

CASE STUDY

Maternity Case Management Delivers Improved Infant Outcomes at Lower Costs

Challenge

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) – a serious but preventable condition among newborns of mothers with drug dependence disorders – is costly. Healthy outcomes require prolonged NICU admissions, which add tens of thousands of dollars to the total cost of care. Today, NAS rates are rising rapidly alongside health plan costs specialized intensive care.

Solution

Proactively enrolling members in maternity case management offers the cost mitigation self-insured employers need to avoid potential NICU claims.

Solution in Action

A 29-year-old pregnant plan member (“Kathy”) was identified through claims for “management of high-risk pregnancy.” After a member assessment and review of medical records that showed Kathy was taking prescribed opioids for migraines, a Valenz® case manager recommended her for case management. At 14 weeks pregnant, Kathy was enrolled in the Maternity Management program, a specialty solution within the triple URAC-accredited Valenz Care Management suite.

At intake, the maternity case manager – an experienced registered nurse – quickly established trust so Kathy felt comfortable being candid about her risk factors. This trust-building enabled confirmation that Kathy was taking opioids daily and needed intervention to avoid complications for her and her baby both before and after birth.

Kathy’s maternity case manager educated her on the addictive dangers and potential for newborn withdrawal after being exposed to opioids in the womb. The case manager supported and guided Kathy in her decision to safely wean herself from narcotics. By the final trimester, Kathy was successfully managing her migraine pain with Tylenol alone.

Outcomes

Kathy delivered a healthy, full-term newborn, who was admitted to normal newborn nursery and discharged home with mom. By helping to avoid the tragic consequences of NAS, the maternity case manager also helped avoid the NICU, saving the health plan an estimated **\$43,900**.

“The new mom appreciated the support and was grateful to have prevented unnecessary out-of-pocket costs for the NICU. Her employer was grateful for the cost-savings, too – and for our help in making it possible for their employee and her baby to live strong, vigorous and healthy lives.

— RN, Valenz Maternity Case Manager ”

¹ Incidence of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Epidemic and Associated Predictors in Nevada: A Statewide Audit, 2016-2018. Published 2020 Dec 30.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7796207/>

Improved
member
experience

\$43,900
cost avoidance
for the employer

Healthy
infant outcome