



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 29, 2018

Contact: Cynthia Townsend
cynthia.townsend@globalhealth.com
(Office) 918.878.7335

Oklahoma HMO provides information for incontinence awareness

More than 25 million Americans affected by incontinence or other bladder control issues

OKLAHOMA – It’s estimated that more than 25 million people in the United States are affected by incontinence or other bladder control issues, according to the National Association for Continence. GlobalHealth, an Oklahoma-based health maintenance organization (HMO), is providing information to help those with incontinence get past the stigma and get the help they need.

“Bladder incontinence can be a potentially embarrassing subject, especially when discussing with your primary care physician,” said Dr. Wesley Williams, medical director at GlobalHealth. “It can not only be an inconvenience, but also lead to more serious health problems like urinary tract infections. We want you to know that it’s a very common health concern and there are ways to get help.”

GlobalHealth is providing the following information to help Oklahomans get the bladder control help they need.

Know the issues. Bladder control issues may be a symptom of something deeper going on. There are many factors that your primary care physician (PCP) may look at when making an assessment, including age, sex, nervous system issues causing bladder spasms, diet, body weight and current medications and therapies.

Diet change and medications. There are multiple options available to those who have this health concern. Avoiding certain foods linked to bladder control issues may be recommended, including alcohol, artificial sweeteners, caffeine, carbonated beverages, chocolate, citrus fruits and tomatoes, corn syrup, honey and spicy foods. There are also multiple available medications that your PCP may consider prescribing, depending on the underlying cause.

Weight loss and bladder training. Higher body weight has been linked to bladder incontinence, so your PCP may encourage you to lose some weight. In addition, exercising the muscles used by the bladder to hold fluids inside without leaking may also be a recommendation. Kegel exercises focus on flexing and strengthening the muscles of the pelvis, and “the knack” is a form

of Kegel exercise that strengthens pelvic muscles during stress caused by sneezing, coughing or any other activity that may cause incontinence.

Importance of bladder control. Beyond incontinence being inconvenient, bladder control is important to maintain since urinary tract infections (UTIs) are a common occurrence. When urine is allowed to stay in contact with the urethra, bacteria can infect the tissue lining and cause a UTI. Symptoms of a UTI include pain or burning during urination; fever, tiredness or shakiness; an urge to urinate often; pressure in the lower belly; urine that smells bad or looks cloudy or reddish; and pain in the back or side, below the ribs. People of any age and gender are at risk for a urinary tract infection, so it's important that every person knows the signs and symptoms so they can speak with their PCP before complications occur.

“Open and honest communication with your PCP can open doors for you that you may not have known were there,” Williams said. “When it comes to bladder control, it's very treatable and your PCP may be able to slow down, if not stop, the unwanted and inconvenient symptoms of an uncontrolled bladder. Don't be hesitant to speak with your provider about any health concerns you have.”

About GlobalHealth

GlobalHealth is changing health insurance in Oklahoma. As an industry leader, GlobalHealth is an Oklahoma-based health maintenance organization covering 44,000 individuals in all 77 Oklahoma counties. Working proactively with each member, GlobalHealth engages a personalized management plan to address their specific needs and ensure the best possible health outcomes. GlobalHealth utilizes cutting edge, predictive data technology as a foundation to deliver improved healthcare as part of its commitment to making health insurance more affordable. Its membership includes state and education employees, federal employees, municipal employees and Medicare Advantage members. GlobalHealth employs more than 200 associates throughout Oklahoma. To learn more, visit www.GlobalHealth.com.

###