Sometimes a diagnosis changes everything; a serious illness can affect every aspect of your daily life. Once you know what kind of medical care you need, the next step is to explore options that make it easier for you to get that care.

Jodie DeLay, Assistant Director of Public Relations for Montana State University, discovered this when she was diagnosed with severe Crohn’s Disease (an inflammatory bowel disorder) in 1994. After struggling for years with the debilitating effects of the disease, Jodie began taking a drug called Remicade; her treatment turned the corner at that point. She has been in remission since 2003 and is currently training for a half marathon. But Jodie’s success story doesn’t stop there—she took advantage of Montana University System’s (MUS) new Quality Care Choice program to save money and improve her quality of life.

**Quality Care Choices**

In collaboration with local providers, the MUS employee benefit plan has been working to establish Quality Care Choice programs to help employees and their enrolled dependents living with certain serious diseases. These programs, which must meet very strict clinical standards, provide integrated medical services under one roof, ensuring that members don’t get lost in the system. These Quality Care Choice programs are also referred to as Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) which we believe may jumpstart healthcare plans into a new cosmos of care, and are truly emblematic of bringing everyone together as partners.

MUS recently initiated a new Quality Care Choice program: Infusion Therapy (The Surgical Treatment of Morbid Obesity Program and Autism Care Program are presently under development.)

- The **Infusion Therapy Program** is offered in partnership with the Walgreens-OptionCare stores in Helena, Billings, Bozeman, and Butte. This program was designed for patients who need medication administered through a needle or catheter, to treat such diseases as congestive heart failure, immune deficiencies, multiple sclerosis, and rheumatoid arthritis. The participating Walgreens stores operate infusion suites, where patients can have their IV drugs administered under the care of medical professionals. (Note: Medicare-primary retirees and disabled retirees should continue to obtain infusion therapy from Medicare-approved facilities, usually at a hospital.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walgreens-OptionCare, Billings</th>
<th>Walgreens-OptionCare, Bozeman</th>
<th>Walgreens-OptionCare, Butte</th>
<th>Walgreens-OptionCare, Helena</th>
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<tr>
<td>404 N 31st St Suite 401 Billings, MT 59101</td>
<td>682 Ferguson Rd Suite 1 Bozeman, MT 59718</td>
<td>800 W Platinum St Suite D Butte, MT 59701</td>
<td>1150 11th Ave Helena, MT 59601</td>
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Plan members who participate in this program receive their treatment **free of charge** - no deductibles, no copayments, and no coinsurance. The program is easy to use as well, with no prior authorization requirements; and works seamlessly with the MUS medical plans.
Jodie’s Story: Saving Time and Money

Jodie’s medication, Remicade, has to be administered intravenously; each treatment takes two hours under close medical supervision. Every eight weeks, Jodie would drive the 90 miles from Bozeman to Butte to be treated at a hospital. This meant spending a lot of time on the road, especially in the winter; she ended up taking a full day off work each time she needed her medication. In addition, hospital charges for administering infusion drugs can be very high.

In August, Jodie learned about the Quality Care Choices program and began getting her infusion therapy at the Walgreens in Bozeman. Now she can work through lunch before leaving for her treatment. “Getting the infusion in Bozeman saves me half a day of work, which adds up over time,” she says. Jodie appreciates the comfortable facilities and the “fantastic” service she receives from the clinic’s staff—as well as the $0 copayment.

The cost savings from the Infusion Therapy Program are tremendous, both for the patient and MUS. For Remicade alone, the MUS and State of Montana employee medical plans project savings of about $750,000 a year; total annual savings for all the services within the Infusion Program can reach $3 million.

The real bottom line is the value that comes from good savings plus good service. The Quality Care Choice program is dedicated to providing that kind of value to MUS employees and their families. To learn more about the Infusion Program call 1-800-287-8266. Or you may contact the Director of the MUS benefits plan, Connie Welsh, at (406) 444-0614.