



## Who we are...

The Innovative Health Alliance of New York, LLC (IHANY) is a collaboration among doctors, health systems, and health care providers in New York's Capital Region aimed at improving the health of the communities we serve by working together in new, more coordinated ways. In today's evolving health care landscape, clinical integration is essential to achieving better health for the community, better care for individuals, and lower costs of health care.

## This Month's Priorities

### Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) Tips

The Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) is a very important preventive health event. It is equally important the AWV is billed accurately to maximize the reimbursement for this visit as it is to document the visit for quality and preventive health purposes. Consulting the billing team to address any payer-specific details needs to be included in the workflow processes to ensure the correct information is included on the encounter for the billing team and the claim that is sent to the payer.

#### Coding and Billing Tips

##### **Diagnosis:**

Report a diagnosis code when submitting an AWV claim. Since Medicare doesn't require you to document a **specific** AWV diagnosis code, you may choose any diagnosis code consistent with the patient's exam.

##### **Coding and Billing:**

- Combining an AWV with new and distinct or routine chronic care visit:
  1. There must be an appropriate time interval (within the first 12 months of joining Medicare, or this visit must be 12 months from the last AWV).
  2. A combined AWV + chronic care is a great opportunity to address HCC coding in the assessment and plan\*.
- Documentation of an annual wellness exam and new/chronic condition(s) can be done **in one note**.
  1. Be sure documentation is clear to distinguish between the wellness portion and a new issue or chronic condition(s).
  2. If you are performing an AWV along with another visit, use modifier 25 with your 99213 or 99214 code.
  3. An AWV cannot be combined with Code 99215.

*\*Medicare will pay for a medically necessary Evaluation and Management (E/M) services visit (99201-99214) and an AWV for the same date. This makes it completely possible to flip a regular or chronic care visit to include the AWV services and update the HCC coding, documenting current clinical conditions. It must, however, be coded correctly to maximize the reimbursement for all services provided. The E/M code must be billed with modifier 25*

to account for both types of services. Modifier 25 is used on claims to signify there was a separately identifiable E/M procedure or service by the same provider on the same day. **It is very important to point out to patients the AWW is a free service provided by Medicare, however when combined with another service provided during a visit, there could be a copayment for the additional services provided.**

**For specialty care providers**, if you have a Medicare beneficiary patient who does not have a primary care physician, please direct them to any of these practices within the IHANY network to set up a primary care appointment and **ask specifically for an Annual Wellness Visit:**

- [Amsterdam Internal Medicine & Pediatrics](#)
- [Ellis Medicine](#)
- [Hometown Health Centers](#)
- [St. Mary's Healthcare](#)
- [St. Peter's Health Partners Medical Associates](#)
- [Wynantskill Family Medicine](#) 518-283-1974

## Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) Guide

The IHANY team has developed a Medicare AWW Patient Education document you can utilize for outreach and education. Click [here](#) to access.

If you would like copies, posters, pamphlets, or have any other questions, please reach out to [Brian Pinga](#).



**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT Medicare Annual Wellness Visits**

Did you know that Medicare will provide an Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) once a year at no cost to you? Below is other important information and how to get the most out of your "free" visit.

**What is an AWW?**  
The Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) is a yearly appointment with your care provider to update your health records and ensure you are up-to-date on receiving preventive health care services (screenings and vaccines).

**Who is Eligible?**  
All Medicare Part B members who have not had a Medicare visit or "Welcome to Medicare" visit in the past 12 months.

**What does the AWW cost?**  
Members pay nothing out-of-pocket for this visit. However, during your visit if you require further tests or screenings other than those listed below, a co-payment or deductible expense may occur.

**Is the AWW the same thing as a physical exam?**  
No. An AWW is a yearly visit with your provider to create a personalized preventive health plan. Wellness providers are performing routine lab work, reviewing your care provider may need to perform additional services during an AWW which may have additional costs.

**What should I do if I haven't had an AWW in the past 12 months?**  
Call your primary care provider or call to schedule your AWW. Talk to your provider about what you can do to prepare for the visit and what they would like you to bring.

