Cancer Support Program

UnitedHealthcare’s Cancer Support Program (CSP) helps clients mitigate the costs associated with cancer treatment while promoting evidence-based care for the patient, delivering clinical and economic value for the client and their members.

Cancer advocate nurse

UnitedHealthcare’s CSP cancer nurse provides one contact for the patient to help make informed decisions about their cancer care. Our specialized Cancer nurses are supported by an entire team of cancer experts, while remaining the sole deliverer of cancer case management for the patient. Through comprehensive case management, clients realize up to 10 percent off cancer-related medical costs for surviving patients that engage in the program and $5,000 in last month of life savings.¹

An integrative approach to close gaps in care

Cancer patients engaged in CSP realize improved quality of life through proactive, targeted interventions and support from their experienced cancer nurse. Our dedicated nurses work to help patients remain productive while focusing on getting healthy and staying healthy.
The costs of cancer

• The financial costs of cancer are large both for the individual and for society. In the year 2010, the National Institutes of Health estimated annual direct medical costs related to cancer were $124.6 billion.¹

• By 2020, they estimate those costs will rise to $157.8 billion.²

Additionally, our devoted cancer nurses: 

• Help prevent and manage symptoms and side effects, leading to fewer inpatient admissions and emergency room (ER) visits
• Collaborate with treating physicians to fill gaps in knowledge, support and management of patients
• Help manage pharmacy costs by reviewing medications and comparing them to evidence-based standards

• Provide support to help patients make informed decisions about their treatment
• Educate patients regarding hospice services and palliative care as appropriate
• Help patients navigate the health care system and refer them to specialists as needed

Cancer Centers of Excellence (COE) network

UnitedHealthcare identifies cancer centers across the country who meet quality criteria to participate in the cancer COE network. These centers only qualify for the COE network if they provide high-quality, appropriate and cost-effective care and are reviewed annually to help ensure they continue to meet the high standards for which they were originally selected.

Reported savings through UnitedHealthcare’s cancer COE facilities have ranged from 35 to 45 percent, contributed equally from inpatient, outpatient and pharmacy services.³ In addition to the financial benefit, other potential benefits at a cancer COE facility may include:

• More consistently accurate diagnosis
• Care that is planned, coordinated and provided by a multidisciplinary team of experts who specialize in the patient’s specific kind of cancer

• Appropriate therapy, fewer complications and higher survival rates
• Shorter length of stay and decreased costs

Network qualification process

The Cancer Centers of Excellence network is comprised of many of the most highly regarded cancer centers in the country. Each center has met our qualification criteria based on eight critical features:

1. Multidisciplinary approach to care
2. Program depth and breadth
3. Best practice medicine
4. Patient- and family-oriented programs and services
5. Patient volumes
6. Treatment planning and coordination
7. High-quality clinical research
8. Patient safety

The costs of cancer

For more information about the Cancer Support Program, please contact your UnitedHealthcare representative.

⁴ National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health; “Projects of the Cost of Cancer Care in the United States”; January 2011.

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The Cancer Support Program provides information and support as part of a health plan. It is not a substitute for a doctor’s care.

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