



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oklahoma-based HMO shares prevention, management information for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

COPD is the third-leading cause of death in America; kills 140,000 every year

OKLAHOMA – In an effort to educate and empower Oklahomans to take control of their own health, Oklahoma-based health insurance provider GlobalHealth is sharing information regarding the third-leading cause of death in the nation, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), as well as tips for prevention and management of the disease.

COPD refers to a group of diseases that cause airflow blockage and breathing-related problems. This includes the diseases emphysema and chronic bronchitis. While tobacco smoke is the primary cause of COPD, one in four people with the disease have never smoked. Secondhand smoke, toxic fumes in the workplace, and even genetics can cause COPD.

Identifying and treating COPD. The initial symptoms include chronic or “smoker’s cough,” chronic phlegm production, shortness of breath, and wheezing. Early detection and treatment may change its course. A breathing test can measure lung function and detect COPD in those at risk. Treatment requires professional diagnosis, followed by avoiding tobacco smoke, and removing air pollutants from the home and at work. Symptoms may be treated with medication and pulmonary rehabilitation.

“The most important aspect in the treatment for COPD lies in the hands of those suffering, and that’s avoiding tobacco smoke and other air pollutants,” said Dr. Wesley Williams, medical director at GlobalHealth. “We could reduce COPD by 75% and, in theory, save more than 100,000 lives lost to COPD each year if people would simply quit smoking.”

COPD prevention. Approximately 75% of COPD deaths are attributed to cigarette smoking. So, the most important first step is to quit smoking. Also, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends avoiding exposure to air pollutants in the home, which includes secondhand smoke, as well as toxic fumes in the workplace.

Managing COPD . The American Lung Association recommends patients talk to their primary care physician, take their prescribed medications and other treatments to develop a disease management plan. Noting that each person's COPD is different and so is each plan.

About GlobalHealth

GlobalHealth is changing health insurance in Oklahoma by providing genuine care and optimal health for the members it serves. As an industry leader, GlobalHealth is an Oklahoma-based health insurance provider covering individuals in all 77 Oklahoma counties. Working proactively with its members, 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 individuals who are eligible for Medicare, state, education and municipal employees and federal employees. To learn more, visit www.GlobalHealth.com.

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