



**Valor Health Plan**

Insurance focused on you.

**Network Participating  
Provider Manual**

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## I. Introducing Valor Health Plan (HMO SNP)

Welcome to the Valor Health Plan (VHP) Institutional Special Needs Plan (HMO SNP). We are pleased to have you as a participating provider. VHP is an Ohio-based Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) dedicated to Medicare Advantage product offerings. VHP serves individuals with Medicare and living in a residential healthcare facility.

A Special Needs Plan (SNP) is a Medicare Advantage (MA) coordinated care plan that exclusively enrolls a disproportionate percentage of special needs individuals as set forth in §422.4(a)(1) (iv) of the MA regulations and that, beginning January 1, 2006, provides Part D benefits under 42 CFR Part 423. A SNP is also an MA plan that has been approved by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) as meeting the MA SNP requirements, as determined on a plan-by-plan basis using criteria that includes the appropriateness of the target population, the existence of clinical programs or special expertise to serve the target population, and whether the proposal discriminates against sicker Members of the target population.

Members must reside in the approved service area in order to enroll in the plan. The Ohio service area includes the following counties:

- Coshocton
- Crawford
- Cuyahoga
- Fairfield
- Guernsey
- Holmes
- Lake
- Medina
- Noble
- Perry
- Stark
- Summit

## Model of Care

Our model of care ensures early diagnosis and intervention by the Nurse Practitioner (NP) and/or Primary Care Physician (PCP), to encourage improved communication between providers and Members (and family, if desired), and the delivery of the appropriate services. Care coordination is central to our model of care. This approach is centered in the belief that an individualized, closely monitored and highly coordinated level of care can reduce fragmentation and enhance well-being.

As a result, VHP's model of care is grounded in the following core principles:

- Nurse Practitioners (NPs) will orchestrate and provide care for those members residing in a network residential care facility, with an emphasis on a Member's psychosocial well-being and maintaining an optimal level of wellness.
- Case Managers will orchestrate care for those members residing in the community through telephonic contact and face-to-face intervention of the NP when necessary.
- Clinicians will monitor the complete picture of a Member's physical, social and psychological needs.
- Plan providers will have experience or additional education in geriatric medicine, with a specific interest in caring for the frail, elderly and disabled.
- The model will minimize Member transfers of care and provide a greater amount of care within the nursing home or other least restrictive setting by bringing providers to the Member, when possible.
- Clinicians will place a strong focus on prevention, working with nursing home staff and clinicians to help ensure regular assessments and early detection.
- Care teams advocate for patients and assist with maximizing the benefits available to them.
- Families will be encouraged to be more involved in a Member's care, with stronger and more consistent communication among the family, their care team, and nursing home staff.

Each Member has a Primary Care Physician and facility-based members are also assigned a NP who works with the Primary Care Physicians, nursing facilities staff, and families to provide intensive primary and preventive services to Members who have long-term or advanced illness or have disabilities.

## **The Role of the Primary Care Physician**

The following specialties are considered Primary Care Physicians, or PCPs:

- Family practice
- General practice
- Geriatrics
- Internal medicine

All VHP Members must select a PCP. If the Member has not selected a PCP, one will be assigned based on the Member's geographic area.

The scope of services to be provided by the PCP may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Diagnostic testing and treatment
- Injections and injectable substances
- Office or nursing facility visits for illness, injury and prevention

The PCP has the primary responsibility for coordinating the Member's overall healthcare among the Member's various healthcare providers. The PCP works closely with the plan NP, to reduce fragmented, redundant or unnecessary services and provide the most cost-effective care. VHP monitors referrals to promote the use of network providers, analyze referral patterns and assess medical necessity.

PCPs, as well as all other providers, are expected to:

- Maintain high quality
- Provide the appropriate level of care
- Use healthcare resources efficiently

## **The Role of the Nurse Practitioner (NP)**

Our model of care introduces the concept of the NP as a trusted partner in the integrated care team. Together with physicians, administrators, Members, and families, the NPs treat the "whole person," rather than addressing the patient's disease or illness only.

The NP visits the nursing home setting on a regular basis, working with the nursing home staff, interdisciplinary team and physicians to closely monitor changes in health, focus on early diagnosis and intervention, and coordinate communication between all relevant practitioners and family members.

The NPs assess and help develop and manage personalized care plans for VHP Members. The NPs work closely with the nursing facility interdisciplinary staff and PCPs, the Member and his/her family to ensure a responsive plan of care for the Member. Based on an initial Personal Health Assessment, which is done upon enrollment and at least annually unless triggered by a change in health status or condition, or admission to the hospital, the NP develops a plan of care and assures that the care plan is implemented and the Member's needs are met.

The NPs review the Health Risk Assessment that is performed by the Case Manager, oversee

diagnostic services and treatments to ensure medical and mental health parity, ensure access to comprehensive benefits as needed, and provide education on the health risks and care to the Member and his/her family. They coordinate multiple services; help facilitate better communication between physicians, institutions, patients and their families; and help ensure effective integration of treatments.

The NPs are available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and are on-site for providers and Members, Monday - Friday at variable times due to patient needs during normal business hours. After-hours, weekend and holiday coverage is provided 24 hours per day, 7 days per week by a health plan staff member designated to be on-call backup.

## **The Role of the Case Manager**

Each Member is assigned to a Case Manager. Depending on the needs of the Member, the Case Manager may make contact, generally through phone calls, as frequently as weekly for the higher need members but at least monthly for the average member.

The case manager assures timely and appropriate delivery of services, providers' use of clinical practice guidelines developed by professional associations, seamless transitions, and timely follow-up to avoid lapses in services or care when there is transition across settings or providers, and conducts chart and/or pharmacy reviews.

The case manager completes, analyzes, and incorporates the results of the initial and annual Health Risk Assessment into the care plan and collaborates to develop and annually update an individualized care plan for each Member. The interdisciplinary team also manages the medical, cognitive, psychosocial, and functional needs of beneficiaries through the initial and annual health assessments, and communicates to coordinate care plan with all key stakeholders, including the provider, Member, family and health plan, as needed.

## **The Role of the Specialist**

Members may see in-network specialists with an order, from the PCP or NP. There is no official referral/authorization process through Valor Health Plan that is needed for referrals. Female Members may see network gynecologists or their PCP for a well-woman examination without any prior authorization or referral.

To maximize their benefits and reduce out-of-pocket costs, Members are encouraged to see in-network specialists. If Members see a non-network provider, the service may not be covered. Please call with questions about network participating providers or visit [www.valorhealthplan.com](http://www.valorhealthplan.com).

## Authorizations

VHP requires authorization for certain services and procedures. Providers should use the authorization request form provided by the plan or contact the Utilization Management team directly at 1-844-857-1601. Providers are encouraged to speak with the Member's PCP or NP to ensure an appropriate care plan.

VHP Nurse Practitioner to participate in guiding and/or obtaining authorization for planned non-emergent services. Authorization code will be given to provider for covered services.

