

# SPECIAL eBULLETIN

FOR FACILITY PROVIDERS

OCTOBER 15, 2021

## ATTN: HOME HEALTH AGENCIES AND SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES THE HOME HEALTH AGENCY AND SKILLED NURSING FACILITY HIGH PERFORMANCE NETWORKS TO CONTINUE IN 2022

On **January 1, 2022**, only those participating home health agencies<sup>1</sup> or skilled nursing facilities<sup>2</sup> that performed at the highest levels<sup>3</sup> have been included in the High Performance Home Health Agency Network and the High Performance Skilled Nursing Facility Network for 2022. These providers have also been placed at the highest benefit tier for those commercial tiered products using the High Performance Home Health Agency Network.

The Highmark High Performance Network will include both Skilled Nursing Facilities and Home Health Agencies. You are encouraged to collaborate with other post-acute care providers in this network to ensure that the members you are caring for receive the best outcomes at the lowest cost share possible. Highmark will reevaluate its High Performance Network composition annually and make modifications as necessary. We will notify you directly should your network participation status change.

### PRODUCTS FEATURED IN THE HIGH PERFORMANCE NETWORKS

Participating providers selected for inclusion in the High Performance Home Health Agency or Skilled Nursing Facility Networks will constitute the entire network for members who have the following Highmark products:

- Community Blue Medicare
- my Direct Blue Commercial Affordable Care Act (ACA)
- Performance Blue National
- Together Blue
- Complete Blue



This information is issued on behalf of Highmark Blue Shield and its affiliated Blue companies, which are independent licensees of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Highmark Inc. d/b/a Highmark Blue Shield and certain of its affiliated Blue companies serve Blue Shield members in 21 counties in central Pennsylvania and 13 counties in northeastern New York. As a partner in joint operating agreements, Highmark Blue Shield also provides services in conjunction with a separate health plan in southeastern Pennsylvania. Highmark Inc. or certain of its affiliated Blue companies also serve Blue Cross Blue Shield members in 29 counties in western Pennsylvania, 13 counties in northeastern Pennsylvania, the state of West Virginia plus Washington County, Ohio, the state of Delaware and 8 counties in western New York. All references to Highmark in this document are references to Highmark Inc. d/b/a Highmark Blue Shield and/or to one or more of its affiliated Blue companies.

NaviNet is a registered trademark of NaviNet, Inc., which is an independent company that provides secure, web-based portal between providers and health insurance companies.

Providers who are not selected for the High Performance Home Health Agency or Skilled Nursing Facility networks will be considered out-of-network providers for members enrolled in these Highmark products.

**IMPORTANT: Providers who are not selected to participate in the High Performance Networks will continue to be a participating provider in all other Highmark networks.**

## PRODUCTS WITH TIERED BENEFITS

High Performance Home Health Agency Network and Skilled Nursing Facility Network providers are designated to participate at the highest level of benefits for most products with tiered benefits. The participating home health agencies not designated for the highest level will participate at the lower tier, resulting in additional member cost share.

For both types of tiered benefits, members will have access to quality providers at varying benefit levels. Choosing a provider who participates at the highest level of benefits will result in the lowest cost-sharing amounts for members.

**It is recommended that you validate the network(s) and each tier of benefits that your facility continues to participate in via NaviNet® beginning January 1, 2022.**

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR NETWORK PARTICIPATION STATUS

It is imperative that you understand your network participation status to avoid denials or increased member cost share. If you are not under the member's benefit plan for a service you perform, **you may not be reimbursed by Highmark**. To confirm specific member cost-sharing responsibility for services you provide to members, check the Eligibility and Benefits function in NaviNet.

Highmark noted that benefit checks may not have been occurring uniformly across our Home Health Agency and our Skilled Nursing Facility networks in early 2020. In the best interests of our members, we will continue to monitor this process during 2022 to confirm that providers are taking the appropriate steps to ensure that they are in network for all accepted admissions or that the member has been appropriately notified of any cost sharing implications of receiving out-of-network care.

## MORE INFORMATION

For additional information, **including claims filing instructions**, please refer to the [Home Health Frequently Asked Questions](#) or the [Skilled Nursing Facility Frequently Asked Questions](#) located under **HIGH PERFORMANCE NETWORKS** on the **Provider Resource Center**.

Any other questions about the changes should be sent to:

[AncillaryProviderContractAdministration@Highmark.com](mailto:AncillaryProviderContractAdministration@Highmark.com)

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<sup>1</sup>On January 1, 2020, Highmark launched a network of Home Health Agencies as part of its commitment to working with health care providers to make sure that our members receive high quality health care. The network changes were required to meet marketplace demand and to provide competitive options to our customers. Highmark is again committed to this endeavor in 2022.

<sup>2</sup>On January 1, 2019, Highmark launched a network of Skilled Nursing Facilities as part of its commitment to working with health care providers to make sure that our members receive high quality health care. The network changes were required to meet marketplace demand and to provide competitive options to our customers. Highmark is again committed to this endeavor in 2022.

<sup>3</sup>Using a specific set of performance metrics, Highmark measured the components of care provided by participating Home Health Agencies and Skilled Nursing Facilities and the quality outcomes of these providers. As a result of that review, Highmark determined that while all participating Home Health Agencies and Skilled Nursing Facilities provide quality care, some providers had higher readmission rates, higher emergency department utilization, and higher than average cost per episode — all of which can lead to suboptimal outcomes and higher costs for members. As such, Highmark picked the providers who adhered to established clinical protocols and had better outcomes and lower costs for members to be included in this year's High Performance Home Health Agency Network and High Performance Skilled Nursing Facility Network.