1. **What is the UnitedHealth Premium® designation program?**

The UnitedHealth Premium designation program evaluates and recognizes doctors and facilities who meet national industry standards for quality and local market benchmarks for cost efficiency. The program evaluates a range of specialties that account for 50% of annual health care spending.¹

The quality criteria come from evidence-based medicine standards and national guidelines published by clinical societies and input from leading physicians practicing in specialty areas. The cost-efficiency criteria are based on patient care provided over an entire episode of care, including physician direct services as well as facility and ancillary services (medications and diagnostic testing). Doctors who meet both quality and cost-efficiency guidelines receive two stars, and those that meet quality guidelines receive one star. These results are displayed in provider directories on the member website at myuhc.com®.

2. **Why did UnitedHealthcare develop the UnitedHealth Premium designation program?**

Health care is changing. Now more than ever there are more choices and decisions to make. Employers need actionable information to help them improve employee health and productivity and manage costs. Employees need easy-to-use tools that help them navigate the health care system and ensure they receive the best care possible. From finding a doctor to evaluating treatment options and understanding how to influence the cost of care, everyone could use some guidance.

The UnitedHealth Premium program was developed to provide quality and cost efficiency information about physicians and facilities to help people make informed decisions about where they get care.

Poor quality care can lead to higher complication and surgical repeat rates, unnecessary hospitalizations, and a higher probability of misdiagnosis. Studies show that physicians who meet quality and cost-efficiency criteria deliver care at costs that are 14 percent lower than those who do not meet the criteria.²

3. **How do physicians and facilities become designated by the UnitedHealth Premium program?**

Physicians are evaluated for quality using national industry, evidence-based and medical specialty society standards, and evaluated for cost efficiency using market and specialty-specific benchmarks.

The quality criteria were developed using evidence-based, medical society, and national industry standards, and input from leading physicians practicing in specialty areas. The criteria used to measure physician practices are based on the following aspects of care:

- **Preventive care** – cancer screening and other indicated screening interventions
- **Appropriate care** – appropriate use of medications and diagnostic tests
- **Chronic disease care** – monitoring for control, progression, and complications
- **Patient safety** – avoiding duplicate testing or adverse drug interactions, and monitoring safety
- **Sequencing of care** – diagnostic tests and procedures, treatment, and monitoring
- **Effectiveness of procedures** – lack of failed therapy and complications

Physician performance is compared to the quality criteria using UnitedHealthcare claims data. Physicians who meet the quality criteria receive the UnitedHealth Premium quality designation, displayed as one star (★) in provider directories on the member website myuhc.com.

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¹ Based on UnitedHealthcare claims data.

² Estimated savings based on UnitedHealth Premium program experience with 28.4 million completed episodes of care. Savings based on 14% average. Actual savings estimates would vary from 7% to 19% based on physician specialty.
Physicians that meet the quality criteria are then analyzed for cost efficiency. Cost efficiency criteria are based on patient care provided over an entire episode of care, including physician direct services as well as facility and ancillary services (medications and diagnostic testing). A physician's total episode costs are compared to the costs of all physicians in the same specialty for the same types of episodes in the same geographic area. Only physicians who have met the quality standards are eligible for the cost efficiency designation. Physicians that meet the quality and cost efficiency criteria receive the quality and cost efficiency designation, displayed as two stars (★★) in provider directories on the member website myuhc.com.

Facilities are designated based on national medical standards for quality of care and may be given from one to three stars. If they meet the quality criteria, they are then evaluated for cost efficiency and identified as either “higher efficiency,” “average efficiency” or “lower efficiency.”

4. **Is cost part of the UnitedHealth Premium designation program criteria in addition to quality?**
   The UnitedHealth Premium designation program evaluates physicians and facilities on quality and cost efficiency measures. Only those who meet the quality criteria are designated for cost efficiency. A combination of methodologies is used to assess both physician and facility cost efficiency using one of the largest claim repositories in the nation. Cost efficiency analysis is based on total cost, which is a combination of resource utilization, resource mix, and unit cost.

Cost efficiency is defined as using the least costly medical resources to treat a medical condition to achieve a desired outcome. Cost efficiency criteria are based on patient care provided over an entire episode of care including physician direct services as well as facility and ancillary services (medications and diagnostic testing). The unit price of each clinical service, the choice of diagnostic or therapeutic modality and the volume of services used in the episode influence the cost of an episode of care. Total episode treatment costs are compared to the costs of all physicians in the same specialty for the same types of episodes in the same geographic area. Cost is measured using the “allowable amount” that includes the provider reimbursement along with the out-of-pocket costs responsible by the member. Only physicians or facilities that meet marketplace norms receive a UnitedHealth Premium cost efficiency designation. All physicians or facilities that meet the cost efficiency criteria have already met UnitedHealthcare’s quality criteria. Physicians or facilities that meet the quality criteria receive the UnitedHealth Premium designation and are listed as meeting quality criteria only.