Medicare criteria, as well as a contracted healthcare guidelines service (i.e.: InterQual or McKesson) or other geriatric focused criteria, are used when reviewing authorization requests. The Medical Director makes all medical and out-of-network denial decisions and is available for consultation with network practitioners and the NP. The Medical Director may also contact network specialists to assist with the peer review.

Authorization requests may be faxed to 1-800-413-8347. VHP will review all requests and respond. If additional information is needed, VHP staff will contact the requesting provider in order to obtain such documentation.

Once the review is completed and request approved, approval is granted. The authorization is valid for 90 days.

The requested provider should use the VHP authorization number, indicated in the confirmation letter, in the authorization field of the CMS-1500 claim form.

An initial notification of pending denial will be faxed to the requesting provider before the denial decision. The requesting provider may discuss the decision with a physician reviewer or request a copy of the criteria used to make the determination by calling Health Services at 1-844-857-1601.

If a denial decision is made, the denial letter will contain all information necessary for an appeal to VHP. A copy of the denial letter and appeal information is also sent to the Member.

## Preventive Screenings and Disease Management

The NP visits each facility Member at least monthly. In addition, VHP requests that PCP's visit each member at least quarterly and perform an annual complete medical evaluation, addressing the Member's specific needs and conducting appropriate preventive screenings.

Preventive guidelines to be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- Screening for colorectal cancer
- Mammography (females)
- Influenza vaccine administration
- Pneumonia vaccine administration

Gaps in Member compliance require appropriate intervention to improve and meet recommended goals. Either VHP staff or the Member’s PCP may provide this intervention.

The following charts list suggested guidelines for Providers to follow when ordering preventive tests and treatments for Members with chronic conditions.

**Prevention Measurements Table**

<b>GENERAL PREVENTIVE CARE:</b>	
Pneumonia Vaccine	Once per lifetime = >65 years
Influenza Vaccine	Once every 12 months
Breast Cancer Screening	Once every 12 months
Body Mass Index (BMI)	Once every 12 months
Prostate Cancer Screening	Once every 12 months
Colorectal Cancer Screening: Fecal Occult	Once every 12 months

**Chronic Conditions Measurements Table**

<b>DIABETES/OBESITY:</b>	
Eye Exam	Once every 12 months
HgbA1C	Once every 6 months
Microalbumin	Once every 12 months
<b>CHF:</b>	
Ejection Fraction measurement	Once per lifetime
<b>CAD:</b>	
LDL levels	Once every 12 months

**CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

Valor Health Plan adopts Clinical Practice Guidelines for the purpose of improving health care and reducing unnecessary variations in care.

The guidelines are evidence-based, sourced from recognized organizations, approved by the Valor Health Plan Quality Improvement Committee, disseminated to Valor Health Plan healthcare providers, reviewed annually, and updated as needed.

The Clinical Practice Guidelines in this document are considered essential to healthcare for the member population we serve.



<p><b>Asthma</b></p>	<p><a href="https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/guidelines/asthma_qrg.pdf">https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/guidelines/asthma_qrg.pdf</a> OR <a href="https://www.aafp.org/afp/2011/0701/p40.pdf">https://www.aafp.org/afp/2011/0701/p40.pdf</a> OR <a href="https://ginasthma.org/2018-pocket-guide-for-asthma-management-and-prevention/">https://ginasthma.org/2018-pocket-guide-for-asthma-management-and-prevention/</a></p>
<p><b>Breast Cancer Screening</b></p>	<p><a href="https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/breast-cancer-screening1?ds=1&amp;s=breast-cancer-screening">https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/breast-cancer-screening1?ds=1&amp;s=breast-cancer-screening</a></p>
<p><b>Cholesterol Management for Adults</b></p>	<p><a href="https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1161/01.cir.0000437738.63853.7a">https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1161/01.cir.0000437738.63853.7a</a> OR <a href="https://www.aafp.org/afp/2014/0815/p260.html">https://www.aafp.org/afp/2014/0815/p260.html</a></p>
<p><b>Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)</b></p>	<p><a href="https://goldcopd.org/gold-2017-global-strategy-diagnosis-management-prevention-copd/">https://goldcopd.org/gold-2017-global-strategy-diagnosis-management-prevention-copd/</a> OR <a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/479627/diagnosis-management-stable-chronic-obstructive-pulmonary-disease-clinical-practice-guideline">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/479627/diagnosis-management-stable-chronic-obstructive-pulmonary-disease-clinical-practice-guideline</a></p>
<p><b>Colorectal Cancer Screening</b></p>	<p><a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/1090701/screening-colorectal-cancer-guidance-statement-from-american-college-physicians">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/1090701/screening-colorectal-cancer-guidance-statement-from-american-college-physicians</a> OR <a href="https://www.aafp.org/afp/2018/0515/p658.html">https://www.aafp.org/afp/2018/0515/p658.html</a></p>
<p><b>Congestive Heart Failure</b></p>	<p><a href="http://annals.org/aim/article-abstract/2670321/2017-american-college-cardiology-american-heart-association-hypertension-guideline-resource">http://annals.org/aim/article-abstract/2670321/2017-american-college-cardiology-american-heart-association-hypertension-guideline-resource</a> OR <a href="http://www.onlinejacc.org/content/70/6/776">http://www.onlinejacc.org/content/70/6/776</a></p>
<p><b>Diabetes</b></p>	<p><a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2659342/synopsis-2017-u-s-department-veterans-affairs-u-s-department">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2659342/synopsis-2017-u-s-department-veterans-affairs-u-s-department</a> OR <a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2595888/oral-pharmacologic-treatment-type-2-diabetes-mellitus-clinical-practice-guideline">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2595888/oral-pharmacologic-treatment-type-2-diabetes-mellitus-clinical-practice-guideline</a> OR <a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2674121/hemoglobin-1c-targets-glycemic-control-pharmacologic-therapy-nonpregnant-adults-type">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2674121/hemoglobin-1c-targets-glycemic-control-pharmacologic-therapy-nonpregnant-adults-type</a> OR <a href="http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/40/Supplement_1">http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/40/Supplement_1</a> OR <a href="https://professional.diabetes.org/content-page/standards-medical-care-diabetes">https://professional.diabetes.org/content-page/standards-medical-care-diabetes</a></p>
<p><b>Falls Prevention</b></p>	<p><a href="https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/falls-prevention-in-older-adults-interventions1">https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/falls-prevention-in-older-adults-interventions1</a></p>
<p><b>Glaucoma</b></p>	<p><a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/1742588/screening-glaucoma-u-s-preventive-services-task-force-recommendation-statement">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/1742588/screening-glaucoma-u-s-preventive-services-task-force-recommendation-statement</a></p>
<p><b>Hypertension</b></p>	<p><a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2598413/pharmacologic-treatment-hypertension-adults-aged-60-years-older-higher-versus">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2598413/pharmacologic-treatment-hypertension-adults-aged-60-years-older-higher-versus</a> OR <a href="http://www.onlinejacc.org/content/early/2017/11/04/j.jacc.2017.11.006">http://www.onlinejacc.org/content/early/2017/11/04/j.jacc.2017.11.006</a></p>

