

August  
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# VALUED PROVIDER eNEWSLETTER

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## RELAXATION: THE ANTI-STRESS

In our fast-paced culture, stress has become the norm rather than the exception. Busy workers, homemakers and students are living lives with little margin. As a result, relieving stress is a multibillion-dollar industry dominated by pharmaceutical intervention. Unfortunately the answer for too many has become the procurement of illegal drugs, alcohol or prescription medication to anesthetize the brain rather than address the cause of stress. Why? Drugs and alcohol provide an immediate, but temporary, relief to stress and don't require users to change their lifestyle.

For those who want to get off the hamster wheel of stress, both physical and psychological relaxation techniques offer viable and healthy alternatives.

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### Relaxation therapy

Relaxation therapies differ in philosophy and method. The goal is to use the power of the mind and body to achieve a sense of relaxation. Relaxation therapies often focus on repeating a sound, word or prayer. They may focus on a body sensation. Relaxation therapies can reduce physiological stress and make a person feel relaxed.

There are numerous approaches to relaxation. The 3 main categories include deep or rhythmic breathing, systematic relaxation of muscle groups, and meditation and prayer.

### Deep or rhythmic breathing

Stress constricts blood flow, reduces oxygen and disrupts mood. Breathing techniques help to regulate and improve oxygen levels, resulting in a calming effect. Here are 3 common breathing exercises:

- **Deep breathing**—As you think about your breathing, consider that you are filling your entire body with life-giving oxygen. Focus on breathing into your tummy; let your lungs and stomach rise and fall with each deep breath. With every long, slow exhalation, you will feel more relaxed.
- **Rhythmic breathing**—Stress is associated with increased heart rate and respirations. You can slow down your breathing by taking long, slow breaths. Focus on your breathing. Inhale slowly, and then exhale slowly. Count to 3 as you inhale, and then count slowly to 3 as you exhale. As you exhale, pay attention to how your body responds. Find a breathing rhythm that is comfortable, and remember it.
- **Visualized breathing**—Breathe in a deep, natural rhythm. Think about your breath coming into your nose, traveling into your lungs, expanding your chest and then going out the same way. Continue breathing, but each time you inhale, imagine that you are breathing in more relaxation and breathing out the worries of the day.

## RELAXATION: THE ANTI-STRESS (CONTINUED)

### Progressive muscle relaxation

The body responds to stress with muscle tension. Progressive muscle relaxation involves learning to systematically tense and relax your muscles. By forcing yourself to tighten your muscles, you will more readily recognize the physical manifestation of stress and how to relax.

This technique involves the voluntary tensing and relaxing of muscles throughout the body. For example, when you simultaneously clench your fists, shrug your shoulders and wrinkle your forehead for five seconds and then relax, you will immediately discern the feeling of relaxation.

### Meditation

When you think about a problem over and over again it's called worry. When you focus your mind on other things such as life's purpose, your loved ones, a "Higher Being," it's called meditation. Meditation usually involves sitting quietly for 15 to 20 minutes. It can produce a state of relaxation that reduces heart rate, slows breathing and lowers blood pressure.

Specifically, meditation is the practice of focusing your attention on things beyond the worries of the day. During meditation, you may focus on a single image, sound, mantra (words spoken or sung in a pattern) or your own breathing. Or, you may not focus on a single thing but try to let your thoughts and feelings simply pass through your mind.

Types of meditation include:

- **Autogenic training**—Participants imagine being in a peaceful place with pleasant body sensations. The person focuses on the body and tries to make parts of the body feel heavy, warm or cool. Breathing is centered and the heartbeat is regulated.
- **Mindfulness meditation**—Participants focus on body sensations and thoughts that occur in the moment. The person learns to observe sensations and thoughts without judging them.
- **Prayer and reflection**—For those who believe in the love and healing power of a "Higher Being," quiet prayer can be a calming and relaxing experience.

Like exercise, meditation and relaxation take time. Unfortunately, the most stressed-out people seldom make the time to experiment with these healthy alternatives to stress and worry. As one busy manager told me, "If I had the time to sit and think about my breathing for 20 minutes, I wouldn't be so stressed."

