Long Acting Antipsychotic Medicines* (LAAMs)

**Why LAAMs?**
Long acting antipsychotic medications (LAAMs) offered through the intramuscular or subcutaneous injection route provide slow release of antipsychotic medications to the bloodstream. LAAMs can last anywhere from 2-12 weeks with just one dose, with a 6 month (2 doses per year) version on the near horizon (paliperidone palmitate 6-month submitted to the FDA in Nov 2020).

**Benefits of LAAMs**
- Helps individuals stay on track with a medication plan.
- Steady release of the medication may reduce side effects.
- Improves the quality of life for those taking the injection.
- Reduces the risk of relapse.
- Reduced hospitalizations.
- Reduces all-cause mortality.

**Keys to Using LAAMs**
- Understand your personal clinical bias
- Planning administration (who gives injection, how to store the medication, billing for the injection and administration)

Offer as an option to all, especially the young adult population
Identify members to talk with about using LAMs
Obtain training and resource information
  - Alliance Health sponsored antipsychotic educational sessions (coming in 2021)
  - SMI Advisor (CME credit)
    - SMI Advisor – LAI Knowledge Center of Excellence
    - Strategies for Success: Using Long-Acting Injectable Medications
    - Clinician’s Guide to Preparing and Administering Long-Acting Injectable Antipsychotics

**Barriers to LAAM Use**
- Lack of knowledge and experience
- Limited infrastructure to administer injections
- Overcoming perceived patient fears of injections
- Historical perception of stigma associated with LAAMs
- Lack of insurance coverage. (Although this should not be considered a barrier as all LAAMs are available via patient assistance programs.)

* The term LAAM is preferred to LAI (long acting injectable) in order to focus on the long acting aspect of these medications and not on the injection aspect. The injection aspect is addressed after the potential benefits of long-acting medicine are relayed to the patient. This language can help patients make better informed decisions about this treatment option.