<p><b>Immunizations</b></p>	<p><a href="https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/adult.html">https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/adult.html</a> OR <a href="https://www.aafp.org/patient-care/public-health/immunizations/schedules/adult-schedule.html">https://www.aafp.org/patient-care/public-health/immunizations/schedules/adult-schedule.html</a></p>
<p><b>Low Back Pain</b></p>	<p><a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/736814/diagnosis-treatment-low-back-pain-joint-clinical-practice-guideline-from?issueno=7&amp;atab=10">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/736814/diagnosis-treatment-low-back-pain-joint-clinical-practice-guideline-from?issueno=7&amp;atab=10</a> OR <a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2603228/noninvasive-treatments-acute-subacute-chronic-low-back-pain-clinical-practice">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2603228/noninvasive-treatments-acute-subacute-chronic-low-back-pain-clinical-practice</a></p>
<p><b>Obesity</b></p>	<p><a href="https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/obesity-in-adults-screening-and-management">https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/obesity-in-adults-screening-and-management</a> OR <a href="https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryDraft/obesity-in-adults-interventions1">https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryDraft/obesity-in-adults-interventions1</a> OR <a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/718309/pharmacologic-surgical-management-obesity-primary-care-clinical-practice-guideline-from">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/718309/pharmacologic-surgical-management-obesity-primary-care-clinical-practice-guideline-from</a> OR <a href="https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/abs/10.1161/01.cir.0000437739.71477.ee">https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/abs/10.1161/01.cir.0000437739.71477.ee</a></p>
<p><b>Osteoporosis</b></p>	<p><a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/742828/pharmacologic-treatment-low-bone-density-osteoporosis-prevent-fractures-clinical-practice">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/742828/pharmacologic-treatment-low-bone-density-osteoporosis-prevent-fractures-clinical-practice</a> OR <a href="https://my.nof.org/file/bonesource/Clinicians-Guide.pdf">https://my.nof.org/file/bonesource/Clinicians-Guide.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>Smoking and Tobacco Cessation</b></p>	<p><a href="https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/tobacco-use-in-adults-and-pregnant-women-counseling-and-interventions?ds=1&amp;s=Smoking%20Cessation">https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/tobacco-use-in-adults-and-pregnant-women-counseling-and-interventions?ds=1&amp;s=Smoking%20Cessation</a> OR <a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2443060/behavioral-pharmacotherapy-interventions-tobacco-smoking-cessation-adults-including-pregnant-women">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2443060/behavioral-pharmacotherapy-interventions-tobacco-smoking-cessation-adults-including-pregnant-women</a></p>
<p><b>Urinary Incontinence</b></p>	<p><a href="http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/1905131/nonsurgical-management-urinary-incontinence-women-clinical-practice-guideline-from-american">http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/1905131/nonsurgical-management-urinary-incontinence-women-clinical-practice-guideline-from-american</a></p>

## II. Provider Standards and Procedures

### Provider Credentialing

Credentialing of providers may be conducted internally by VHP staff or delegated to an external entity. If delegated, VHP will conduct both pre-delegation and annual audits to ensure credentialing standards are maintained throughout the network. The standards below outline the overall approach to credentialing by VHP. The delegated entity's standards may differ slightly. If there are any questions, please contact Network Operations at 330-498-8231.

The provider credentialing process involves several steps: application, primary source verification, notification and a Credentialing Committee review.

Providers who would like to participate in the VHP network should request a Participation Agreement from Network Operations at 330-498-8231.

Once contracted, the provider may either submit the CAQH (Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare) provider identification number or fill out the applicable state-mandated credentialing application form and submit it to the Network Operations Department at the address listed below:

Network Operations  
Valor Health Plan  
339 E. Maple Street, Suite 100  
North Canton, Ohio 44720

VHP follows NCQA standards involving credentialing and re-credentialing of Providers. Once all information is complete, including primary source verification and office site review (if applicable), the Credentialing Department reviews and compares all information to the primary source data. If VHP notes any discrepancies, it notifies the provider in writing and gives the provider two weeks to forward the correct information to Network Operations.

In addition, a physician has the right to review the information submitted in support of the application. If the physician discovers erroneous information on the application, he or she has an opportunity to correct this information before the VHP Credentialing Committee or the external vendor reviews it. The physician must initial and date the corrected information or update their CAQH profile.

## Credentialing Committee Review

Completed credentialing files are presented to the VHP Credentialing Committee for review and final decision.

VHP staff will send a welcome letter to providers who are approved as providers in the VHP Provider network. This letter will give the providers their effective date as network providers in VHP.

Physicians are notified in writing if they are denied credentialing status. If a physician wishes to appeal a denial decision, the physician must submit a request in writing to the chair of the VHP Credentialing Committee.

## Re-credentialing Process

All physicians must be re-credentialed within three years of the date of their last credentialing cycle. The re-credentialing process is the same basic process as that for credentialing, except that physicians are also evaluated on their professional performance, judgment and clinical competence. Criteria used for this evaluation may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Compliance with VHP's policies and procedures
- VHP sanctioning related to utilization management, administrative issues or quality of care
- Member complaints
- Member satisfaction survey
- Participation in quality improvement activities
- Quality-of-care concerns

VHP or its designee will send an application for re-credentialing to providers at least 3 months before their re-credentialing due date to allow the process to be completed within the required period.

Failure to return the completed reappointment application and supporting documentation by the deadline may result in termination from the network.

## Malpractice Insurance

VHP requires Providers to carry minimal professional liability insurance. Please refer to your Provider's Participation Agreement to verify those amounts.

## Credentialing Denials and Appeals

VHP will send a letter to providers who have been denied credentialing that includes the following:

- The specific reason for the denial
- The provider's right to request a hearing
- A summary of the provider's right in the hearing

- The deadline for requesting a hearing
- The provider has 30 days following receipt of the notice in which to submit a request for a hearing
- Failure to request a hearing within 30 days shall constitute a waiver of the rights to a hearing
- A request for consent to disclose the specifics of the provider's application and all credentialing documentation to be discussed
- Appropriate requirements specific to the state in which the practice is located

Upon receipt of the provider's request for a hearing, VHP will notify the provider of the date, time and place of the hearing.

The provider has the right to be present and is allowed to offer evidence or information to explain or refute the cause for denial. The provider may be represented by legal counsel or another person of the provider's choosing as long as VHP is informed of such representation at least seven days before the hearing.