If you are having trouble with stress and would like to learn more about how to cope, talk with your family doctor or call the toll-free phone number on this site.

By Drew Edwards, EdD

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*"Unfortunately, the most stressed-out people seldom make the time to experiment with these healthy alternatives to stress and worry."*

## NORTH CAROLINA SERVICE CENTER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE: MONITORING FOR METABOLIC SYNDROME FOR MEMBERS TAKING ANTI-PSYCHOTIC MEDICATIONS

*“Considerable evidence indicates that mentally ill patients often do not receive adequate recognition of, monitoring of, or care for their medical illnesses negatively impacting quality of life and contributes to premature death.”*

Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of features (hypertension, central obesity, glucose intolerance/insulin resistance and dyslipidemia) that is predictive of both Type 2 Diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Such features are prevalent in people who are receiving antipsychotic medication. The precise relationship between antipsychotic drugs, glucose homeostasis, obesity, and the metabolic syndrome remains uncertain, but it is clear that people treated with antipsychotic medication have a high rate of the individual features of the metabolic syndrome and the syndrome itself. (Schizophrenia Bulletin vol. 33, no 6, pp. 397-1403.)

In addition to antipsychotic medication, the negative symptoms of mental illness and vulnerability to stress, specifically in schizophrenia, lead to a lifestyle that increases the risk for development of metabolic syndrome. (DeHert, et.al, 1999).

Studies suggest that screening rates for metabolic syndrome in people prescribed antipsychotic medication are below those recommended. Considerable evidence indicates that mentally ill patients often do not receive adequate recognition of, monitoring of, or care for their medical illnesses negatively impacting quality of life and contributes to premature death.

Reviews of the association between psychotic disorder, the metabolic syndrome, diabetes, and antipsychotic drugs conclude that there is a critical need for active, routine physical health screening of patients' prescribed antipsychotic drugs, including appropriate management of metabolic adverse events associated with psychiatric medications.

Baseline monitoring measures, such as those listed below, should be obtained before or as soon as clinically feasible after, the initiation of any antipsychotic medication:

- Personal and family history of obesity, diabetes, dyslipidemia, hypertension, or cardiovascular disease
- Height and weight
- BMI calculation (Weight in Pounds / ( Height in inches x Height in inches ) ) x 703
- Waist circumference (at umbilicus)
- Blood pressure
- Fasting plasma glucose
- Fasting lipid profile

Baseline screening and regular monitoring for metabolic syndrome should include:

- Consideration of metabolic risks when starting second generation antipsychotic medication
- Patient, family and caregiver education
- Referral to specialized services when appropriate
- Discussion of medication changes with patient and family



## NORTH CAROLINA SERVICE CENTER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE, CONTINUED

Based on the 2012 annual treatment record review and the 2012 providers that were surveyed, Value Options has created a [Metabolic Monitoring Form](#) for your use. Additional information related to Body Mass Index is available on the [Center for Disease Control website](#).

## PARTICIPATE IN VALUEOPTIONS' STAMP OUT STIGMA CAMPAIGN

As reported in July, ValueOptions rolled out its own Stamp Out Stigma (S.O.S.) campaign to show our commitment to stamping out the stigma of mental illness that keeps so many from seeking the care they need.

This campaign was also rolled out to clients and the public, and is now currently being introduced to you, our valued providers, to further support you when communicating with your patients about the importance of seeking help and talking with others about mental illness.

A provider toolkit is also available online, which includes information you can use in your office and/or distribute to your patients as you feel appropriate. Posters, flyers and articles comprise this toolkit, which all reinforce the consistent message that we need to all work together to remove the stigma associated with mental illness.

To learn more about the S.O.S Campaign, visit ValueOptions' own [S.O.S. website](#).



*"A provider toolkit will soon be available online, which includes information you can use in your office and/or distribute to your patients as you feel appropriate."*

## ROLE-BASED SECURITY NOW AVAILABLE WITH PROVIDERCONNECT

ValueOptions is pleased to introduce a new level of ProviderConnect access, role-based security, designed to enhance security measures for providers and ensure compliance with HIPAA regulations.