**What is covered as part of the AWW?**

- Update of your age, sex, address, and contact information
- Update of your medical and family history
- Update of your list of current care providers
- Measurement of blood pressure, height and weight
- Screen for memory changes
- Review of medication safety and risk of falling
- Written preventive screening plan for the next 5 to 10 years
- Advance Care (end-of-life) Planning
- Review of current medications

**Mission Statement**  
The Innovative Health Alliance of New York, LLC (IHANY) is a collaboration among doctors, health systems, and health care providers in New York's Capital Region aimed at improving the health of the communities we serve by working together in new, more coordinated ways. In today's evolving health care landscape, our integration is essential to ensuring better health for the community, better care for individuals and lower costs of health care.

**Partners:** 

## Addressing Patient Needs

**As an ACO, it is important we bring focus to addressing the needs of our patients with the highest disease burden.** In April, the IHANY team began sharing reports centered on managing these members and addressing their risk and quality gaps. We shared how we will be managing this data with our primary care physician (PCP) practice leads through feedback and bimonthly meetings. If you have any questions around this process, please reach out to [Brian Pinga](#).

## Welcome to the HCC Coding Catch-Up

**Documentation, coding, and submission** of each patient's diagnoses or Hierarchical Condition Category (HCCs) is **required at least once per calendar year, restarting every Jan. 1.**

**Coding topic for this month: Cerebral Vascular Accident (CVA, or stroke)**  
(click link: [CVA and Other Neurological Disorders](#))

**Documentation and coding for CVA includes:**

- Neurological deficits/symptoms during the acute episode (e.g., facial weakness)
- History of CVA with(out) residuals becomes the status once discharged from the acute episode

**Documentation and coding for residuals of CVA includes:**

- Deficit (e.g., hemiplegia, hemiparesis, monoplegia)
- Mechanism of injury (e.g., hemorrhage or infarct)
- Laterality (right side is considered dominant, unless otherwise documented)

**The most effective way to document is MEAT.** This acronym represents Monitor, Evaluate, Assess, or Treat the condition.

For more information on these topics, visit our website <https://www.ihany.org/for-providers/hcc-provider-education/>.

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## Important Reminder for Patients: Crowded Emergency Departments

The Capital Region's health care systems continue to face unprecedented pressures and demand for services, particularly in the region's emergency departments.

Officials with Albany Medical Center, St. Peter's Health Partners (including Albany Memorial Campus, Samaritan Hospital, and St. Peter's Hospital), and Ellis Medicine are warning the public of these longer wait times and asking that people only use emergency departments in true emergency situations.

**We are asking you to please take this opportunity to remind your patients that non-emergency care can be provided more quickly at urgent care centers and primary care offices, some of which have after-hours appointments and virtual care appointments. Also, emergency rooms are -not- to be used as COVID testing sites.**

Patients experiencing serious symptoms like a high fever, trouble breathing, or chest pain should still call 9-1-1 or immediately go to the emergency department for care.

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## Specialty Spotlight

### IHANY Network Specialty Practices:



*As a Clinically Integrated Network, continuing to promote in-network referrals will allow for IHANY to provide better health to the populations we serve. With that in mind, we will have feature spotlights on IHANY partners and affiliates within this newsletter to ensure we keep you informed of our diverse resources.*

**October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month and Oct. 21 is National Mammography Day.** According to the American Cancer Society, breast cancer is the second most common cancer in women, accounting for 30 percent of all new female cancers each year. Many women with breast cancer have no symptoms which is why regular breast cancer screening, including mammograms and ultrasounds, is so important for early detection when cancers are most treatable.

The COVID-19 pandemic lead to a substantial decline in cancer screenings, so please talk to your patients and colleagues and encourage them to get back on schedule, and make sure YOU are getting screened as well if appropriate. (Visit [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org) to review screening guidelines.)

If you, your colleagues or your patients need encouragement to get screened, watch the story of our brave SPHP colleague, Melissa Zapotocki, who is a breast cancer survivor, thanks to early detection.



Other colleagues have reached out to share their similar stories about how colon cancer screenings have saved/changed their lives. We will be sharing those stories in the coming months.