There is no appeal process if a provider is denied credentialing based on administrative reasons, such as:

- Network need
- Failure to cooperate with the credentialing or re-credentialing process
- Failure to meet the terms of minimum requirements (e.g., licensure)

## **Provider Termination**

The relationship between a provider and VHP may be severed for several reasons, which may include any of the following:

- Provider is non-compliant with the contractual coverage requirements
- Provider's license or certification or registration to provide services in the provider's home state is suspended or revoked
- Provider makes a misrepresentation with respect to the warranties set forth in the Provider Service Agreement
- Provider is sanctioned by the Office of Inspector General (OIG), Medicare or Medicaid

VHP may initiate the termination action or the provider may initiate the termination. In all cases, if a provider began treating a Member before the termination, the provider should continue the treatment until the Member can, without medically injurious consequences, be transferred to the care of another participating provider.

The terminating provider will be compensated for this treatment according to the rates agreed to in the provider's contract.

Should the terminating provider note special circumstances involving a Member – such as treatment for an acute condition, life-threatening illness, or disability – the provider should ask VHP for permission to continue treating that Member. In such cases, VHP will continue to reimburse the provider at the contracted rates.

The provider may not seek payment from the Member of any amount for which the Member would not be responsible if the provider were still in VHP's network. The provider also is to abide by the determination of the applicable grievance and appeals procedures and other relevant terms of the provider's contractual agreement.

When the Credentialing Committee decides to terminate a provider's agreement or impose a corrective action that will result in a report to the National Practitioner Data Bank, the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank and/or applicable state licensing agency, the Credentialing Department shall promptly notify the affected provider by certified mail, return receipt requested.

Such notice shall:

- State the specific reason for the termination or corrective action
- Inform the provider that he/she has the right to request a hearing
- Contain a summary of the provider's right in the hearing under this policy
- Inform the provider that he/she has 30 days following receipt of the notice within which to submit a request for a hearing
- State that failure to request a hearing within the specified time period shall constitute a waiver of the right to a hearing
- State that upon receipt of the hearing request, the provider will be notified of the date, time and place of the hearing
- Allow the provider to be represented by an attorney or another person of his/her choice

A provider shall have 30 days following receipt of notice to file a written request for a hearing. Requests shall be hand delivered or sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the chairperson of the Credentialing Committee. If such a hearing is requested, the Credentialing Committee shall follow the steps as defined by the Credentialing Department's policies and procedures. (Copies of such policies and procedures are available upon request.)

A provider who fails to request a hearing within the time and in the manner specified in this policy waives any right to a hearing. Such a waiver shall constitute acceptance of the action, which then becomes the final decision of the Credentialing Committee and is not subject to appeal.

As indicated in their contracts, providers must give written notice to VHP before voluntarily leaving the network. Providers also must supply copies of medical records and facilitate a Member's transfer of care upon request by VHP or the Member.

For terminations initiated by PCPs, VHP will notify affected Members in writing and ask them to select a new PCP. If a Member does not select a PCP, VHP will assign a PCP before the provider's effective date of termination. PCPs must continue to provide care for 90 days following termination.

For terminations by specialists, VHP will notify all Members who have visited the specialist in the past 90 days. This notification will alert the Member of the provider's forthcoming termination and allow for transition of care to another contracted provider.

## Practice Information

At the time of credentialing and re-credentialing, and directory printing, VHP will verify important demographic details about a provider's practice to help ensure the accuracy of information such as claims payments and provider directories. VHP will also verify if providers are accepting new members to comply with all CMS requirements.

Providers should notify VHP of any changes in practice information 60 days before the effective date of the change to avoid improper claims payment and incorrect directory information.

All network providers must have the hours of operation clearly posted in their office.

## Office Requirements

Providers should bill VHP for all services performed in their offices or at the Nursing Facilities for assigned Members. The services should be within the standard practices of the Provider's license, education and board certification. However, reimbursement for such services will vary by Provider. Providers should refer to the network Provider's contract for reimbursement rates and terms.

VHP wants to make sure that all Members—including those with limited English proficiency, diverse cultural backgrounds, the homeless and individuals with physical and mental disabilities—receive healthcare services and assistance with their health plan in a culturally competent manner. Each Member is entitled to receive healthcare needs in a manner that is respectful and consistent with the Member's cultural perspective. The goal of this policy is to enhance patient care compliance.

Once cultural expectations and health service needs are determined, providers may be required to supply interpreters to overcome barriers of language and/or understanding. To further promote understanding and support, providers also may be required to supply the Member with appropriate educational materials and information about community resources.

For assistance with Members requiring culturally competent services, providers may call Provider Services at 1-800-485-3793.

While on vacation or a leave of less than 30 days, a network provider must arrange for coverage by another VHP provider. If a provider goes on a leave of 30 days or longer, the provider must notify Provider Services at 1-800-485-3793.

If a network provider arranges with either a participating or non-participating physician to cover for his/her patients during an absence, the network provider is responsible for making sure the covering physician will:

- Accept compensation from VHP as full payment for covered services
- Not bill the Member, except for applicable copayments
- Obtain approval from the Health Services Department, as set forth in this manual, before



all non-emergency hospitalizations and non-emergency referrals

- Comply with the rules, protocols, policies, procedures and programs set forth in this manual

All network Providers are required to provide 24-hour on-call coverage. If a Provider delegates this responsibility, the covering provider must participate in VHP’s network and be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## Accessibility Standards

VHP follows accessibility requirements set forth by applicable regulatory and accrediting agencies. The purpose of these standards is to make sure services are available and accessible to Members in a timely fashion. VHP monitors compliance with these standards annually.

VHP sets standards to be met for services within providers’ offices. The next table describes sample types of services and the respective standards to be followed:

### Accessibility Standards

REASON FOR APPOINTMENT	COMPLIANCE STANDARD
<b>PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN</b>	
Chest pain	Same day
Mild respiratory symptoms >3 days	Next day
Routine physical examination	Within 30 days
<b>Obstetricians-Gynecologists</b>	
Urgent referral	Next day
Non-urgent referral	Within 2 weeks
Well-woman examination	Within 10 weeks
<b>SPECIALISTS</b>	
Emergency	Same day
Urgent referral	Next day
Routine referral	Within 30 days

## Provider, Member and Member’s Family Satisfaction Surveys

Satisfaction surveys provide VHP with feedback on performance relating to:

- Access to care and/or services
- Overall satisfaction with VHP
- Provider availability
- Quality of care received
- Responsiveness to administrative processes
- Responsiveness to inquiries



## Member Administration

### Contacting VHP

<b>Website:</b>	www.valorhealthplan.com
<b>Provider Services:</b>	
Phone:	1-800-485-3793 (TTY for hearing impaired: 711) (8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time)
E-mail:	providerservices@valorhealthplan.com
<b>Mailing Address:</b>	Valor Health Plan Attn: Provider Services 339 E. Maple Street, Suite 100 North Canton, Ohio 44720
<b>Authorization Department:</b>	1-844-857-1601
<b>Authorization Fax Number:</b>	1-800-413-8347
<b>Pharmacy Management Department:</b>	
Phone:	1-833-459-4423
<b>Pharmacy Authorization Department:</b>	
Phone:	1-833-459-4423
<b>Medical Claims submissions:</b>	
Mailing Address:	Access Health Services P.O. Box 3630 Little Rock, AR 72202
<b>Part D Appeals:</b>	
Mailing Address:	EnvisionRx Options ATTN: Coverage Decisions 2181 E. Aurora Road, Suite 201 Twinsburg, OH, 44087
<b>Credentialing:</b>	
To request a hearing:	Valor Health Plan Attn: Provider Relations 339 E. Maple Street, Suite 100 North Canton, Ohio 44720
<b>Fraud Waste &amp; Abuse Hotline:</b>	
Medicare Fraud Hotline:	1-800-447-8477
Report online:	<a href="https://forms.oig.hhs.gov/hotlineoperations/">https://forms.oig.hhs.gov/hotlineoperations/</a>

## Member ID Cards

All VHP members are provided a Member ID Card and should be presented at the time of medical services. Refer to the VHP website at [www.valorhealthplan.com](http://www.valorhealthplan.com) for information about specific benefits, Member cost-sharing and product logo. A copy of the Member ID card is located on the inside cover of this book.

