

SmartHealth®

Provider Newsletter, June 2023

This newsletter shares important updates, reminders and resources related to the Ascension SmartHealth medical plan

Anti-Obesity (Rx) Coverage Exclusion Updates

As part of our standard practice to continually review the long-term outcomes, national coverage benchmarks, and cost-effectiveness of covered medications for all SmartHealth plan members, we recently evaluated anti-obesity drugs across the SmartHealth membership.

Following this careful review of benefits, SmartHealth determined that anti-obesity drugs will no longer be covered as part of its pharmacy benefit effective July 1, 2023. These drugs will be excluded from the Rx benefit. This medication coverage exclusion does not affect SmartHealth member access to weight loss services provided through clinics and provider offices. Please note that related medications will be covered on-label when there is a primary diagnosis of diabetes.

Effective July 2023, any prescriptions written for anti-obesity drugs will require the member to pay directly for the medication. These costs are not applied to a member's annual deductible nor toward their annual out-of-pocket expense. We apologize for any inconvenience that this may cause.

However, as a result of our recent clinical review, SmartHealth may continue to provide coverage of anti-obesity medications under very specific and limited circumstances while under direct care from a bariatric clinician. Members should speak with SmartHealth Care Management for additional information, or referral if needed.

The decision reflects Ascension's goal to balance how to provide the most effective combination of benefits to support the health and well-being of the most associates.

We have other ways to support members on their journey to better health, including access to:

- Care Management Services at 1-855-288-6747 for weight loss options
- Bariatric specialists and related clinics
- Launching in July: No-cost digital cardiometabolic programs and support from [Vida Health](#) (more information below)
- Ascension Rx (ARx) guidance with applying for pharmaceutical manufacturer assistance where available. The ARx Medication Access Team can be reached at 1-833-980-2352.
- For additional resources around weight loss programs and education, please visit: https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/losing_weight/index.html.

Please tell your SmartHealth members there may be patient assistance programs offered by drug manufacturers for some of the weight-loss drugs being excluded. Click this [link](#) for more information. These

assistance programs may help with their monthly costs of these medications. They can contact the manufacturer directly to discuss this option.

In addition, members may reach out to you or our Care Management Services group at 1-855-288-6747 to review options for successful long-term weight loss, and options for weight management programs, or they can visit mysmarthealth.org/pharmacy for more information.

Introducing a new benefit for SmartHealth members-Vida Health

Vida Health is an online and virtual care platform for SmartHealth members which offers personalized health coaching and therapy combined with digital therapeutic programs tailored to specific needs and health goals. Vida Health is designed to assist members that have been diagnosed with a chronic condition (such as obesity, diabetes, prediabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, etc.). This program will be available July 1, 2023 for all SmartHealth members and their spouses/dependents 18+ enrolled in the SmartHealth medical plan that have been diagnosed with a chronic condition.

Vida Health matches members to a free health coach to help them lose weight, lower their blood sugar, improve blood pressure or cholesterol, feel less stressed, and build ongoing, sustainable healthy habits. Vida's human coaches utilize a mobile app; members can access a customized program designed for them and their health goals.

SmartHealth members can start signing up for Vida on July 1, 2023.

Improvement changes to the SmartHealth Pharmacy Provider

SmartHealth is always looking for ways to provide SmartHealth members with high-quality healthcare benefits and services and be good financial stewards of Ascension. Effective January 1, 2024, SmartHealth insurance will have a new pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) that will replace Cigna.

The new PBM is MaxorPlus and this change will provide our SmartHealth members with improved pharmacy benefit services and an online tool while providing Ascension with improved service in terms of customization, better linkage with Ascension Rx and cost savings.

Announcements taking place to SmartHealth members over the next few months:

a.) Communication about this change is going out to members starting in July through open enrollment this fall.

b.) Online tools and Call Center support for members will be available this fall. This tool will allow members to easily access information about their benefits, search the formulary list and manage your medications. Members will receive more information in the fall about this online tool.

i.) Drug Search Tool (available 10/1/23): This interactive tool provides insight into 2024 formulary tier, drug class coverage, and MaxorPlus standard utilization management edits, such as Prior Authorization and Quantity

Level Limits.

ii.) MaxorPlus award winning* customer service will be available beginning 10/01/2023: MaxorPlus can provide general 2024 pharmacy benefit support, such as formulary coverage and finding a participating in-network pharmacy.

iii.) MaxorPlus Customer Service call center for estimated Rx Co-pay information (available 12/10/23): In addition to formulary coverage and pharmacy network assistance, MaxorPlus can also provide estimated copay information.

For more detailed Talking Points and FAQs on this change, please click [here](#).

*MaxorPlus was rated #1 in Patient Satisfaction by the PBMI Customer Satisfaction Report (2017, 2018).

COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Ending

Based on current COVID-19 trends, the Department of Health and Human Services is ending the Public Health Emergency (PHE) for COVID-19 effective May 11, 2023.

SmartHealth will be following their guidance and ending our extra coverage of benefits for COVID-19. COVID-19 will be categorized similar to other infections like the flu and normal benefits will apply.

The Benefits of Care Management

Do you have a patient who could benefit from care management?

The Ascension Care Management (ACM) team is available to support your patients from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CST, Monday through Friday. You may make a referral by email, phone, or by completing this [Care Management form](#).

By collaborating together, we can help improve quality outcomes and help our members reach their health goals. Learn more about what ACM can do for your patients [here](#).

Email: acmmembers@ascension.org

Phone: (855) 288-6747

Printable Resources: Click below to view:

- Ascension Care Management Flyer
- Provider Referral Form

ACM Printable Resources



Ascension

[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt Out](#) using TrueRemove™

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

523 Mainstream Drive | Nashville, TN 37228 US

This email was sent to .

To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.

emma®

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.