## Gynecology Referrals

If your patients need a gynecologist for their women's health issues, please direct them to practices within the IHANY network.

[St. Peter's Health Partners](#)  
[St. Mary's OB/GYN Health Center](#)

*If you are an IHANY Network Specialty practice and would like your location featured in a future IHANY Monthly, please email [Brian Pinga](#).*

## Ellis Medicine to Host "Mammothon"

In partnership with the Roswell Park Care Network, Ellis Medicine and Bellevue Woman's Center are teaming up to launch "Mammothon 2022." They will be collaborating with WTEN News 10 for a "live drive" on Wednesday, Oct. 19, including stories from the community to inspire women age 40 and above to get their annual mammogram. For more information, visit their website at <https://roswellatellis.com/mammothon> for up-to-date screening information, treatments, and technologies, or call 518-243-3333.

## Breast Cancer Screenings for Uninsured Population

The Cancer Services Program of Fulton, Montgomery & Schenectady Counties has scheduled the following breast cancer screening events for **uninsured women ages 40-64. Preregistration is required. Call 518-770-6814.**

**St. Mary's Healthcare — Oct. 19, 1-3 p.m.**  
Rao Outpatient Pavilion, 4950 State Hwy. 30, Amsterdam

**Nathan Littauer Hospital — Oct. 20, 1-3 p.m.**  
99 E. State St., Gloversville



**Bellevue Woman's Center — Oct. 25, 1-3 p.m.**  
2210 Troy Schenectady Rd., Niskayuna

**Ellis-McClellan Family Health Center — Oct. 25, 1-3 p.m.**  
600 McClellan St., Schenectady

## Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

Many organizations are forming teams and creating fundraising opportunities to support the Making Strides of Albany walk on Sunday, Oct. 16, in Washington Park. Check with your office/department to see if they are forming a team. If not, consider joining this IHANY partner's team! Click [here](#) to print.



**Walk with us!**  **ST PETER'S HEALTH PARTNERS**  
A Member of Trinity Health



When cancer strikes, it hits from all sides. That's why the American Cancer Society is committed to attacking cancer from every angle.

**Making Strides of Albany** has always been more than just a walk, it's a movement that **St. Peter's Health Partners** is proud to be a 2022 sponsor. The American Cancer Society is the nation's nonprofit leader in the breast cancer fight. We are putting 100+ years of cancer-fighting experience to work through investments in breast cancer research, ensuring greater access to quality care, influencing public policy, and providing patient support. We know the future can be free from breast cancer. Join us **Sunday, October 16th, 2022**  
**Washington Park Parade Grounds Albany, NY**

**Scan to join or donate to  
St. Peter's Cancer Care Team!**



### WITH YOUR HELP WE....

-  Launch breakthrough research
-  Create empowering resources for people to outsmart cancer
-  Enable local communities to support those affected by cancer
-  Convene powerful activist to create awareness and impact

[www.MakingStridesWalk.org/Albany](http://www.MakingStridesWalk.org/Albany)

Sign up with fellow employees, friends, and family members.

**OCT** **Sunday, October 16, 2022**  
**16** **Washington Park Parade Grounds, Albany, NY**  
**10:00 a.m.**

# NEW Cancer Screening Location Flyer

Please take note of this NEW flyer that has been created, expanding IHANY cancer screening locations to include colon cancer screenings. Please share with your patients and colleagues. Click [here](#) to print.



**INNOVATIVE  
Health Alliance**  
of New York, LLC

## Cancer Screening Locations

The Innovative Health Alliance of New York (IHANY) is a collaboration among doctors, health systems, and providers to improve health in our communities.

