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UnitedHealthcare Prior Authorization Program Changes – COVID-19

This announcement is applicable to in-network Ohio hospitals statewide.

During the COVID-19 national public health emergency, UnitedHealthcare is temporarily suspending select utilization management requirements for in-network hospitals due to an overwhelming increase in Emergency Department visits and admissions. We chose to take these steps to help Ohio in-network hospitals that have experienced a sharp increase in admissions. The suspended requirements and dedicated support resources are being communicated directly to you as one of the impacted hospitals.

The specific adjustments to our program for Ohio apply to UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage and Individual and Group Market health plan members, **effective Nov. 16, 2020 until Dec. 16, 2020**. These adjustments include:

- **Prior authorization for admission to SNFs:** We're suspending prior authorization requirements and level of care reviews for admission to in-network Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) for Medicare Advantage and Individual and Group Market health plan members.
- **Transfer prior authorizations:** We're suspending prior authorization requirements when a member transfers to a new provider.
- As a reminder, for orders involving **COVID-19-related oxygen requests**, oxygen can be delivered without prior authorization and does not need to meet current clinical criteria.
- **Discharge and post-care assistance:** Please email COVID-19dischargeplanning@uhc.com if your team needs assistance with discharge planning or finding post-acute care for patients with complex needs.

For **Medicaid patients** (MyCare and Medicaid Managed Care), effective **Nov. 12, 2020**, the state of Ohio is suspending prior authorization requirements for admission to SNFs, Inpatient Rehabilitation Facilities (IRFs) and Long-Term Acute Care Hospitals (LTACHs). Please review the state guidelines for all applicable end dates and specific requirements.

After **Dec.16, 2020**, we may conduct selective retrospective reviews for services rendered during this time period. Admission notification is still required during this time, in alignment with the current protocol to support you in arranging post-admission care or other support services, if needed. In most cases, notification of inpatient admission is provided to UnitedHealthcare by the hospital through Link or an EDI 278N transmission that requires no intervention on the part of your hospital staff.

If you have questions, please contact Gary Grosel, M.D., UnitedHealthcare Market Chief Medical Officer, at gary_grosel@uhc.com or 216-263-9533. For the most up-to-date information surrounding our other efforts related to COVID-19, please visit UHCprovider.com/covid19.

We will continue to monitor guidance issued by regulatory authorities and keep you posted as the COVID-19 crisis continues to evolve. As dedicated workers on the front lines of this pandemic, we deeply appreciate your efforts to fight this virus. Thank you for all you're doing.

Sincerely,



Ed Lagerstrom
President, UnitedHealthcare Networks



Anne Boland Docimo, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer, UnitedHealthcare

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