

FirstChoiceSM
by Select Health of South Carolina

Your Hometown Health Plan

Healthy Connections 



**FIRST CHOICE:
Tried and True,
Time to Renew!**

Healthy NOW

2026 ISSUE 3

www.selecthealthofsc.com

**Stay well
and feel
your best**



First Choice
4900 O'Hear Ave., Suite 104
North Charleston, SC 29405



First Choice Member Services
P.O. Box 40849
Charleston, SC 29423



@firstchoicebyselecthealth



@firstchoicebyselecthealth



First Choice by Select Health

Learn about
extra benefits
See page 5

Access the digital version of *Healthy Now* with links to click on at:
www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/info-for-you/healthy-now

Is it time for your child's next shot?

Keeping up with your child's vaccines is 1 of the best ways to help safeguard their health.

Childhood shots help prevent diseases like the flu and measles that can lead to serious health problems. They can also spread easily to other people. Here are 3 other things to keep in mind:

1 Timing matters. Vaccines work best when they are given at the right age. Following the recommended schedule helps protect your child when they are most at risk.

2 Staying up-to-date benefits everyone. It can:

- Protect your child before exposure happens.
- Reduce the spread of illness at school, daycare, and playdates.
- Keep your child healthy so they do not miss school and activities.

3 Catch up when needed.

Families get busy and appointments get missed. Your child's primary care provider (PCP) can help you to figure out what shots your child needs and create a plan to get back on track.

To learn more about childhood vaccines now, visit

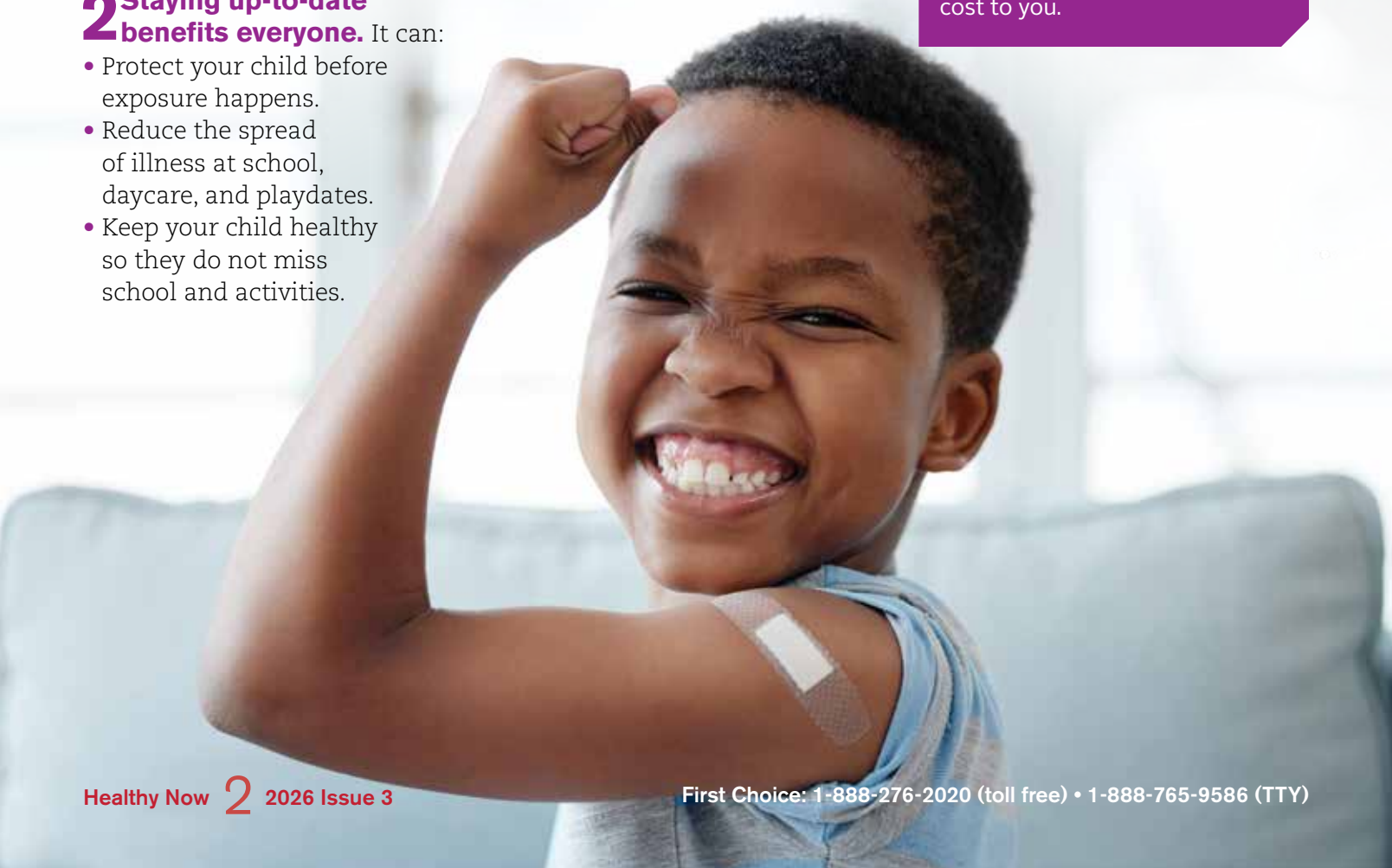
- www.selectthehealthofsc.com/member/staying-healthy/child-preventive-services
- <https://dph.sc.gov/public/vaccinations>

