



mercy care

HEALTH MATTERS

Spring/Summer 2024

4 barriers to good health — and how Mercy Care can help

The road to good health can have many twists and turns. Roadblocks like not having access to healthy foods or a ride to the doctor's office can make it harder to take care of your health. These are called social determinants of health (SDOH). And many of them may be out of your control. That's why Mercy Care provides benefits designed to help you overcome these barriers.

Barriers story continued on page 2

[MercyCareAZ.org](https://www.MercyCareAZ.org)

MCD-1699

Check out our young adult health services video library!

These engaging videos are for Mercy Care members ages 16 to 25. These short videos give information on mental health services and suicide prevention. They also cover preventative care topics such as eating healthy and exercising.

Visit our YouTube Channel to start watching.

[CLICK HERE](#)



BARRIER 1 Transportation

Nearly 6 million people say that a lack of transportation keeps them from seeking medical care.

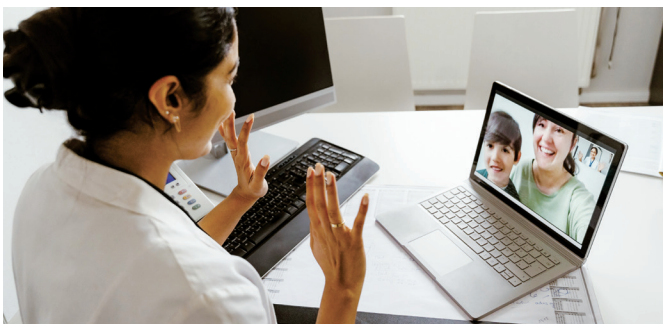
How we can help:

If you can ride the bus, we will send you bus tickets or passes at no cost to you. If you need a ride, call Mercy Care Member Services at least three days in advance to schedule your ride.

When you call, let Member Services know:

- The day, time, provider address and reason for your visit.
- If you have special needs, like a wheelchair or oxygen.
- If you have regular appointments for visits like dialysis. We can set up rides all at one time.

After your appointment, call your transportation provider to arrange a ride home. Call **1-800-624-3879** to schedule return rides home. Mention you are a Mercy Care member.



BARRIER 2 Language

We know that not all members speak English as their first language. That can make it hard to talk to your doctor or ask questions about your benefits.

How we can help:

If you need a qualified interpreter, written information in other formats, translation or other services, call the number on your ID card or **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**).



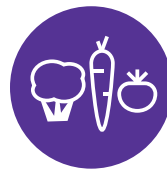
BARRIER 3 Accessing care

Maybe you don't live near a doctor's office. Or you don't have time to go to an appointment. This can make it tough to get the care you need.

How we can help:

We offer telehealth services. You can talk to a provider via phone or video chat from the comfort of your own home, on your schedule. To find Telehealth providers, visit [mercycareaz.org/find-a-provider](https://www.mercycareaz.org/find-a-provider) and scroll down to the section "More help finding providers." Then click the "Telemedicine/telehealth provider visits" drop-down.

Have a medical problem after hours? We have a 24-hour nurse line. Call the phone number listed on your Member ID card. Choose the option to "speak with a nurse" for general health advice. They can help you decide where to go for care or how to treat your health problem at home.



BARRIER 4 Food access

In the greater Phoenix area, one in three people don't have regular access to healthy foods. If you or someone you know needs food assistance, help is available.

How we can help:

Arizona Food Bank Network is a statewide group of food banks, food pantries and agencies that offer food assistance and no-cost meals. Visit [azfoodbanks.org/get-food](https://www.azfoodbanks.org/get-food) or call **602-528-3434**.

Farm Express is a mobile produce market that provides affordable fruits and vegetables to people with little to no access to healthy food. Visit [mercycar.es/farmexpress](https://www.mercycar.es/farmexpress) for a calendar of locations.

Check out your Member Handbook or visit [MercyCareAZ.org](https://www.MercyCareAZ.org) to learn more about the benefits and services included in your health plan, as well as those not covered.

Get help with your benefits application or renewal

Benefit Eligibility Triage and Education (BETE) can help anyone in Arizona with their government-benefits eligibility questions. BETE is a no-cost public service offering education about government benefits. They can help with questions about Medicaid, Medicare, Veterans Administration (VA) assistance and Social Security benefits.

Finding answers to your questions isn't always easy. It can be frustrating to search many websites or deal with recorded phone messages. With BETE, you can talk to someone directly who can help you get the benefits you're qualified for.

Call **1-855-477-9896** or visit **aet.na/sp24az-ddd-4** to get support.



Integrated care: what to know

Integrated care means that a member needs only one health plan to get care for their mind and body. Mercy Care members can get their physical and behavioral health services from us. We offer integrated health services to all our members:

- Long-term care members
- ACC-RBHA members including members with a Serious Mental Illness (SMI) designation
- Members with a developmental disability
- Department of Child Safety Comprehensive Health Plan (Mercy Care DCS CHP) members

We also provide integrated services for Arizonans who are dually eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare with Mercy Care Advantage (D-SNP).