### Breast Cancer Screening/Mammography



**ST PETER'S HEALTH  
PARTNERS**

A Member of Trinity Health

#### St. Peter's Breast Center

##### St. Peter's Hospital

317 S. Manning Blvd., Suite 305, Albany, NY 12208  
(518) 525-7536

##### St. Peter's Breast Center - Washington Ave.

1365 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12206  
(518) 525-5287

#### St. Peter's Breast Center

**Samaritan Hospital - St. Mary's Campus**  
1300 Massachusetts Ave., Troy, NY 12180  
(518) 268-5353

##### St. Peter's Medical Imaging - Clifton Park

1 Tallow Wood, Clifton Park, NY 12065  
(518) 373-4448

##### St. Peter's Medical Imaging - East Greenbush

Walmart Plaza, Rte. 4, 279 Troy Rd.  
Rensselaer, NY 12144  
(518) 880-6300



#### Bellevue Woman's Center

2210 Troy-Schenectady Rd., Niskayuna, NY 12309  
(518) 346-9400

#### Ellis Hospital

1101 Nott St., Schenectady, NY 12308  
(518) 243-3333



#### Rao Outpatient Pavilion

4950 State Hwy 30, Amsterdam, NY 12010  
(518) 841-7224

### Colon Cancer Screening



**Albany  
Gastroenterology  
Consultants**

#### Albany Gastroenterology Consultants

1375 Washington Ave. Suite 101, Albany, NY 12206  
518-533-5000



#### St. Mary's Gastroenterology Health Center

Medical Office Building, Floor 2/Suite 201  
425 Guy Park Ave., Amsterdam, NY 12010  
518-843-1240



**ST PETER'S HEALTH  
PARTNERS**

A Member of Trinity Health

#### Capital District Colon & Rectal Surgery Associates

St. Peter's Hospital Campus  
319 S. Manning Blvd., Suite 310, Albany, NY 12208  
518-438-2776

We recommend all patients check the details of their insurance to understand their coverage and cost responsibility.

## NEW C. difficile Educational Event

A new C. difficile Learning Action Network (LAN) event is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 5, from 1-2 p.m. The topic is *Sharing Best Practices in the Management of C. difficile Infection*. This is a follow-up to last month's event focusing on the diagnosis and treatment of C. difficile in the acute care setting, though you did not have to attend the previous event to benefit from this one.

This event also provides Pharmacy Continuing Education (CE). See details below,

including how to register in advance.

Please share with appropriate team members, including nurses, physicians, infection preventionists, pharmacists, quality and patient safety professionals, and clinical and hospital leaders. Click [here](#) to print or download the flyer.



■ QIN-QIO  
■ HQIC

**NQIC**  
Network of Quality Improvement and  
Innovation Contractors  
CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES  
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT & INNOVATION GROUP

## IPRO NQIC PRESENTS:

### *Clostridioides difficile* Sharing Best Practices and Outcomes Achieved

Pharmacy Continuing Education offered by CT Pharmacist Association

October 5, 2022, 1–2 PM EST

The 2019 CDC Threat Report lists *Clostridioides difficile* (*C.difficile*) as an urgent threat. There were an estimated 12,800 deaths due to *C.difficile* in the US in 2017. *C.difficile* infection (CDI) affects thousands of people each year; and infections are more common and tend to be more severe in older people. Inappropriate antibiotic prescribing puts patients at risk for CDI. More than half of all hospitalized patients might get an antibiotic at some point during their hospital stay, but studies have shown that 30% to 50% of antibiotics prescribed in hospitals are unnecessary or incorrect.\*

This event will include presentations on the approaches taken by two hospitals (Taylor Regional Hospital and Trinity Health Mid-Atlantic-Saint Francis Hospital) that have improved *C.difficile* rates with multidisciplinary best practice team Interventions.

#### Who Should Attend

Nurses, Physicians, Infection Preventionists, Pharmacists,  
Quality and Patient Safety Professionals, Clinical and Hospital Leaders

#### Registration Link

<https://ipro.webex.com/ipro/onstage/g.php?MTID=ee05e97205d6752ef7860f0c3d5c20708>

#### Presentation Learning Objectives

##### Taylor Regional Hospital

- Identify opportunities for improvement related to increased compliance with current best practices for prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of CDI.
- Explain processes in developing a multi-disciplinary, layered plan to incorporate C-diff education and quality improvement interventions.
- Discuss and summarize evaluation and anticipated sustainability of this plan within the current healthcare climate and its future application.

