

# Highmark Oncology Management Pathways Program Manual

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# Program Overview

## Introduction

The options for treating cancer are rapidly expanding and outpacing the ability of clinical trials to define best practice. In addition, cancer drugs have now become the top driver of specialty drug spending.

Because cancer care is complex and expensive, Highmark wants to promote the highest possible quality and value for the health care dollars spent. The Highmark Oncology Management Pathways Program was developed and implemented in 2011 to help control the cost-trend growth of oncology care while promoting the delivery of high quality patient care.

## Program Description

The Highmark Oncology Management Pathways Program is an initiative that utilizes evidence-based clinical treatment protocols as a method for standardizing the way physicians treat cancer. Physicians who choose to participate in the Oncology Management Pathways Program and remain compliant will be rewarded for their effort to improve quality of care. Highmark will make payment according to an enhanced program fee schedule to participating providers who comply with the Oncology Treatment Protocols ("Protocols").

The Oncology Management Pathways Program is based on national standards of care set by the oncology community. Since Highmark recognizes that keeping the oncologist in control of treatment is vital to successful quality outcomes, the development of the Protocols will be guided by network oncologists in collaboration with Highmark.

The NCCN guideline based protocols will be updated as necessary based on outcomes of clinical trials, FDA approval of new chemotherapy drugs and physician input on significant clinical developments which could impact standards of care. These protocol changes will be incorporated into the program to be effective the following month.

## Program Overview, Continued

### **Program Objectives**

By encouraging adherence to the Protocols, Highmark hopes to see a reduction in variation of treatment and a decline in the use of expensive drugs that have been proven less effective, and ultimately, provide members with access to the best and latest treatment protocols.

### **Program focus: Quality, Efficacy, Toxicity, and Cost**

The measurement of concordance will include all Highmark members newly diagnosed with cancer upon the implementation of the Program by the practice. Patients diagnosed prior to the provider's participation in the program will not be included in the data analysis.

In addition to the Protocols for each cancer type, the program also includes Supportive Care Protocols in the areas of neutropenia, anemia, and nausea/vomiting for patients with these tumor types.

Please Note: The Oncology Treatment and Supportive Care Protocols and other reference materials are available on the NaviNet® Provider Resource Center. Select Clinical Reference Materials from the main menu, and then choose Oncology Management Program.

### **Applicable Products**

The Oncology Management Pathways Program will apply to all Highmark products and products networks.

### **Provider Participation**

Highmark will extend an invitation to selected network participating oncologists to participate in the Oncology Management Pathways Program.

Oncologists who choose to participate must sign an agreement that establishes the terms and conditions for participation in the Oncology Management Pathways Program. For those oncologists who sign the participation agreement, the reimbursement methodology for oncology drugs included in the program will be in effect.

## Program Overview, Continued

### **Reimbursement**

Highmark will provide an enhanced reimbursement multiple on chemotherapy and supportive treatment drugs that are included in the program. When a provider signs an Oncology Management Program Participation Agreement, the provider begins to receive reimbursement according to the enhanced program fee schedule as of the program start date. The participating provider will continue to receive the enhanced fee as long as the Protocols are followed for a minimum of 80 percent of cases.

If a participating provider does not achieve 80 percent compliance during a measurement period, the provider will be evaluated for removal from the program and may be removed from the enhanced reimbursement schedule.

Please Note: The Oncology Management Pathways Program Fee Schedule is available on the NaviNet® Provider Resource Center under Administrative Reference Materials.

### **Auto-Authorization**

Participating providers will receive auto-authorization on Chemotherapy drugs currently requiring prior authorization, only required to submit fundamental clinical information into NaviNet. The participating provider will continue to receive the auto-authorization as long as the Protocols are followed for a minimum of 80 percent of cases.

If a participating provider does not achieve 80 percent compliance during a measurement period, the provider will be evaluated for removal from the program and may have auto-authorization eligibility removed.

## Program Overview, Continued

### Measurement period

Provider performance will be reviewed and measured on a rolling four-quarter basis. Highmark will review, subsequent to the completion of each calendar year quarter, the provider's compliance with the Oncology Treatment Protocols for that quarter. The measurement will be determined at the practice level, not by individual provider.

Based on the aggregate of the last four (4) quarterly reviews, Highmark will determine whether the practice is compliant with the Protocols and qualifies to continue being paid according to the enhanced fee schedule. If the review determines that the practice was non-compliant with the Protocols, the practice can revert to the base program fee schedule for the two full quarters; with an opportunity to re-enter into Protocol compliance, if Pathways Protocols return to 80% compliance.

If a practice is determined to be non-compliant with the Protocols in one quarter, it does not preclude the practice from receiving payment at the enhanced fee schedule following any ensuing quarterly reviews in which the provider is determined to have achieved compliance with the Protocols.

Reimbursement according to the enhanced program fee schedule will be reinstated for the full quarter subsequent to the quarterly review in which the provider was determined to be compliant with the Protocols.

# Compliance Measurement

## **Eligible Patient Population**

The compliance measurement will include only those patients newly diagnosed within the initial calendar quarter of the practice's participation in the program. In addition, only those patients having a diagnosis within the approved Oncology Treatment Protocols will be eligible for inclusion in the compliance measurement.

## **Calculation of compliance rate**

Compliance rates will be calculated at the end of each calendar quarter. Antineoplastic drug therapy and supportive care compliance will be assessed separately; therefore, each practice will receive two compliance scores following the quarterly review – one for antineoplastic drug therapy and one for supportive care.

The compliance rates will be calculated by dividing the number of patients treated in accordance with the Protocols by the total number of eligible patients. The compliance score will be reflected as a percentage.

## **Compliance threshold**

The compliance scores for each practice will be measured against the 80 percent compliance requirement to determine the reimbursement rates for the subsequent calendar quarter. The practice must satisfy the threshold requirements for both antineoplastic treatment and supportive care to continue to be eligible for reimbursement under the enhanced program fee schedule.