We are committed to providing our members with more options to get physical and behavioral health care and wellness services. We simplify access to care for members with complex care needs. If you have any questions or need services, call **Member Services**.



Dental care tips

Healthy teeth and gums don't just give you a beautiful smile. They're also key to your overall health.

Brush your teeth and clean between your teeth twice every day using fluoride toothpaste. Dentists often recommend a toothbrush with soft bristles to prevent too much pressure against your teeth. Use dental floss between your teeth. This prevents harmful bacteria from growing in your mouth.

Eating well is also key to a healthy mouth. Foods that are rich in calcium — including milk and yogurt — help keep your teeth strong. Limit foods that are high in sugar, such as soda. Sugar that stays on your teeth can lead to tooth decay.

Drink water with fluoride in it. Fluoride helps keep your teeth strong. In most cities, the best source of fluoridated water is the tap in your kitchen sink. Drinking water with fluoride may help prevent tooth decay.

Try to visit a dentist twice a year for regular checkups and cleanings. This is a covered service for all DDD members. Check your Member Handbook to see what other dental services are

covered, call Mercy Care Member Services, or go to mercycaresaz.org/dd/more-benefits.html and select the 'Dental services' dropdown.

A dentist is an important member of your care team. Visit MercyCareAZ.org to find an in-network dentist. Click "Find a provider" at the top of the home page. Select the "Find a dentist" option.

Introducing Mercy Care Health Assistant

Mercy Care Health Assistant offers helpful tools for managing your health in your daily life. You can use these resources through your computer, tablet or phone. Get personalized health plans to meet your needs and track your progress. Earn rewards for completing healthy activities. You can also browse the library of articles, videos and decision tools. Learn more at aet.na/sp24az-ddd-3

We want to hear from you! Join our Member Advisory Committee (MAC) to share your feedback and help us improve our services. Go to MercyCareAZ.org/committees.html to find out how to join, or email oifateam@MercyCareAZ.org.

Medicare Part D

Prescription drug benefits for dual-eligible individuals

People who are eligible and enrolled in both Medicaid and Medicare are considered “dual-eligible” members. Once you are Medicare eligible, your Medicaid plan can no longer pay for your drugs. Dual-eligible people need to enroll in a Medicare plan that includes Part D prescription drug coverage.

Medicare Advantage plans include coverage for Medicare covered services, Part D prescription drugs and other benefits not covered by Medicare. Some Medicare Advantage plans are Special Needs Plans. These plans include coverage for Medicare-covered services, Part D prescription drugs and additional benefits. And they will coordinate with the Medicaid plan coverage a dual-eligible member has.

Mercy Care offers a Dual-Eligible Special Needs Plan, called Mercy Care Advantage, and it includes Part D drug coverage. With Part D drug coverage, you will pay a small amount for covered drugs.

If you live in a nursing home and have full Medicaid coverage,

you pay nothing for covered drugs. If you don't join a Medicare plan that includes Part D drug coverage, Medicare will automatically enroll you in a stand-alone Medicare Part D prescription drug plan. People who are dual eligible can switch Medicare plans during certain times of the year.

Note: AHCCCS does not contract nor oversee the activities of any separate stand-alone Medicare Part D prescription drug plans.



Understand your pharmacy benefits

Mercy Care's List of Covered Drugs (“the Drug List” or formulary) tells you which prescription drugs and over-the-counter drugs and items are covered at participating network pharmacies.

The Drug List will tell you if there are any special rules or restrictions on any covered drugs. In these cases, you or your doctor or other prescriber must ask the plan to cover a drug by submitting required medical information.

Visit [MercyCareAZ.org/dd/pharmacy.html](https://www.mercycareaz.org/dd/pharmacy.html) to find out about our pharmacy management and updates. You can see which drugs are covered and any requirements for getting them. You can also see what your doctor needs to do if you want a medication that isn't covered.

Benefits at your fingertips. You can access your plan benefits from anywhere through your member portal. You can also use the Mercy Care app to see your benefits on the go. Visit [MercyCareAZ.org](https://www.mercycareaz.org) and select “Login” to get started!

HIV and pregnancy: Why testing matters

Pregnant or thinking about having a baby? There's a lot you'll need to do to prepare. Here's one important thing you'll want to be sure to add to your to-do list: Getting tested for HIV.

HIV, or human immunodeficiency virus, is the virus that causes AIDS. When you're pregnant, you can pass the virus on to your child during pregnancy or delivery. But if you know you are infected, you can take steps to keep your baby (and yourself) healthy.

Special medicines can help prevent passing the virus to the baby. These medicines work best when started early. But they can still help if used before labor begins.