## Selecting a Primary Care Physician

All VHP Members must select a PCP from the list of participating primary care physicians in the VHP Provider directory. If a Member does not select a PCP, VHP will assign a PCP based on geographic access. A PCP is not permitted to refuse services to an eligible Member. Members may change PCPs by contacting Member Services. The change becomes effective on the first day of the following month.

## Verifying Member Eligibility

Possession of an ID card is not a guarantee of eligibility. Providers should photocopy the card and check it for any change of information, such as address and eligibility date.

Providers should verify Member eligibility before each office visit using the telephone number listed on the back of the Member's health plan ID card or by calling 1-800-485-3793.

## Member Copayments and Coinsurance

VHP covers the same benefits as Original Medicare as well as some enhanced services.

For a list of benefits and their respective cost-sharing amounts, go to [www.valorhealthplan.com](http://www.valorhealthplan.com) for the most recent Summary of Benefits and Evidence of Coverage.

As an Institutional Special Needs Plan, some members may be eligible for the cost sharing benefits provided by Ohio Medicaid. Generally this will provide the member with no cost sharing for covered services provided by in-network providers. Other members of the plan will have the same cost sharing expenses as with Original Medicare Part A and Part B with applicable deductibles, copayments, and co-insurance costs.

Providers are not allowed to charge co-payments, co-insurance, or deductible charges that are the responsibility of VHP or Ohio Medicaid.

## Benefit Exclusions

The following list indicates some, but not all, of the services not covered by Medicare or VHP. Some of these services may be covered by the State Medicaid program. VHP staff will help coordinate benefits and services.

SERVICE	NOTE
Abortion	
Acupuncture	
Ambulance	Ambulance is covered only if transportation in any other vehicle would endanger the Member's life. Air ambulance is paid only in emergency situations. If land ambulance would not seriously endanger the Member's health, Medicare will reimburse land ambulance rates only.
Chiropractic services	Exception: Manual manipulation of the spine to correct subluxation.
Contraceptives	
Cosmetic surgery	Exception: Reconstructive surgery is a covered benefit, as it is primarily intended to improve bodily function, relieve symptoms or improve appearance altered by disease, trauma or previous therapeutic processes (e.g., when breast reconstruction is performed following a mastectomy), or exists because of congenital or developmental abnormality.
Custodial care or respite care	
Dental services	Exceptions include surgery of the jaw or related structures, setting fractures of the jaw or facial bones, or services that would be covered when provided by a physician except as specifically stated in the Member's EOC. Tooth extractions for other reasons are not covered.
Foot care, routine	
Durable medical equipment and medical supplies that do not meet Medicare coverage criteria	Examples include shower chairs, safety tubs, stair lifts and blood pressure monitors.
Exercise programs	
Experimental or investigative procedures	
Eye surgery for refractive defects	Exception: Veterans Affairs hospitals and military treatment facilities are considered for payment according to current legislation.
Government treatment	Same as above.
Homemaker services	
Naturopath services	
Obesity treatment	Exception: This exclusion does not apply to surgical obesity treatment if treatment is necessary to treat another life-threatening condition involving obesity or if providers document that non-surgical obesity treatments have failed.
Orthodontia	
Orthopedic shoes, unless part of a leg brace	
Personal comfort items	

Private duty nursing	Exception: If VHP determines that such services are medically necessary before service is rendered
Sex transformation	
Work-related conditions	

## Quality Improvement

VHP’s approach to quality improvement is built on a model that involves the entire organization and related operational processes. The Quality Improvement program incorporates information from all of VHP departments and encourages providers to participate in quality improvement initiatives.

The Quality Improvement model employs a cycle of continuous improvement and a “Plan-Do-Study-Act” (PDSA) methodology. Opportunities for improvement are identified through qualitative and quantitative reviews of member care and services.

Quality improvement is a shared responsibility between VHP and its contracted networks and other delegated entities. The Quality Improvement department oversees and assists with many of the activities that support continuous quality improvement, including:

- Reviewing processes to identify quality improvement needs
- Organizing work groups and committees, such as the Clinical Quality Improvement Committee
- Identifying best practices
- Developing and implementing improvement initiatives
- Collecting data to evaluate the results of the activities and initiatives

Member satisfaction and quality of care/quality of service issues evaluated and reviewed on a regular basis using the PDSA Methodology. The CMS Star program results and the Quality Reporting Metrics serve as ongoing indicators for the Quality Improvement Work Plan.

Participation in the collection, review, and submission of CMS Star quality rating system performance data is one means by which VHP evaluates the quality of Member Services, care and satisfaction.

In addition, VHP is a full participant in CMS-required activities, including but not limited to the Chronic Care Improvement Program (CCIP) that targets the improvement of care for Members with a chronic condition as outlined by CMS. Program development is underway to meet this standard and improve the care and health outcomes our Members.

The VHP Quality Improvement program includes initiatives related to the CMS-mandated Quality Improvement Project (QIP), which will be associated with CMS Quality Strategy Goal(s).

## Advance Directives

All healthcare providers who participate in the Medicare Advantage program must offer Members written information about their right to make their own healthcare decisions, including the right to accept or refuse medical treatment and the right to execute advance directives.

An Advance Directive generally is a written statement that an individual has established – in advance of serious illness – regarding a medical decision. The Advance Directive must be in accordance with the Member’s state regulatory guidelines in order for it to be considered valid. All adults have the right to create and initiate an Advance Directive.

The two most common forms of advance directives are a living will and a healthcare durable power of attorney.

*Living Will* – A living will takes effect while the individual is still living. It is a written document concerning the kind of medical care a person wants or does not want if he or she is physically or mentally unable to make a decision.

*Healthcare Durable Power of Attorney* – A healthcare durable power of attorney is a signed, witnessed written statement by an individual naming another person as an agent to make medical decisions if he or she is physically or mentally unable to do so. A healthcare durable power of attorney can include instructions about any treatment the individual desires to undergo or avoid.

