psychosocial issues) as well as increase health literacy and reduce costs for the member.
- Intervening on behalf of the member if approved by the member/LAR and empowering the member/LAR to advocate for self, needs, and services in order to help the member remain in his or her community setting.

# What is the Medically Dependent Children's Program (MDCP) waiver

If you have STAR Kids patients, there's a chance some of them receive the Medically Dependent Children's Program (MDCP) waiver, which is a home and community based services program. The goal of this program is to support families and children by preventing institutionalization and hospitalization, while helping them remain safely in their homes with the appropriate services. Examples of these services include flexible family support service, respite, minor home modifications, adaptive aids, transition assistance services, employment assistance, supported employment, and financial management services. The purpose of enrolling a child into the MDCP waiver is to improve quality of life while decreasing cost of care, improving his or her health and psychosocial outcomes, and provide the most effective and appropriate in-home and community services.

For basic qualification, the MDCP waiver does not take into account the caregiver's income, but it does consider the child's income. To enroll in and receive

services from this waiver, the caregiver has 2 options: enroll and be placed on the state's interest list, or bypass the interest list—which can be at least a 10 year wait—and undergo the Money Follows the Person (MFP) process. The MFP process requires the family to be responsible for paying for an overnight nursing facility stay and a physician recommendation for that stay to occur. The caregiver is responsible for contacting the state to begin the enrollment process for either the Interest List or MFP process. Once the child has been released and undergone the Screening and Assessment Instrument (SAI) conducted by a Texas Children's Health Plan Service Coordinator to gauge if he or she meets the medical necessity for the waiver, the MCO is then handed the responsibility of managing the services provided via the MDCP waiver. The member must use at least one (1) service a month in order to remain active with the waiver.

If you think one of your STAR Kids patients may qualify for the MDCP waiver, educate the family about it today!