HIV testing is encouraged for all pregnant people, even if you don't think you have HIV. HIV may not have any symptoms for years, so you could have it without knowing it.

Your Primary Care Physician (PCP) can test for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). If the test is positive for any STI, your PCP can prescribe medication and help you find counseling. Testing, medication and counseling are provided at no cost to members.



Peer and family supports lend a helping hand

Trained peer support specialists assist members with their mental health recovery. These are mentors who can relate to your loved one. The peer support specialist can help families and their loved one address the member's social needs.

Peer support specialists know the recovery process because of their own lived experience. They receive training on how to engage people in services to support their recovery.

Peer support provides members:

- Resources to connect with the community
- Tools to use in times of crisis
- Help with treatment and wellness plans
- An advocate who will work with their clinical team

There are also family support specialists that educate and guide members and their families through the behavioral health system.

A family support specialist is an advocate. They help give a voice to the members and their family of choice. They give people the chance to explain their unique family situation. Also, they can connect members and their family with Mercy Care's other community partners that can provide services such as employment and housing support for members. These community partners are part of the treatment team that interacts with members and their families. **View the list of peer and family support providers.**

Peers and families play an important role in helping members be as healthy as possible. That is why Mercy Care works with the Arizona Peer and Family Coalition, an organization of peer and family member advocates. The coalition makes sure individuals and families have a say in the behavioral health policy decisions that affect their community.

Want to learn more about how to get involved? Or about peer and family support resources? Contact the Peer and Family Referral Center at referralhelp.org or email the Office of Individual and Family Affairs at OIFATeam@mercycares.org.

Get help quitting tobacco

Quitting tobacco products and vapes is one of the best things that you can do for your health. With help, you can double your chances of quitting successfully. And many resources are available at no cost to you.

The Arizona Smokers Helpline (ASHLine) is a great place to start. It offers coaching and resources to help people quit tobacco products and vapes. It can also give you information to help protect you and your loved ones from secondhand smoke. You don't need a referral to use the ASHLine.

Looking for more information to help you or someone you know quit?

- 1 Talk to your care manager, if you are part of Mercy Care's Care Management program.
- 2 Talk to your doctor or health care provider. They can prescribe medications that can help, or refer you to other programs and resources.
- 3 Call the Arizona Smokers Helpline (ASHLine) directly at **1-800-556-6222** or visit **ashline.org**.



Help for a behavioral health crisis

Mercy Care members can call the **Arizona Behavioral Health Crisis Line** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call **1-844-534-HOPE (4673)** or text HOPE to **4HOPE (44673)**. Chat support is available at **crisis.solari-inc.org/start-a-chat**.

The Crisis Line staff can help:

- Provide crisis support over the phone
- Dispatch a crisis mobile team to support you
- Arrange transportation to take you somewhere safe
- Help you arrange counseling or a connection to your outpatient provider
- Provide options for dealing with urgent situations

Tribal crisis lines:

- San Carlos Apache Reservation: **1-866-495-6735**
- Gila River and Ak-Chin Indian Communities: **1-800-259-3449**
- Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community: **1-855-331-6432**
- Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation: **480-461-8888**
- San Lucy District of the Tohono O'odham Nation: **480-461-8888**
- Tohono O'odham Nation: **1-844-423-8759**
- Pascua Yaqui Tribe: Tucson **520-591-7206**; Guadalupe **480-736-4943**
- White Mountain Apache Tribe: **928-338-4811**
- Navajo Nation: **928-551-0508**

Veterans Crisis Line: **1-800-273-8255**, press 1

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: **988**

National crisis text line:

Text HOME to **741741**. Chat support is available at **crisistextline.org/text-us**.

Teen Lifeline: Call or text **602-248-TEEN (8336)**

If you need someone to talk to, call the Warm Line at **602-347-1100**. Get 24/7 support from trained Peer Support Specialists. *Always call **911** in life-threatening situations.*

Transitioning into the adult system for behavioral health services

For members enrolled in DDD transition into adulthood at age 18, the behavioral health system divides into General Mental Health/Substance Use (GMH/SU) and Serious Mental Illness (SMI). There are a few differences between the covered services.

Services available in the SMI system include:

- Assigned case-manager
- Assertive Community Treatment
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
- Supported Employment (SE)
- Peer and Family Support

GMH/SU services include residential settings for substance use or eating disorders. DDD members may receive case management support from a clinician. All other adult system behavioral health services are available based on clinical need.

To be eligible for SMI services, a person must have both an SMI designation and qualifying diagnosis. Members must be at least 17 and a half years of age to have a SMI evaluation.