Vaccines are not just for kids

In South Carolina, flu season usually starts in November and lasts through March. The South Carolina Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that everyone 6 months and older get a flu shot every year.

Ask your primary care provider (PCP) if you also need a pneumonia (pneumococcal) shot. The CDC says adults ages 50 and older should get at least 1 dose. Younger adults may also need this shot if they have certain health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, or HIV.

As a First Choice member, you can call your PCP or visit a network pharmacy to get these and other routine vaccines at no cost to you.





Respond
quickly to
keep your
benefits!

Make sure you keep eligible benefits for you and your family!

When you get your annual Medicaid eligibility review form, you **have limited time to complete and return it**. If you do not return it on time, you and/or your children are at risk of losing Healthy Connections (Medicaid) benefits.

Does Healthy Connections have your current address?

It's important that Healthy Connections has your current address and contact information. To prevent a gap in coverage, please visit the Healthy Connections online portal today to update your information: <https://tools.apply.scdhhs.gov/quick-tools>.

For the latest information about annual reviews, visit Healthy Connections at <https://msp.scdhhs.gov/annualreviews>.

Explore other First Choice health plans

First Choice offers more than just Medicaid in South Carolina. We also offer 2 other types of health plans.

A **dual-eligible special needs plan (D-SNP)** is for people who have both Medicaid and Medicare. It can help make it easier to use both plans together.

A **Marketplace plan** is for people who need health insurance but do not have Medicaid or Medicare. It may be a choice if your Medicaid ends or if someone in your family needs coverage.

To learn more about these plan options, visit:

- First Choice VIP Care D-SNP: www.firstchoicevipcare.com
- First Choice Next Health Insurance Marketplace plans: www.firstchoicenext.com

What to do after an **ER visit**

Here are 4 key actions to help you avoid a return visit to the hospital.



Follow directions. The ER provider will give you written discharge instructions. Read them closely before you leave. Ask any questions you have. Once you get home, follow your discharge instructions. Also, take the instructions with you to follow-up visits.

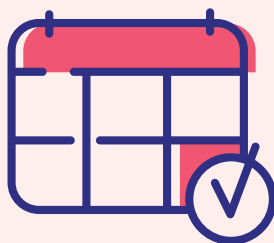
Reach out if you need help before your follow-up visit.

Call your PCP if you start to feel worse or have new symptoms after you get home. Also call if you have questions about your instructions.



Take all your medicines as directed.

If you are prescribed antibiotics or other drugs, do not stop taking them until your provider tells you to, even if you feel better. If you have questions about your medicine routine, ask your provider or pharmacist.



Book your next visit.

Your discharge instructions may say when you should follow up. If not, call your primary care provider (PCP). Schedule an appointment to take place within 7 days of leaving the ER.

Your rights and responsibilities

As a First Choice member, you have many rights and responsibilities. For example, you have the right to be treated with respect. You also have the right to take part in choices about your health care.

