

# NEWS RELEASE



*For Immediate Release*

## **UnitedHealthcare Offers Special Enrollment and Reduces Administrative Requirements to Improve Access to Care and Coverage in Response to COVID-19**

*Company launches a special enrollment period for some of its existing commercial customers, reduces prior authorization requirements for providers and expands telehealth*

**MINNETONKA, Minn. (March 24, 2020)** – UnitedHealthcare announced today several updates to its programs in response to the COVID-19 national emergency. In addition to previously announced telehealth and virtual care expansion, the company will open a special enrollment period for some of its existing commercial customers to enable people to get coverage for their health care needs. The company is also further easing administrative requirements to access care through reduced prior authorization requirements.

“UnitedHealthcare is committed to helping people access health care to the fullest extent possible as we come together to address this national emergency,” said UnitedHealthcare Chief Executive Officer Dirk McMahon. “We will continue to help people get coverage for the care they need, as well as ease care provider and health system administrative burdens.”

### **Access to Coverage – Special Enrollment Period**

UnitedHealthcare is easing contractual requirements for its fully-insured and level-funded customers to offer a special COVID-19 enrollment opportunity to allow employees who did not opt in for coverage during the regular enrollment period to get coverage. The enrollment period will be open from March 23, 2020, to April 6, 2020. Self-funded customers may choose to amend their eligibility requirements to align with this special enrollment period at their discretion. Customers can contact their broker, consultant or sales representative to speak to them about the special enrollment period.

### **Reduced Prior Authorization Requirements**

UnitedHealthcare continues to adopt measures that will reduce administrative burden for physicians and facilities to help members more easily access the care they need. This includes:

- Suspension of prior authorization requirements to a post-acute care setting through May 31, 2020; and
- Suspension of prior authorization requirements when a member transfers to a new provider through May 31, 2020.

We will temporarily suspend or relax additional policies as needed in regions where inpatient capacity is most compromised and most at risk. Providers should consult [www.UHCprovider.com](http://www.UHCprovider.com) for specifics on UnitedHealthcare policies and guidelines.

## **Access to Testing and Medical Care**

During this national emergency, UnitedHealthcare will continue to waive cost-sharing for COVID-19 testing provided at approved locations in accordance with the CDC guidelines. In addition, the company will waive cost-sharing for COVID-19 testing related visits, whether the care is received in a physician's office, a telehealth visit, an urgent care center or an emergency department. This coverage applies to commercial, Medicare Advantage and Medicaid members.

## **Access to Telehealth**

To increase system access and flexibility when it is needed most, UnitedHealthcare is expanding its telehealth policies to make it easier for people to connect with their health care provider from home. People will have access to telehealth services in two ways:

**Designated Telehealth Partners** – Medicare Advantage and Medicaid members can continue to access their existing telehealth benefit offered through one of UnitedHealthcare's designated partners without cost-sharing. Cost-sharing for commercial members will be waived through June 18, 2020. Self-insured customers may choose to opt out.

**Expanded Provider Telehealth Access** – Through June 18, 2020, eligible medical providers who have the ability and want to connect with their patient through synchronous virtual care (live video-conferencing) can do so. Except for the waiver of cost-sharing for COVID-19 testing related visits, benefits will be processed in accordance with the member's plan.

## **About UnitedHealthcare**

UnitedHealthcare is dedicated to helping people live healthier lives and making the health system work better for everyone by simplifying the health care experience, meeting consumer health and wellness needs, and sustaining trusted relationships with care providers. In the United States, UnitedHealthcare offers the full spectrum of health benefit programs for individuals, employers, and Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, and contracts directly with more than 1.3 million physicians and care professionals, and 6,500 hospitals and other care facilities nationwide. The company also provides health benefits and delivers care to people through owned and operated health care facilities in South America. UnitedHealthcare is one of the businesses of UnitedHealth Group (NYSE: UNH), a diversified health care company. For more information, visit UnitedHealthcare at [www.uhc.com](http://www.uhc.com) or follow @UHC on Twitter.

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