The listed SMI diagnoses are:

- Psychotic disorders
- Bipolar disorders
- Obsessive-compulsive disorders
- Depressive disorder
- Mood disorders
- Anxiety disorder
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Personality disorders

Members and/or their guardian or legal representative can call Mercy Care Member Services at **602-263-3000** or **1-800-624-3879** (TTY: **711**) to request an SMI evaluation. For more information, visit **crisis.solari-inc.org** or call **988**.



Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices

An AAC device gives a member added ways to share their wants, needs and thoughts. These devices are computer tablets that assist a person with a speech or language impairment. They can communicate using images from the tablet screen.

This is a covered benefit for all Mercy Care Medicaid members with a medical necessity for an AAC device: Complete Care, ACC-RBHA, Division of Developmental Disabilities, DCS Comprehensive Health Plan (CHP) and Long Term Care. Visit **MercyCareAZ.org/acc-rbha-smi/more-benefits.html** to find out how to request, repair or replace an AAC device.



Employment services

Working can be an important part of recovery in many ways. When you earn money from a job, it allows you to make choices about where to live and what to buy. A job provides structure and routine to your day. Having a job can be good for your mental health, too. When people feel good about having a job, they see themselves in a more positive way.

If you're ready to work, we're ready to help you get started! Just ask your clinician about connecting to employment services. For more information, contact Mercy Care Member Services.

What is Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)?

VR is a work program that helps individuals with disabilities prepare for, secure, retain, regain or advance in a job.

How does VR Help?

Local employment counselors work with the individual to explore their interests, skills and resources to identify a career path. They provide guidance and services to assist the individual in achieving their goal. Services

may include low- or no-cost degree programs, training and accessibility equipment to help them be successful on the job.

Get Connected to VR

Want to receive VR services? We encourage you to apply. Contact the VR general information line at **1-800-563-1221** or visit **des.az.gov/services/employment/rehabilitation-services/vocational-rehabilitation-vr** to find the nearest office.

Disclaimer

Under Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI and VII) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Mercy Care prohibits discrimination in admissions, programs, services, activities or employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age and disability. Mercy Care must make a reasonable accommodation to allow a person with a disability to take part in a program, service or activity. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. For example, this means that if necessary, Mercy Care must provide sign language interpreters for people who are deaf, a wheelchair accessible location, or enlarged print materials. It also means that Mercy Care will take any other reasonable action that allows you to take part in and understand a program or activity, including making reasonable changes to an activity. If you believe that you will not be able to understand or take part in a program or activity because of your disability, please let us know of your disability needs in advance if at all possible. To request this document in alternative format or for further information about this policy please contact Member Services at **602-263-3000** or **1-800-624-3879** (TTY: **711**).



Take advantage of your Member Handbook

Your Mercy Care Member Handbook has everything you need to know about your health plan, including:

- Benefit restrictions outside Mercy Care’s service area
- Copayments and other charges you may be responsible for
- How to file a complaint, grievance or appeal
- How we make decisions about your care (called Utilization Management)
- How we evaluate new technology as a covered benefit
- Notice of privacy practices
- Your member rights and responsibilities

The Member Handbook is updated every year. If there are major changes, we will send you a letter about it at least 30 days before the changes are effective.



Visit aet.na/sp24az-ddd-2 or scan the QR code to view your Member Handbook online. Prefer a hard copy? Call Member Services to have one mailed to you. Let us know if you need it in another language, a larger font or other formats.

HEALTH MATTERS is published for the members of Mercy Care.

4750 S. 44th Place, Suite 150,
Phoenix, AZ 85040.

This is general health information and should not replace the advice or care you get from your provider. Always ask your provider about your own health care needs.

Mercy Care is administered by Aetna Medicaid Administrators, LLC, an Aetna company.

Call for Mercy Care Member Services Monday through Friday, 7 AM to 6 PM. DDD members, call **1-602-263-3000** or **1-800-624-3879** (TTY 711). To reach the 24-hour nurse line, call Member Services and select “Speak with a nurse.”

MercyCareAZ.org

Nondiscrimination Notice

Mercy Care complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. Mercy Care does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

Mercy Care:

- Provides no-cost aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
 - Qualified sign language interpreters
 - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
- Provides no-cost language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
 - Qualified interpreters
 - Information written in other languages

If you need a qualified interpreter, written information in other formats, translation or other services, call the number on your ID card or **1-800-385-4104 (TTY:711)**.

If you believe that Mercy Care has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex, you can file a grievance with our Civil Rights Coordinator at:

Address: Attn: Civil Rights Coordinator
 4570 S. 44th Place, Ste. 150
 Phoenix, AZ 85040
Telephone: **1-888-234-7358 (TTY 711)**
Email: MedicaidCRCoordinator@MercyCareAZ.org

You can file a grievance in person or by mail or email. If you need help filing a grievance, our Civil Rights Coordinator is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue, SW Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, D.C. 20201, 1-800-368-1019, 1-800-537-7697 (TDD).

Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>