To see the full list of member rights and responsibilities, visit www.selectthehealthofsc.com/member/info-for-you. Click on **Member rights and responsibilities**. You can also find it in your Member Handbook. Or you can call Member Services toll free at **1-888-276-2020**.

Have you reached the limit of your covered benefits?

You can call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020** for help and information about resources to continue care.

Your First Choice:

Extra benefits to help you get and stay healthy!

As a First ChoiceSM Medicaid managed care member, you keep your standard Healthy Connections benefits and get certain **extra benefits at no cost to you!**



Maternity support programs from First Choice include:

- **Electric breast pump** for qualifying members.
- **NEW! The Maternity Peer Support program** is available for all expecting and new mothers (prenatal through 12 months postpartum).
- **Doula and lactation services** are available. We provide prenatal and postpartum doula services at no cost to qualifying members.
- **Regional baby showers** with choice of car seat, portable crib, or stroller.
- **Meals for qualifying new moms.**
- **Transportation vouchers** for qualifying pregnant members.*
- **Access to online parenting classes.** Online workshops to help parents solve challenges, like sleeping through the night, potty training, and more.
- **Keys to Your Care[®] texting program** for pre- and post-pregnancy.

Adult vision care, including an eye exam and glasses every 2 years.*



Get a **\$25 gift card for completing a new member orientation** within 30 days of enrollment with First Choice.**



Educational assistance programs:

- **College scholarships and GED vouchers** for selected qualifying members.*
- **Back-to-school events** with school supplies and haircuts for grades K – 12 (while supplies last).

Additional programs:

- **Youth sports program/YMCA swim lessons voucher.***
- **Sports physicals for children.** Members who get their sports physical at the same time as their well visit will receive a \$25 gift card.*
- **NEW! Foster care hygiene kits** for youth in foster care through age 18.
- **NEW! Rides for caregivers in foster care.*** Parents and guardians can schedule a ride to visit their foster child or youth in psychiatric residential treatment facilities (PRTFs) within South Carolina.
- **Feminine hygiene kits** available at no cost to qualifying members ages 10 to 18.
- **Emergency kits are available to members.** These kits include road hazard tools, first aid supplies, and a flashlight**
- **Fresh Produce Box and Meal Program.***
- **Trusted Medicaid community center.** The center is a hub for members, families, and the community. It's a gathering place where you are always welcome!



*Conditions apply; see website.

**Note: For certain benefits, there is a limit of one per household, per lifetime.

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To learn more, visit
www.selecthealthofsc.com/extrabenefits

Questions?

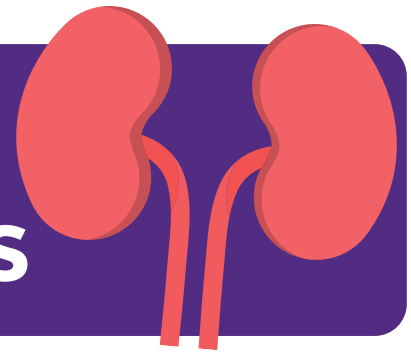
You can also call Member Services at
1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586).

FirstChoiceSM
by Select Health of South Carolina

 *Your Hometown Health Plan*

Healthy Connections 

4 ways to care for your kidneys



Think of the kidneys like a pool filter. Without a filter, the pool's water fills up with waste fast. The kidneys work all day and night to clean the blood. When they do not work well, waste, and extra fluid build up in your blood. This can lead to chronic kidney disease (CKD).

CKD is not just a concern for people with diabetes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warns that people with prediabetes can also damage their kidneys. Prediabetes means blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough to count as Type 2 diabetes. Over time, the damage could lead to CKD or kidney failure.

Teens, take note!

Adults are not the only ones who have prediabetes. A recent CDC report says that as of 2023, about 1 in 3 kids ages 12 to 17 has prediabetes. Now is the time to make a change.

So, what can you do?

The CDC says the 4 steps shown on this page can help everyone keep their kidneys working the right way.

1 Make healthier food choices.

For most people, this means eating more fruit, vegetables, and whole grains and cutting back on salty, processed foods. If you have prediabetes, follow your health care provider's instructions.



2 Limit or avoid alcohol. It can raise blood pressure. If you have diabetes, it can cause low blood sugar.

3 Get or stay active.

Regular exercise can help lower your blood pressure. In turn, this can help reduce



your risk for kidney disease. Walking and cycling are good options for many people.