Neither document becomes effective unless the individual is unable to make decisions (generally as certified by a treating physician). The individual can change or revoke either document at any time. Otherwise, it should remain effective throughout the person’s life.

A Member who decides to execute a living will or a healthcare durable power of attorney is encouraged to notify their PCP, or treating provider, of its existence, provide a copy of the document to be included in personal medical records and discuss this decision with the PCP or treating provider. If a Member is under the care of a provider who is unable to honor the Member’s Advance Directive, the Member may transfer to the care of a provider willing to do so.

## Member Appeals

The Evidence of Coverage is provided to each member and states that every Member has the right to file an appeal. Members or their authorized representative must file an appeal within 60 calendar days of receiving notification of VHP’s denial decision or provide “good cause” for the delay in filing.

Examples of good-cause reasons include the following:

- The Member did not personally receive the adverse organization determination notice or received it late
- The Member was seriously ill, which prevented a timely appeal

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- There was a death or serious illness in the Member's immediate family
  - An accident caused important records to be destroyed
  - Documentation was difficult to locate within the time limits
  - The Member had incorrect or incomplete information concerning the reconsideration process
  - The Member lacked the capacity to understand the time frame for filing a request for reconsideration

A Member may appoint an authorized representative or request that the Member's physician, ancillary practitioner or hospital represent him/her in the appeal or grievance. To be appointed, both Member and the proposed representative (including attorneys) must sign, date, and complete the Appointment of a Representative (AOR) form (CMS1696 form) or an equivalent written notice. The AOR form is available on the CMS website at:

<https://www.cms.gov/cmsforms/downloads/cms1696.pdf> or in the appendix

**A Member's treating physician or non-physician provider may file an appeal on the Member's behalf without representation documentation.** However, Medicare regulations require that the physician notify the Member that the appeal is being filed.

VHP must provide an expedited determination if a Member or Member's physician indicates (the physician does not have to use the exact words) that applying the standard time frame could seriously jeopardize the life or health of the Member or the Member's ability to regain maximum function.

There must be potential Member liability (e.g., an actual claim for services already rendered as opposed to an advance organization determination) in order for a provider to appeal utilizing the Member appeal process.

Certain Member or provider appeals (pre-service and payment) may require that VHP obtain additional medical records from the treating provider to adequately perform a fair and independent review. A plan representative, generally an Appeals Specialist, will request medical records. The Appeals Medical Director may also request a peer-to-peer review to address treatment or patient-specific information to assist in the plan's appeal determination.

A provider has the right to an appeal when a **denial of a service rendered** occurs, or upon receipt of an initial claim or Revised Payment Determination **that results in a zero payment** to the provider.

Expedited appeals should be faxed to 1-866-820-0690. Standard appeals may be faxed to the same number or mailed to:

Valor Health Plan  
Attn: Appeals  
339 E. Maple Street, Suite 100  
North Canton, OH 44720

## **CMS Timeliness Standards Regarding Member Appeals**

CMS regulations require that VHP respond to pre-service standard appeals within 30 calendar days and within 60 calendar days for post-service appeals. Therefore, providers must respond to requests for information from VHP within five calendar days so that VHP is able to obtain all appropriate and complete information to make a timely and fully-informed decision. The deadline for pre-service standard appeals may be extended by 14 calendar days if doing so is in the interest of the Member.

VHP must make a determination for expedited appeal requests within 72 hours of receipt. Providers must respond to VHP's requests for information regarding expedited pre-service appeals within 24 hours to ensure timely resolution. The deadline for pre-service expedited appeals may be extended by 14 calendar days if doing so is in the interest of the Member. (Post- service (payment) appeals cannot be processed as expedited.)

Expedited appeals should be faxed to 1-866-820-0690.

## **Member Grievances**

If a Member is dissatisfied with the services provided, such as sales, enrollment or service processes, the Member has the right to file a grievance with the plan. VHP will review the grievance, take corrective action as appropriate and notify the Member. A grievance does not involve an appeal or coverage determination. Members may file a written or oral grievance at any time.

For more information about the appeals and grievances policies and procedures, please contact Provider Services at 1-800-485-3793.

## **III. Hospitalization Guidelines**

### **Overview**

VHP strives to deliver a coordinated care approach to providing care for our Members. This coordination is led by the NP for facility members working in conjunction with the PCP and the Member's Interdisciplinary Care Team which may include community-based providers, facility-based providers and the facility staff.

It is through this coordinated approach that services are delivered in the most effective and efficient manner. Therefore, VHP has incorporated certain authorization processes.

VHP urges all providers to use the services of a network hospital. This will assure the most appropriate cost sharing for the Members. The model of care emphasizes appropriate care at the most clinically appropriate setting. Whenever appropriate, unnecessary hospitalization should be avoided to minimize Member disruption and the risk of infections.

### **Transition Liaison**

If a facility based Member must be hospitalized, the NP discusses the Member's typical functioning level with the hospital staff. This communication can often result in avoiding unnecessary therapy or care, preventing redundant X-ray or lab tests, and reducing the length of stay.

The VHP NP and Case Manager are the central resource in coordinating transitions of care and ensuring that Members are appropriately and successfully transferred from one care setting to another. The majority of transitions are from the nursing facility to the hospital, and back again to the nursing facility.

The goal is to help reduce re-hospitalizations and avoid adverse events during the periods of transition. VHP staff is on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and are notified immediately when a facility transition of care is underway.

The NP or PCP reviews the appropriateness of the transfer and ensures all necessary Member information is transferred via the facility transfer face sheet, medication list, and Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) orders. The NP may also visit the Member in the hospital within one day of the transition to monitor the Member's status and communicate any issues or concerns.

### **Elective Admissions**

To admit a Member for an elective admission, the admitting provider must receive prior authorization from VHP at least three business days before the admission.



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The admitting provider must work with the NP / case manager and the hospital to schedule the admission and any pre-admission testing.

## **Pre-Admission Diagnostic Testing**

Pre-admission diagnostic testing includes:

- Laboratory diagnostic tests
- Radiological diagnostic tests
- Other diagnostic tests, including electrocardiogram, pulmonary function and neurological function

All preadmission diagnostic testing conducted before a Member's medically necessary surgery or admission to the hospital is covered when performed at an approved facility. Certain procedures require prior authorization.

## **Emergency Admissions**

VHP will cover care for an emergency medical condition with symptoms of such severity that a prudent layperson, who possesses an average knowledge of health and medicine, could reasonably expect the absence of medical attention to result in:

- Placing the health of the individual (or, with respect to a pregnant woman, the health of the woman or her unborn child) in serious jeopardy
- Serious impairment to bodily functions, or
- Serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part

Upon admitting a Member from the emergency department, the hospital should collect the following information:

- The name of the Member's PCP
- The name of the Member's referring Provider (PCP, NP or the nursing facility), if applicable
- The name of the admitting Provider if different from the referring Provider or PCP
- Nursing Facility Residence

The hospital or facility should notify VHP at 1-844-857-1601 within 48 hours or on the next business day following the emergency admission.