5. **How often are physicians and facilities evaluated in this program?**
   Physicians and facilities are evaluated at least every other year.

6. **When will the UnitedHealth Premium designation program be available in my market?**
   The UnitedHealth Premium physician designation program is currently available in the following states:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alabama</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
<th>Louisiana</th>
<th>Nevada</th>
<th>Oklahoma</th>
<th>Texas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>Utah</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>Illinois*</td>
<td>Michigan*</td>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>Pennsylvania*</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>West Virginia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>Missouri*</td>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Illinois: Not available in Springfield
  Michigan: Not available in Upper Michigan
  Missouri: Only available in Kansas City
  Pennsylvania: Not available in Philadelphia
7. **What specialties are included in the UnitedHealth Premium designation Program?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Care Specialty Areas</th>
<th>Other Specialty Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Medicine</td>
<td>Allergy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
<td>Cardiology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obstetrics and Gynecology</td>
<td>Cardiology - Electrophysiology</td>
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<td>Pediatrics</td>
<td>Cardiology - Interventional</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Endocrinology</td>
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<td>Infectious Disease*</td>
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<td>Nephrology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Neurology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Neurosurgery - Spine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orthopaedics - General</td>
<td>Orthopaedics - Hand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orthopaedics - Foot/Ankle</td>
<td>Orthopaedics - Hip/Knee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopaedics - Shoulder/Elbow</td>
<td>Orthopaedics – Spine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulmonology</td>
<td>Rheumatology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not Available in MN, ND, SD and Western WI

8. **What are the benefits to employers of the UnitedHealth Premium designation program?**

The program is another way to help consumers, through information and other tools, make more informed decisions about their care. The program offers many benefits to our customers and their employees.

For customers, the program provides:

- **Affordability solutions** that increase overall network value by encouraging and rewarding physicians for providing quality, cost-efficient care and offering benefit incentives to consumers for using quality and cost-efficient providers.
- **Easy access** to information and simple tools, support and guidance so employees can make informed decisions about their care.

9. **How does the UnitedHealth Premium designation program benefit my employees?**

Not all health care is equal, and where your employees seek care matters. The UnitedHealth Premium designation program was designed to help employees find quality, affordable care.

For consumers, the program provides:

- **Information transparency** by recognizing those physicians who meet national industry criteria for quality and local market benchmarks for cost efficiency and displaying those results on the member website myuhc.com.
- **Simple, easy-to-use tools** to help employees make the right choice for them. These include:
  - **Website – www.myuhc.com.** This site can help members find a UnitedHealth Premium doctor or facility. It also provides useful tools and information, including prescription drug information, a health assessment and a treatment cost estimator.
  - **Toll-free Customer Care line.** Our customer care professionals are available toll-free through the number located on the back of the health plan ID card.
  - **NurseLine**. Our NurseLine offers advice from experienced registered nurses who can answer questions about health concerns and help find a UnitedHealth Premium doctor or facility.
  - **Treatment Decision Support.** Treatment Decision Support targets nine common and costly conditions to help people actively engage in more informed decision-making.

10. **How do my employees locate a UnitedHealth Premium designated physician or facility?**

There are several ways to find a Premium designated physician or facility:

- Call the toll-free Customer Care number located on the back of their health plan ID card.
- Log on to myuhc.com to do a physician or hospital search and look for the UnitedHealth Premium star icon.
- Contact the NurseLine (24/7).
11. **What tools are in place to engage and encourage members to select a designated physician or facility?**

Critical to the success of this program is the ability to engage consumers. We have developed a three-phase consumer communication and activation plan to help you establish communications with your employees about UnitedHealth Premium.

**Phase 1: Generate Awareness.** These communication materials are designed to help employees understand the personal value of researching quality and cost efficiency information when looking for a doctor. Examples of tools to support this phase include the UnitedHealth Premium program member brochure, newsletter articles and email templates.

**Phase 2: Educate, Inform, and Engage.** These communications are designed to educate your employees on the resources available to them and how to use them. Examples of tools and resources include a physician and facility search demo on MyChoiceNotChance.com, Smart Patient checklists and a customizable PowerPoint presentation.

**Phase 3: Activate.** This phase provides personal support at every touch point to help employees take informed action on where to seek care. Resources include NurseLine, Treatment Decision Support, myuhc.com, and condition-specific consumer materials.

12. **How is information being shared with physicians and facilities?**

Physicians and facilities are notified of their designation status in writing. Physicians also have online access via a secure website, UnitedHealthcareOnline.com, to detailed reports which show their performance compared to quality and cost efficiency criteria. Designations for both physicians and facilities are displayed in provider directories on the member website at myuhc.com.