4 Don't smoke.

If you smoke, take steps to quit. Your efforts can improve your kidneys and overall health.



Earn rewards for good health!

With the Healthy Rewards Program, First Choice members can earn rewards by doing things that help them stay healthy. To begin earning rewards, all you have to do is complete the health screenings offered through our member incentive mailing. Then have your provider sign or stamp the form and return it to us in the envelope provided. It's that easy! Learn more about the Healthy Rewards Program at www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/benefits/healthy-rewards.

Dilated eye exams are worth a closer look

Routine eye exams are important for everyone. If you have diabetes, you have a higher risk for eye problems, including diabetic retinopathy. That is why you should get a dilated eye exam at least 1 time a year. This can help you find problems early before you notice changes in your vision.

What to expect

Your eye care provider will put special drops in both of your eyes to make the pupils wider. This allows your provider to see the back of your eyes better while using a magnifying lens.

Right after the exam, your vision may be blurry. Bright light may bother your eyes. Both will go away in a few hours.

Signs to watch for

Diabetic retinopathy may not cause symptoms at first. Over time, you may notice:

- A dark shadow over part of your vision.
- Eye pain or redness.
- Flashes of light.
- Spots or dark wavy strings floating in your vision.
- Vision loss.

Tell your eye doctor right away if you have any of these symptoms.

Do you or your child need extra support to stay healthy?

First Choice offers care management programs for certain conditions at no cost to members. Learn more at www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/benefits/special-health-programs.

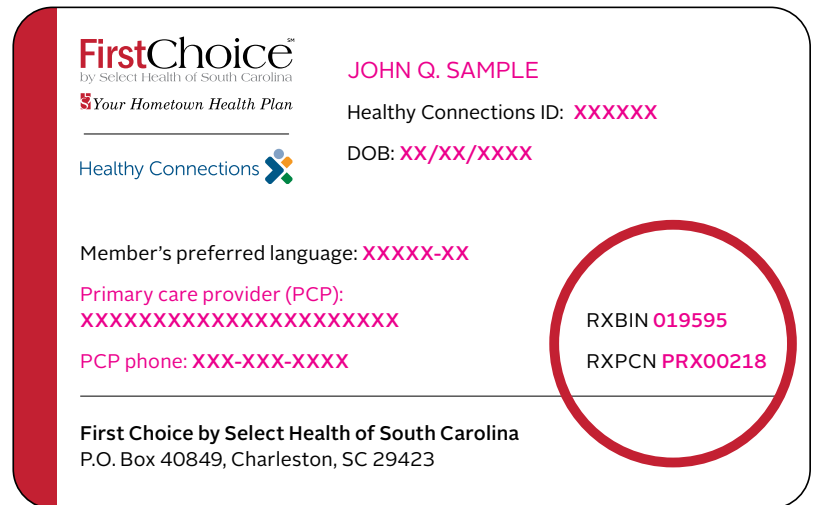
Update on information sharing

In 2027, new Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) rules will make it easier for you and your doctors to get and share your health information safely. Watch for updates on our website to learn more about what this means for you and your care.



Expect a new First Choice member ID card in December!

In December, you will get a new **First Choice ID card**. You should start using the new card as of January 1, 2027. Your replacement card will have new pharmacy RXBIN and RXPCN numbers. That is the only change. There are no changes to your benefits and services.



Member Services: Let us help you!



Call **1-888-276-2020**
(TTY **1-888-765-9586**).

We are here to answer benefit questions and help you:

- Schedule health care provider visits.
- Get your covered medicines filled. Call before you leave the pharmacy.
- Arrange transportation to and from provider visits or a pharmacy to pick up your covered medicine.
- After a visit to your provider. Let us know if you wait longer than 45 minutes from your appointment time.

For health-related questions, call the 24/7 Nurse Call Line at **1-800-304-5436**.

Find information about your prescription benefits online

Visit www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/benefits/prescription-benefits for information about:

- How your prescription benefits work.
- First Choice's preferred drug resources, including the South Carolina Statewide Preferred Drug List (PDL).
 - A drug list, also called a PDL, is a list of medicines covered by First Choice.
- How we let you know about drug list changes.
- How often the drug list changes occur.
- Limits and exceptions.
- Prior authorization of medicines.
- Generic substitution and step therapy.
- Copayments. There are no copays for First Choice members.