With this new enhancement, providers can:

- Create New Login Accounts
- Deactivate Login Accounts
- Control User Access to Certain Areas within ProviderConnect

Providers can now grant varying levels of functionality to employees within their office, so that only specific employees will have access to processes and information. For example, a provider may only want his/her accounts payable clerk to be able to process claims. Role-based security makes this possible.

Three types of user types are currently available:

- Super user
  - Manages other users' login accounts
  - Creates new login accounts and disables users
  - Controls access to specific areas within ProviderConnect
- Managed user (with rights managed by the super user)
  - Managed by a superuser and only has access to functions to which he/she has been granted access
- Standard user
  - Not managed by another user or manages other users
  - Has access to certain areas of ProviderConnect depending on his/her assigned role

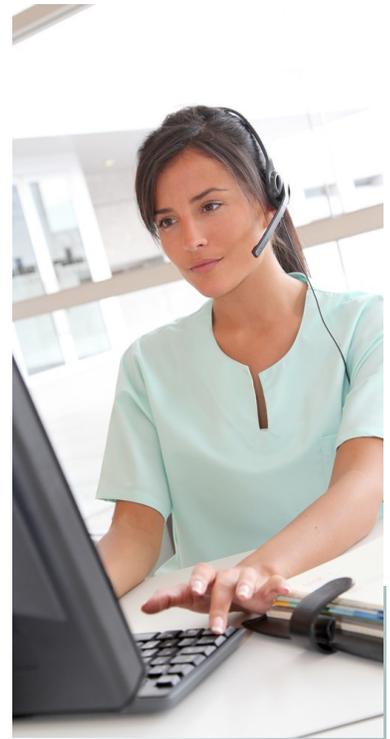
To begin using role-based security, contact the EDI Help Desk at 1-888-247-9311 from 8:00 am – 6:00 pm ET or by email at [e-supportservices@valueoptions.com](mailto:e-supportservices@valueoptions.com).

For additional information on this enhancement, refer to the [“Role-based Security” section in the ProviderConnect user guide](#).

## Webinar Alert: ProviderConnect Webinar Schedule

### An Overview of ProviderConnect

- [Wednesday, August 14, 2013 2 PM to 3 PM Eastern Time](#)
- [Wednesday, September 11, 2013 2 PM to 3 PM Eastern Time](#)



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## IMPORTANCE OF TIMELY CREDENTIALING & RE-CREDENTIALING APPLICATIONS

ValueOptions' requires credentialing and re-credentialing for all *providers* and *participating providers*, including individual practitioners and organizations (clinics, facilities or programs).

**Credentialing** begins with the submission of completed and signed applications, along with all required supporting documentation. This includes, without limitation, attestation as to:

- any limits on the *provider's* ability to perform essential functions of their position or operational status;
- with respect to individual practitioner *providers*, the absence of any current illegal substance or drug use;
- any loss of required state licensure and/or certification;
- absence of felony convictions;
- with respect to individual practitioner *providers*, any loss or limitation of privileges or disciplinary action; and
- the correctness and completeness of the application.

Failure of a *provider* to **timely submit** a complete and signed credentialing application, and all required supporting documentation, **may result in rejection of request for participation status with ValueOptions.**

**Re-credentialing processes** begin approximately six (6) months prior to the end of the initial credentialing cycle or the preceding re-credentialing cycle. Required documentation includes, without limitation, attestation as to:

- any limits on the *participating provider's* ability to perform essential functions of their position or operational status;
- with respect to individual practitioner *participating providers*; the absence of any current illegal substance or drug use; and
- the correctness and completeness of the application

It's also important that you ensure we have your accurate demographic information on file.

Failure of a *participating provider* to **timely** submit a complete and signed re-credentialing application, and all required supporting documentation, **may result in termination of participation status with ValueOptions and such providers may be required to go through the initial credentialing process.**

To expedite the credentialing and re-credentialing, we encourage you to begin the processes on ProviderConnect.

For additional information, refer to the [Credentialing/Re-credentialing section](#) of the Provider Handbook.



