PAPER CLIP—GAP IN CARE FOR OSTEOPOROSIS

Description: Osteoporosis (porous bone) is a disease where bones become less dense, less flexible, and more fragile. Those who have osteoporosis are more likely to fracture or break bones.

Possible Cause: Bone strength diminishes with age and is also affected by diet, activity level, some medications, and smoking.

Diagnostic Tests: A bone mineral density scan (DEXA scan) is used to diagnose Osteoporosis.

Conversation with Member:

- **General opening:** “How are things going with your activities and exercise? Are you keeping your bones healthy?”
- **Offer information:** “I have some information to share with you regarding what you can do to keep your bones strong and less prone to breaking; would you like to talk about that?”
- **Get more specific:** “I want to share some information with about Osteoporosis so we can make a plan together to keep your bones healthy. Osteoporosis is a disease of the bones that is very common with aging. You may not know if you have Osteoporosis if you have never been diagnosed. If you have this disease, your bones are more prone to break. Having fragile bones can be difficult and painful. Have you had a recent fracture? Were you scanned for Osteoporosis or put on medication to treat Osteoporosis?”
- **Lifestyle impacts:** “Osteoporosis may cause pain, a loss of height, an inability to work or to be active. You will heal more slowly if you have a fracture. You may have a loss of independence if it is not treated.”
- **Medical treatment:** “There are some treatment options available for Osteoporosis. I think it would be helpful to discuss this with your doctor to determine if you have Osteoporosis and to make a treatment plan if one is needed. These options may include: medications, diet changes and getting more exercise.”
- **Review the member’s plan of action:** “Based on this information, can we make a plan for you to work with your doctor on keeping your bones healthy?”

- **National Standard:** Women 67 to 85 years of age who sustained a fracture were tested or treated for Osteoporosis within 6 months of the injury.

References:

- NIH Osteoporosis and Related Bone Disease
- National Bone Health Alliance Resources