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News Flash

To: Sharp Health Plan Providers
Attn: Providers and Provider Office Staff
From: Sharp Health Plan
Date: December 9, 2019
Subject: CDPH Health Advisory Regarding Vaping-Associated Pulmonary Injury (VAPI)

Attention Provider Partners and Office Staff:

Sharp Health Plan has received a health advisory alert for health care professionals regarding Vaping-Associated Pulmonary Injury (VAPI) and we want to make sure you are aware of it. Since June 2019, 102 cases of VAPI requiring hospitalization have been reported to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). Most patients report vaping the cannabis compounds tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and/or cannabidiol (CBD), and some patients also report vaping nicotine products, although the exact cause of illness is not yet known. The health alert advises:

- Clinicians who identify cases similar to those described in this health advisory are asked to report the cases to their local health department.
- Local health departments should report new cases or direct inquiries to CDPH's Duty Officer at dutyofficer@cdph.ca.gov or **1-916-328-3605**. Contact CDPH's Duty Officer when vaping devices/supplies have been collected from a patient and can be turned over to CDPH for testing.
- **CDPH is urging everyone to quit vaping altogether, no matter the substance or source, until current investigations are complete.** For those who continue, consumers are urged to avoid buying any vaping products on the street, to purchase cannabis products from licensed businesses (whose products are tested), to never modify a store-bought vape product, to monitor themselves for respiratory illness, and to seek immediate medical attention if they experience symptoms related to VAPI.
- **Vaping is not safe.** Vape liquids contain several dangerous chemicals, some of which cause developmental harm or are on California's Proposition 65 list of chemicals known to cause cancer, birth defects, and other reproductive harm. Vaping nicotine and cannabis is particularly dangerous for youth, whose developing brains are more vulnerable to these neurotoxins. Additionally, pregnant and breastfeeding women should not use these products.

Thank you,

Cary B. Shames, DO
Vice President, Chief Medical Officer

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