



Unmet Health-Related Needs

What are they?

In a paper by Daniel, Brownstein and Gregory in the Annals of Internal Medicine, unmet health related needs are defined as “nonmedical factors that can affect a person’s overall health and health outcomes.”*

It is significant to note that the whole-person, integrated healthcare concept includes understanding and addressing unmet health-related resource needs, including identifying, utilizing and helping members navigate available social supports and local community resources.

The state of North Carolina has detailed the standard unmet health-related needs to include questions covering four priority domains:

1. Housing;
2. Food;
3. Transportation; and
4. Interpersonal violence/toxic stress.

The assessment of these four domains of care are required in the Care Management Comprehensive Assessment. The Tailored Plan will ensure the care plan and ISP incorporates these needs in the care management assessment. These assessments will include the community and social providers used to address the members’ needs.

NCCare 360 will be available to identify the community-based resources and connect members to these resources, enabling the CMA to track closed-loop referrals. Also note that these assessments, if done in discreet data fields, can be used in your agency’s risk stratification process.

How to Assess Unmet Health Related Needs?

For Medicaid transformation, Alliance recommends using the State of NC standardized resource for covering the questions with members. Using the assessment, your agency can:

- ✓ Coordinate services provided by community and social support providers.
- ✓ Link members to local community and social support providers.
- ✓ Monitor and modify the approach.

Why Are Unmet Health Related Needs Important to Understand?

According to Daniel, Bornstein and Kane,

“Tackling these issues will reduce health disparities and promote health equity across the population.”

*Daniel, Hilary; Bornstein, S., MD; and Gregory, C. Kane, MD. Addressing Social Determinants to Improve Patient Care and Promote Health Equity: An American College of Physicians Position Paper. Annals of Internal Medicine. 2018; 168:577-578. doi:10.7326/M17-2441.