Medicine matters

Do you take 1 or more prescription medicines?
Be sure to follow all the instructions from your health care provider. If you do not take it the right way, it may not help you with the health issue it was meant to treat. This can make your condition worse.

These tips can help you stay on track:



Get your refills on time. Set up refill reminders in the First Choice member portal!



Take all the doses.



Take the right amount each time.



Talk with your pharmacist or provider if you have any questions.

The National Center for Health Statistics reports about:

50% of people take prescription medicine.

25% take at least 3 different prescription medicines.

Complete your follow-up care.

You may need extra checkups or tests based on the medicines you take. **Here are 2 examples:**

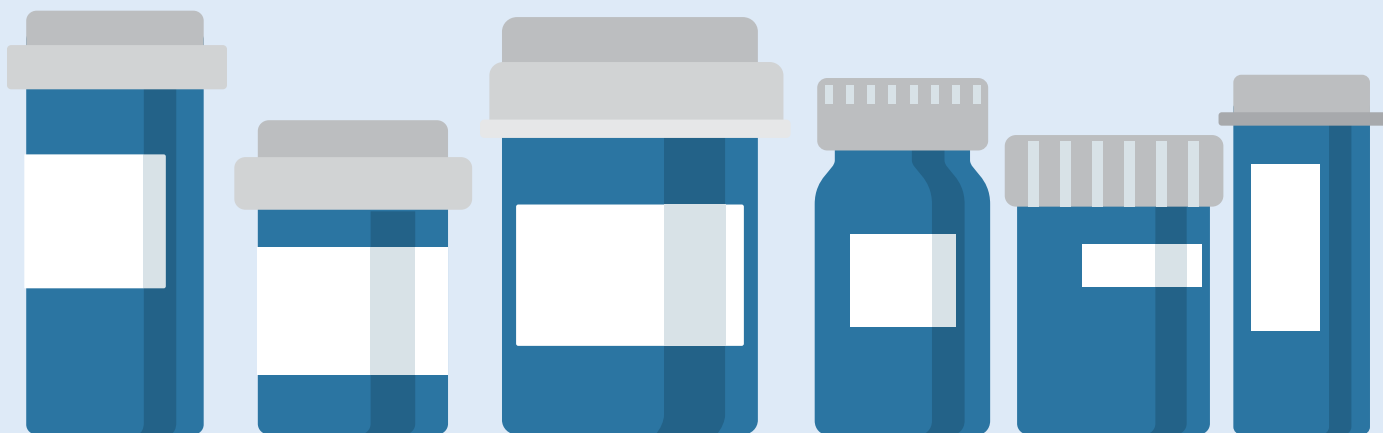


Antipsychotic medicines. The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) says people ages 17 and younger should have regular blood sugar and cholesterol tests when taking these drugs.



Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) medicine.

The NCQA says kids ages 6 to 12 should have a checkup within the first 30 days of starting this medicine. They should have 2 more visits before month 11.



Learn more about your **benefits and services** on our website, through your member portal, or by mail

The First Choice website, www.selecthealthofsc.com, described below is home to important resources and information about your health benefits and services.

The member portal

Here you can see your medical and drug benefits and health information. You have access to your recent health care history while you have been a First Choice member. You can also:

- Request a new ID card.
- Change your primary care provider (PCP).
- See a list of your medicines.
- Enroll in a Care Management program.

To register: Under **Members**, click on **Member tools**. Click on **Member portal**. Enter your information to log in.

The most current Member Handbook

This has information about:

- Benefits and services that are and are not covered.
- How to get language services. These services are provided at no cost.
- How to choose a PCP and find providers in our network.
- When to access emergency services.
- How quickly you should be seen for urgent and routine needs.
- How to get care in case of an emergency or when you are out of town.
- What to do if you need to be admitted to the hospital.

- How to get care after normal business hours.
- How to get a second opinion.
- How to get specialty care and mental health services.
- Member Rights and Responsibilities and the Notice of Privacy Practices.
- Grievances and appeals.
- How to report suspected fraud and abuse.
- How First Choice makes decisions about your care when there are advances in medicine and new treatments become available.
- Other benefits and services to help you with your health decisions.