*“Failure of a provider to timely submit a complete and signed credentialing application, and all required supporting documentation, may result in rejection of request for participation status with ValueOptions.”*

## GIVING VALUE BACK TO THE PROVIDER WEBINAR SERIES

We welcome our provider community to this interactive forum where ValueOptions will introduce and discuss new and exciting initiatives for providers. These webinar presentations will familiarize you with administrative and procedural information to simplify doing business with ValueOptions.

- [Thursday, September 12, 2013 2 PM to 4 PM Eastern Time](#)
- [Friday, September 13, 2013 11 AM to 1 PM Eastern Time](#)
- [Thursday, December 5, 2013 2 PM to 4 PM Eastern Time](#)
- [Friday, December 6, 2013 11 AM to 1 PM Eastern Time](#)

## VALUESELECT<sup>SM</sup> PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

The ValueSelect Outpatient Program is an exclusive program designed to recognize network outpatient providers who are engaging in activities that promote clinical effectiveness, member access to services, member satisfaction, and administrative efficiency.

As a member of the ValueSelect program, providers are eligible to receive:

- Opportunity for increased referrals
- Free CEU/CMEs through Relias Learning (formerly Essential Learning)
- Training Discounts through Behavioral Tech, LLC
- Access to Achieve Solutions, ValueOptions award-winning website that offers valuable mental health resources, assessment tools and articles that may be shared with clients

To qualify for the ValueSelect designation, providers must demonstrate the following:

- Accessibility: Seeing five or more ValueOptions members (EAP and non-EAP) in the past 12 months (or at least 10 commercial members for clinics);
- Administrative efficiency: conducting transactions using ValueOptions ProviderConnect portal within the past 12 months, and
- ValueSelect Activities: Engaging in one or more of the following activities
  - Participation in the On Track Outcomes Program
  - Submitting at least 75% of non-EAP claims electronically
  - Having clients complete the ValueOptions Patient Treatment Survey
  - Having a CEAP credential

To learn more about this program, refer to the [ValueSelect Outpatient Program Description](#) or contact your Provider Relations representative.

*"The ValueSelect Outpatient Program is an exclusive program designed to recognize network outpatient providers who are engaging in activities that promote clinical effectiveness, member access to services, member satisfaction, and administrative efficiency."*



## VALUEOPTIONS ACTIVATES NATIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE PROTOCOLS AFTER MID-WEST TORNADO OUTBREAK

As the dust literally settled in the aftermath of the devastating tornado damage caused in the mid-west, ValueOptions had the privilege of bringing imperative care to our members who were and still are reeling from this disaster. We never wish for events such as this, but we anticipate them and spring into action when they occur, taking our commitment to the people we serve very seriously.

The moment we saw the scale of the tornado and the impact it had on densely populated areas, we activated our national crisis response protocols. This involved:

- Assessing potential client impact in the regions through outreach
- Alerting our call centers to prepare for higher call volumes
- Prepping our crisis response network to address calls for assistance
- Adding relevant resources to Achieve Solutions websites, including an updated home page supporting recovery and supplying local resources
- Communicating concern to clients as well as assuring them of our readiness to assist them when needed
- Distributing tips and links to pertinent resources to clients for distribution to their employees/members

As overwhelming as moments such as these are, we realize this when our expertise is vital. Our clients and members can trust ValueOptions and our provider network to be there when we're needed most.

## UPCOMING BANK ACCOUNT CHANGE – PROVIDER CHECKS ISSUED ON WELLS FARGO ACCOUNTS

Please know that ValueOptions will be closing our Wells Fargo bank accounts during the second half of 2013 and opening new replacement accounts with two financial institutions, one of which is Bank of America. No change is needed on your part, although to plan for this change, it is important that you deposit all checks you may be holding or regularly receiving from ValueOptions, which are written on our Wells Fargo accounts.

If you do not deposit these checks prior to the closure of our Wells Fargo accounts, you will need to contact your customer service representative to have replacement checks issued on our new bank accounts. Some new accounts have already been opened with Bank of America and will have checks issued in late May.

To provide you as many reminders as possible, we will continue to notify you in the upcoming weeks and months as we receive more details regarding this change and the exact closure date of our existing accounts.

*“The moment we saw the scale of the tornado and the impact it had on densely populated areas, we activated our national crisis response protocols.”*