13. **What kind of recognition can a physician receive by the UnitedHealth Premium designation program?**

There are several possible displays for a physician’s designation. Designations are displayed in the physician search results on myuhc.com.

- **Quality and cost efficiency criteria met:** To receive the quality and cost efficiency designation (two stars), physicians must meet guidelines for providing quality and cost-efficient care. To receive the quality designation, physicians must meet national, evidence-based medical society, and national industry standards for quality care. For the cost efficiency designation, physicians must meet local market benchmarks for the cost-efficient use of resources in delivering care.

- **Quality criteria met:** To receive the quality designation (one star), physicians must meet national, evidence-based medical society, and national industry standards for quality care.

- **Quality criteria met (not enough data to assess cost efficiency):** This display indicates the physician has met national industry standards for quality care, but did not have enough health plan claims data (i.e., a minimum of 10 medical or surgical cases) to be evaluated for cost efficiency.

- **Not enough data to assess:** A physician did not have enough health plan claims data to be evaluated for the UnitedHealth Premium designation. For quality and cost efficiency, a minimum number of patients and a minimum number of medical or surgical cases are required to determine if the physician has met the quality and cost efficiency criteria.

- **Not evaluated:** If a physician did not receive a star designation, it may be because the UnitedHealth Premium program does not currently evaluate physicians in this specialty, or the physician’s UnitedHealth Premium evaluation is in process.

- **Not displayed upon physician request:** A physician may have requested that his/her designation not be displayed on this website.

If the space next to a physician’s name is blank, the physician did not meet the criteria for designation under the UnitedHealth Premium program.
Overview

14. What is the UnitedHealth Premium specialty center designation program?
The UnitedHealth Premium specialty center program evaluates and recognizes facilities who meet quality and cost-efficiency criteria in the following areas: cardiac care, congenital heart disease, surgical spine, total joint replacement, infertility, and neonatology. Facilities must complete an online survey to apply for designation.

A facility must first meet the quality criteria before it may be evaluated for cost efficiency. If a facility meets the quality criteria, they receive from one to three stars. If they meet the quality criteria, they are then evaluated for cost efficiency and identified as either “higher efficiency,” “average efficiency” or “lower efficiency.”

15. What are the benefits of the UnitedHealth Premium specialty center program?
Facilities that receive the UnitedHealth Premium specialty center designation are recognized for meeting national evidence-based and medical specialty society standards. They are identified in UnitedHealthcare’s online provider directories and related customer and consumer materials. Some consumers may receive benefit incentives when they visit designated facilities. As a result of the designations, facilities may see an increased volume of patients.

16. How many facilities receive the UnitedHealth Premium specialty center designation?
There is no limit to the number of facilities that can be designated for the UnitedHealth Premium specialty centers program. Participation in the program is voluntary.

17. What happens when the facility meets the UnitedHealth Premium specialty centers program criteria?
Facilities will be notified in writing of the outcome of their evaluation. Additionally, the following will occur:

- Facilities will have their designation status displayed in provider directories on the member website at myuhc.com.
- Communication materials to physicians and consumers will identify all facilities that are designated as a UnitedHealth Premium specialty center.
- Members who call into the NurseLine are told which facilities have received the UnitedHealth Premium specialty center designation, as applicable.

18. What happens if a facility DOES NOT meet the UnitedHealth Premium specialty center designation criteria?
Facilities that do not meet the program criteria will be notified in writing of the outcome of the survey review and criteria evaluation, including identified areas of improvement for future consideration. Facilities that do not meet the criteria and receive no designation will remain listed on myuhc.com, but without designation information. All UnitedHealthcare facilities, regardless of designation status, remain part of our national network.
The UnitedHealth Premium® designation program is a resource for informational purposes only. Designations are displayed in UnitedHealthcare online physician directories at myuhc.com®. You should always consult myuhc.com for the most current information. Premium designations are a guide to choosing a physician and may be used as one of many factors you consider when choosing the physicians from whom you receive care. If you already have a physician, you may also wish to confer with him or her for advice on selecting other physicians. Physician evaluations have a risk of error and should not be the sole basis for selecting a physician. Please see myuhc.com for detailed program information and methodologies.

Only individual physicians and facilities that meet UnitedHealth Premium designation criteria, or physicians in designated specialties who are part of medical groups that meet UnitedHealth Premium criteria for group practices and who have sufficient claims data for analysis, may be designated. All physicians and facilities that contract with UnitedHealthcare have met credentialing requirements. Regardless of designation, plan enrollees have access to all physicians and facilities in the UnitedHealthcare network. Specialties for which there are no quality guidelines currently established in the program are excluded from evaluation and are noted as such.

For informational purposes only. NurseLineSM nurses cannot diagnose problems or recommend specific treatment and are not a substitute for your doctor’s care. NurseLine services are not an insurance program and may be discontinued at any time.

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