Network hospitals, doctors, and behavioral health providers

Using the online provider directory, you can find a First Choice health care provider, behavioral health provider, or hospital. Search by name, ZIP code, or county. You can see their specialty, languages spoken, gender, office hours, and wheelchair accessibility.

Copayment amounts for adults

As of July 1, 2024, there are no copayments.

Medicine updates

You can find: pharmacy benefits, limits, and Comprehensive Drug List changes under **Benefits**, then **Prescription benefits**. FDA drug recalls can be found under **Information for you**.

Member Rights and Responsibilities and the Notice of Privacy Practices

To view these documents, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com/rights and www.selecthealthofsc.com/privacy. It is important for you to know your health care rights and what information you can control.

Instructions for how to report fraud or make a complaint

You can learn how to:

- Report suspected fraud or abuse.
- Make grievances (complaints).
- Ask for an appeal if a service you feel you need is denied.
- Request a Medicaid State Fair Hearing.

Frequently asked questions

You can find out about many things, like what to do if you get a bill, the policy on prior authorization, whom to call if you have trouble getting a prescription filled, and how to change your PCP. Remember to check our website for notices of any temporary benefit changes related to public health emergencies, or extreme weather updates, such as hurricanes.

Need printed resources?

Please call Member Services if you want a provider directory, Member Handbook, list of Member Rights and Responsibilities, or other information sent to you by mail.

Health care fraud and abuse

There are many types of fraud and abuse.

These can include when doctors bill for services you did not get or bill the wrong way on purpose to get paid more. Or when people use member ID cards that are not theirs or people who are not supposed to get coverage are on a health plan.

What you can do

To help, you can:

- Check your Explanation of Benefits (EOB), if you have received one, to help make sure all information is right.
- Protect your health plan card and private information at all times.
- Only share your Medicaid ID number or Social Security number if you have confirmed whom you are speaking with and if they are acting in an official role related to your health care.
- Count your pills each time you pick up medicine to make sure you get the amount prescribed. If the amount is not correct, tell your pharmacist. If you get too few pills on more than 1 occasion, report it as noted below.

How to report fraud and abuse

If you think someone is abusing the Medicaid system, you should report it. Your report can be anonymous, if you choose.

You can call any of these numbers:

- Select Health Fraud Tip Hotline (to report fraud, waste, or abuse): **1-866-833-9718**.
- Select Health Compliance Hotline (secure and confidential 24 hours a day, 7 days a week): **1-800-575-0417**.
- South Carolina's Division of Program Integrity Fraud and Abuse Hotline: **1-888-364-3224**.



Or you can email: South Carolina's Division of Program Integrity: fraudres@scdhhs.gov.

Or you can mail a letter to:

- Special Investigations Unit
200 Stevens Drive, Mail Stop 13A
Philadelphia, PA 19113

If your primary language is not English, language services are available to you, free of charge. Call **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

First Choice is here for you! This newsletter and other materials are translated into Spanish and can be found on our website at www.selecthealthofsc.com. If you need help with translations of other documents, or in other languages, please call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**.

Disponibilidad de traducción

¡First Choice está aquí para usted! Este boletín informativo y otros materiales están traducidos al español, y se pueden encontrar en nuestro sitio de Internet en www.selecthealthofsc.com/es/member. Si necesita ayuda con traducciones de otros documentos, o en otros idiomas, llame a Servicios al Miembro al **1-888-276-2020**.

www.selecthealthofsc.com

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Grateful to be your health partner

As Market President of First Choice by Select Health, and mother to a small child, I know how important it is that your health plan support you and your family, no matter the season or stage of life. I consider it an honor and a blessing that you've chosen First Choice. We are thankful for you and promise to care for you like we would care for our own loved ones.

Courtney Thompson
Market president,
Select Health of South Carolina



Community Baby Showers are 1 way First Choice cares for members. At our Goose Creek shower, families, local organizations, and community partners enjoyed a morning of celebration and support. Members connected with helpful resources and took home baby essentials like diapers and wipes.



First Choice Member Services
P.O. Box 40849
Charleston, SC 29423



Member Services:
1-888-276-2020
TTY for the hearing impaired:
1-888-765-9586



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