## **Observation Status**

Observation status applies to Members for whom inpatient hospital admission is being considered but is not certain. Observation care is a well-defined set of specific, clinically appropriate services, which include ongoing short-term treatment, assessment, and reassessment before a decision can be made regarding whether the Member will require further treatment as hospital inpatients or if he/she is able to be discharged from the hospital. Observation services are commonly ordered for Members who present to the emergency department and who then require a significant period of treatment or monitoring in order to make a decision concerning his/her admission or discharge.

Observation status should be used when:

- 
- The Member's condition is expected to be evaluated and/or treated within 24 hours, with follow-up care provided on an outpatient basis.
  - The Member's condition or diagnosis is not sufficiently clear to allow the Member to leave the hospital.

If a physician wants to admit a Member who is in observation status, the physician should notify VHP at 1-800-485-3793.

## Admission Review

The Member and attending physician are notified immediately and the case is referred to the VHP Medical Director if:

- An admission request does not appear to meet guidelines upon initial review and/or
- A Member's condition no longer meets criteria for an extended length of stay/level of care

The admitting provider will have the opportunity to discuss the treatment plan and/or medical guidelines with the VHP Medical Director. If a request results in a denial or adverse determination, VHP will send a letter of non-authorization the same day by messenger, fax or mail. This letter includes the appeals process.

VHP Members have the right to an immediate Peer Review Organization (PRO) review of a denial. The Member or authorized representative must make such a request in writing or by telephone by calling Member Services at 1-800-485-3793 (TTY users call 711) by noon on the next business day following receipt of the notice of non-coverage.

If the Member or authorized representative does not choose to initiate an immediate PRO, the Member retains the right to appeal through the regular appeal process and should contact Member Services.

## Notices of Non-Coverage/Denial

In February 2011, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) revised its mandated forms regarding denials and appeals. As of February 28, 2011, VHP must use these forms when it makes an adverse determination.

If a provider makes a recommendation for care and the Member does not agree, the Member must be given his/her appeals rights, which requires the Member to call VHP and dispute the recommended services. Once the Member has filed a grievance, VHP will process the request for services accordingly. If the decision results in a denial, VHP will send out the appropriate form.

Those updated forms include:

- Integrated Denial Notice: Notice of Denial of Medical Coverage/Notice of Denial of Payment (CMS 100003–NDMCP) – When denying a request for medical service, in whole or in part, or when denying a Member's request for payment of a service already received.

- Notice of Medicare Non-Coverage (CMS 10095-NOMNC) – When informing Members receiving skilled nursing, home health (including psychiatric home health), or comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation facility services of the termination of services. (VHP must provide the service termination date to the provider no later than two days before the termination of services.)

## Concurrent Review

Concurrent review is performed to assess the appropriateness of continued inpatient care in a hospital or skilled nursing facility.

Concurrent review includes:

- Review of medical necessity
- Determination of the next review date
- Discharge planning
- Research/coordination of alternatives to inpatient care, such as home healthcare

The review is conducted on Members in acute, rehabilitation, skilled nursing, and psychiatric facilities.

Medicare criteria, as well as an evidenced-based clinical decision support solution of healthcare guidelines, are used when coordinating inpatient care.

VHP obtains clinical information on inpatient Members by coordinating with the utilization review staff at the facility. This may involve reviewing the medical record and/or interviewing attending physicians.

## Transfers

The Member's NP or case manager will help coordinate the transfer of any VHP Member from a network hospital to another facility. Every effort should be made to maintain the use of contracted facilities. This helps to ensure a coordinated approach to the management of the Member and minimizes Member disruption.

## Discharge Planning

The VHP NP and case manager nurse work with hospitals staff, attending physicians, PCP, and the facility's staff to coordinate discharge planning. A VHP clinical team member helps coordinate follow-up care, ancillary services and other appropriate services.

The VHP clinical team member will place a post-discharge call or visit to Members. The call/visit may include:

- Confirmation that follow-up appointments are made
- Verification that prescriptions are filled
- Confirmation that discharge services are completed
- Identification of symptoms of complications that may require readmission

## **Transplant Management**

The VHP care management team helps providers interpret transplant benefits for Members and choose a facility from the national transplant network. Each transplant facility is selected based upon its level of expertise and standards of care using an established set of criteria.

Transplant coverage includes pre-transplant, transplant and post-discharge services, as well as the treatment of complications after transplantation. Providers should contact Health and Wellness Services as soon as they feel transplant services may be necessary and before evaluation for transplant services.

A claim for a transplant may be reviewed for medical necessity to ensure coverage for qualified Medicare benefits.

## **IV. Claims and Reimbursements - Billing Guidelines**

Providers should bill VHP rather than Medicare or a Medicare Supplement carrier. Providers should bill all Medicare-covered services in accordance with Medicare and CMS rules, standards and guidelines applicable to Parts A and B. In addition, providers should use applicable CMS billing forms (i.e., UB-04/CMS1450, CMS1500, or such successor forms) and follow the same coding rules and billing guidelines as Original Medicare, including Medicare CPT Codes, HCPCS codes and defined modifiers.

Diagnosis codes should be billed to the highest level of specificity. The following information should be included on claims:

- National Provider Identifier
- The Member's identification number
- Date(s) of service
- Required CMS modifiers
- Diagnosis
- All other required CMS fields (e.g., number of service units, service location, etc.)

Providers who are paid based on interim rates should include with the claim a copy of the current interim rate letter if the interim rate has changed since the previous claim submission.

Billing questions and/or problems should be directed to Provider Services at 1-800-485-3793.

### **Filing a Claim for Payment**

#### **Electronic Submissions**

VHP is contracted with Access Health Services. Access Health Services is able to forward claims to VHP.

Filing claims electronically reduces administrative costs, speeds claims payment and improves payment accuracy. To begin submitting claims electronically, contact Access Health Services as follows:

Access Health Services  
P.O. Box 3630  
Little Rock, AR 72202  
1-800-485-3793

For questions regarding electronic claims (EDI) billing, contact Provider Services at 1-800-485-3793.

## Paper Submissions

Providers who prefer to submit claims by mail should send them to the following address:

Access Health Services  
P.O. Box 3630  
Little Rock, AR 72202

## Filing Deadlines

For services furnished after January 1, 2010, Section 6404 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 amended the timely filing requirements to reduce the maximum time period for submission of all Medicare claims to one calendar year following the date of service.

Many providers have agreed to a shorter filing deadline in their applicable Provider Participation Agreement and should be consulted for specific applicable deadlines.

For institutions or providers billing with span dates exceeding a month in duration, the date of service is considered the discharge date, or when the service is completed, not the date treatment begins or the patient is admitted for care.

## Key Points

Here are some key points to consider when filing claims:

- Do not bill the Medicare carrier or fiscal intermediary. Doing so will delay payment and Medicare will not process the claim.
- Providers must include their NPI number on all claims.
- Durable medical equipment suppliers must use a 10-digit DME Medicare supplier number.
- Laboratories must use their 10-digit CLIA number.
- Providers should submit claims to VHP as soon as possible after the service is rendered.
- Submit claims using the same coding rules as original Medicare and use only Medicare-approved CPT codes and defined modifiers.
- Bill diagnosis codes to the highest specificity.

