



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Oklahoma HMO provides information for alcohol awareness**

*Excessive drinking is responsible for 1 in 10 deaths in working-age adults*

**OKLAHOMA** – Excessive alcohol use is responsible for approximately 88,000 deaths in the United States each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). GlobalHealth, an Oklahoma-based health insurance provider, is giving information to educate Oklahomans on the causes and effects of alcohol use disorders.

“Excessive alcohol use has become more common, and now includes binge drinking, heavy drinking, any alcohol use by people under the minimum legal drinking age and any alcohol use by pregnant women,” said Dr. Wesley Williams, medical director at GlobalHealth. “With approximately 75% of the alcohol Americans drink occurring in the form of binge drinking, it is important to remain educated about the short- and long-term health risks associated with excessive alcohol consumption.”

GlobalHealth is providing the following information to help Oklahomans identify and treat alcohol use disorders:

**What is an alcohol use disorder?** According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, an alcohol use disorder occurs when a person has uncontrolled and problematic drinking patterns. Previously known as alcohol abuse or alcoholism, an alcohol use disorder can be mild, moderate or severe, and may cause lasting changes in the brain that make patients vulnerable to relapse.

**What are some symptoms of an alcohol use disorder?** Common physical, psychological and behavioral symptoms include wanting to stop drinking but not managing to do so, diverting energy from work, family and friends in order to drink, being secretive about the extent of alcohol abuse in order to protect it and engaging in risky behavior, such as drunk driving.

**What are the health risks associated with an alcohol use disorder?** Excessive alcohol use may cause mental health problems including depression and anxiety, learning and memory problems, high blood pressure and chronic diseases such as pancreatitis, cirrhosis of the liver and various forms of cancer.

**What are the treatment options and costs?** If you feel you or someone you know has an alcohol use disorder, contact your primary care physician or your healthcare provider to discuss inpatient and outpatient treatment options. According to the CDC, other resources include the National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Referral Routing Service, which provides information about treatment programs in your local community.

Consulting your health insurance provider can help you determine whether your health insurance covers treatment services. Some health insurance providers, such as GlobalHealth, offer substance abuse services, including counseling and residential treatment, medication-assisted treatment, alcohol detox and acute hospitalization coverage. When researching treatment options, be sure to ask about payment options or whether they accept your insurance plan.

### **About GlobalHealth**

GlobalHealth is changing health insurance in Oklahoma. As an industry leader, GlobalHealth is an Oklahoma-based health maintenance organization 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 state, education and municipal employees, federal employees, and individuals who are eligible for Medicare. To learn more, visit [www.GlobalHealth.com](http://www.GlobalHealth.com).

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