##### Trinity Health Mid-Atlantic - Saint Francis Hospital

- Describe the root cause analysis completed to identify an area of opportunity for improvement in management of CDI.
- Explain how data from *C.difficile* resources were used to plan multi-disciplinary quality improvement interventions
- Identify process and clinical outcomes achieved.

\*CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/cdiff/clinicians/index.html>

Continued on next page



## Fast Track to Better Mental Health with apti.health

Whether you or your patients are struggling with mild or severe mental illness, help is available without a long wait.

IHANY providers are using **apti.health** to quickly connect

patients to an expert care team dedicated to helping with emotional health and wellness.

Patients in need of these services will receive an online clinical consultation within 48 hours of registering and have their first online therapy session within five days of the consult. In addition to therapy, patients will receive a personalized care plan, direct messaging on a secure platform, 24/7 support services, and, if recommended, mental health medication management by a prescriber.



For more details, visit [aptihealth.com](https://www.aptihealth.com) or call (888) 454-3827.

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## Education: Medical Grand Rounds are Back!

CME credits are available for live events, and recordings will be posted 30 days after the event. **These sessions are open to all IHANY providers.**

Details available on the website:

<https://www.sphp.com/colleagues/continuing-medical-education>

**Meetings are held noon to 1 p.m. on Wednesdays.**

**Upcoming Presentations:**

**Virtual and LIVE:**

**Wednesday, Oct. 5, noon - 1 p.m.**

*"What Matters Most in Goals of Care Discussion"*

Presented by: **Lynn Berdar, RN; George Giokas, M.D.; Kelly Leonard, MSN, RN BC**

**Join us in-person in Mercy Conference Rooms 1/2, St. Peter's Hospital, Albany.**

**To attend virtually, visit [sphp.com/colleagues/continuing-education](https://www.sphp.com/colleagues/continuing-education).**

**Microsoft Teams Meeting Links are displayed at the bottom of the page the morning of the event.**

For questions, email:

**[Kathy Kindness](mailto:kathy.kindness@sphp.com)**, Medical Librarian

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## Connecting our CIN: EpicCare Link

If you are a provider -not- currently on St. Peter's Epic/TogetherCare electronic medical record system (EMR), you can use **EpicCare Link** to connect to that EMR. This is a free, web-based portal that provides real-time, read-only access to your patients' clinical data to provide quality patient care. You'll receive automatic notifications when there is an update on your patient, giving you the information you need to plan your patient's follow-up and continuing care plans. You can also use EpicCare Link to quickly refer patients to the SPHPMA organization. **You can access EpicCare Link by clicking [here](#).**

**NEW to EpicCare Link?**

To find out if your practice is already set up in EpicCare Link, or if it needs to be added,



please email the SPHP EpicCare Link Coordinator [Missy Belotti](#).

Once it is validated the practice exists in EpicCare, a practice "site administrator" needs to be identified to coordinate and manage access for providers and appropriate practice staff. Practices are able to designate more than one site administrator if needed. Only new account requests submitted to Missy Belotti *by the practice site administrator(s)* will be processed.

You should also contact Missy Belotti if your practice is already set up, but you do not know who your site administrator is or you need assistance reactivating an EpicCare Link account.

*We will continue to highlight the option of using the EpicCare Link for program registrations and referrals when appropriate to streamline the process for our providers and patients.*

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## IHANY Website

There are now easily accessible resources for Hierarchical Condition Categories (HCC) Provider Education and Quality on [IHANY.org](#). Go to the "For Providers" section and choose which topic you would like to explore.

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## We are here to support you.

### Your IHANY Practice Support Team

**Adriana Quiroga-Garcia**, Regional Manager, Population Health Quality & Performance

**Ashley Zapp**, Manager, Care Coordination

**Brian M. Pinga**, Regional Director, Population Health Quality & Performance

**Emily Smith**, Risk Adjustment Coding Specialist

**Julie R. Eisen**, Risk Adjustment Coding Specialist

**Laura Wise**, Healthcare Data Analyst

**Laura Graham**, Quality Improvement Specialist

**Lisa Kelly-Armstrong**, Director, Network Management & Operations

You can find all of our past newsletters on our website. Click [here](#).

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[Learn more about IHANY](#)

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