## Clean vs. Unclean Claims

VHP processes and pays all error-free claims, known as clean claims, for covered services provided to a Member within 30 calendar days of receipt by the plan, or as required by applicable federal law. If a clean claim is not paid within the 30-day time frame, VHP will pay interest on the claim according to Medicare guidelines.

Under CMS guidelines, a “clean” claim is a claim with no defects or improprieties. An “unclean” claim may include:

- Lack of required substantiating documentation
- A particular circumstance requiring special treatment that prevents timely payment from being made on the claim
- Any required fields where information is missing or incomplete
- Invalid, incorrect or expired codes (e.g., the use of single-digit instead of double-digit place-of- service codes)
- A missing Explanation of Benefits (EOB) for a Member with other coverage

VHP will process all non-clean claims and notify providers of the determination within 60 days of receiving such claims.

## **National Provider Identifier**

All healthcare Providers should have a NPI. The NPI replaces Legacy identifiers such as the Unique Physician Identification Number or UPIN.

The purpose of the NPI is to uniquely identify a healthcare Provider in standard transactions, such as healthcare claims. The NPI may also be used to identify healthcare Providers on prescriptions, in internal files to link proprietary Provider identification numbers, in coordination of benefits between health plans, inpatient medical record systems and in program integrity files.

The NPI is the only healthcare Provider identifier that can be used for identification purposes in such transactions.

## **Reimbursements**

VHP complies with Medicare’s prompt payment of claims requirements for all clean claims. Claims must be submitted within the time frame specified in the provider’s contracts. VHP processes all error-free claims (known as clean claims) for covered services provided to a Member within 30 calendar days of receipt by the plan.

### **Special Circumstances**

For certain Medicare-approved providers, VHP pays as follows:

- Eligible hospitals are reimbursed according to CMS IPPS DRG reimbursement methodology, including Capital Indirect Medical Education Expense (IME) payments. Hospitals receive the same IPPS DRG reimbursements, including add-on payments, that they would receive under original Medicare based on rates published on the CMS website ([www.CMS.gov](http://www.CMS.gov)). The payment is added to the Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS). However, because Fiscal Intermediaries are responsible for operating IME and DGME, VHP does not reimburse those components of the DRG.

- VHP reimburses qualifying Disproportionate Share Hospitals the same capital exception payments and add-on payments for operating DSH that they would have received under original Medicare. The payment is added to the Prospective Payment System (PPS) rate. VHP reimburses DSH payments on a claim-by-claim basis in the same manner as CMS.
- VHP does not reimburse facilities for bad debt incurred as a result of Members not paying their cost-sharing amounts (if any), unless specified in a provider's contract.
- VHP does not enter into the annual cost settlement process with providers, contracted or non-contracted. Providers who have treated VHP Members should contact Medicare or their Fiscal Intermediary regarding their cost settlements.

## **Billing for Non-Covered Services**

Providers may not bill a Member if VHP denies payment because the service was not covered, unless:

- The provider has informed the Member in advance that the services may not be covered, and
- The Member has agreed, in writing, to pay for the services.

## **Balance Billing Provisions**

A provider may collect only applicable plan cost-sharing amounts from VHP Members and may not otherwise charge or bill Members. Balance billing is prohibited by providers who furnish plan-covered services to VHP Members.

## **Provider Remittance Advice Form**

VHP sends Providers a Provider Remittance Advice Form (PRAF) once it has received and paid a claim.

Questions regarding the PRAF may be addressed to VHP at 1-800-485-3793 from 8 AM to 5 PM (local time zone), Monday-Friday a week.

When calling, Providers should have the following information available for the representative:

- National Provider Identifier (NPI)
- Claim number in question
- Member's name
- Date of service
- Member's date of birth
- Issue requiring review
- Member's ID number
- Copy of claim (if available)



## Coordination of Benefits

If a Member has primary coverage with another plan, providers should submit a claim for payment to that plan first. The amount payable by VHP will be governed by the amount paid by the primary plan and the coordination of benefits policies.

In order to bill the correct payer, the provider must obtain all the information that determines whether the Member is covered. The provider must include all this information on the claim form to facilitate the correct adjudication.

For a provider who accepts Medicaid and who treats a VHP Member who is a Medicaid patient, VHP will pay the Medicare portion of the claim. The provider must then submit the claim to the appropriate state Medicaid entity for the Medicaid portion of the claim.

The following types of situations, not an exhaustive list, will prevent payment by VHP as the primary payer:

- **Elderly Workers Employed Group Health Plan (EGHP):** These Members, who are 65 years or older, are covered by an EGHP with 20 or more employees or the spouse of a person covered by an EGHP. The spouse's age is not material to the determination of primary coverage, only the qualification of the EGHP.
- **Disabled Beneficiaries Employer Group Health Plans:** These Members are eligible for Medicare based on disability and are under the age of 65 years and are covered by a Large Group Health Plan (LGHP) through their own or a family member's employment. LGHP is defined by at least one of the employers having at least 100 employees.
- **Federal Black Lung Program:** The Black Lung Program was established under the Department of Labor to assist coal miners with pulmonary and respiratory diseases that resulted from their employment. The program is billed for all services that relate to either respiratory or pulmonary diseases. VHP is the primary payer for all other care and service needs.
- **Workers' Compensation:** The Workers' Compensation carrier is responsible for all injuries and illnesses that result from employment. VHP pays only when the Workers' Compensation benefits are exhausted or the services/care were not covered by the Workers' Compensation carrier but are Medicare benefits.
- **Veterans Administration Coverage:** Care and services authorized by the VA are payable in full by the VA. Claims from one government program cannot be reimbursed by another government program. VHP may supplement VA payment when the Member files a claim for Part B services that were not fully reimbursable by the VA.

## **Provider Payment Dispute Resolution Process**

If a provider believes a clean claim should have been paid differently, providers have the right to dispute the payment.

Providers must address disputes regarding claims payments (such as denied claims, inappropriate payments, the timing of payments or the amount of the claim) in writing. Providers may direct any questions to Provider Services at 1-800-485-3793.

To file an official payment dispute, providers should submit a Provider Dispute Resolution Request form along with any supporting documentation. Providers may include a cover sheet outlining the reason for the requested review along with the claim and Provider Remittance Advice Form, or PRAF.

VHP will respond to all written disputes regarding claims within 30 business days.

If VHP agrees with the reason for the payment dispute, VHP will issue a new Explanation of Payment (EOP) and pay the additional amount that is requested, including any interest due.

VHP will inform providers in writing if the decision is unfavorable and no additional amount is owed, as well as supply information regarding the provider's appeal rights.

Claims must be disputed within 120 days from the date payment/denial is initially received by the provider. In cases where VHP re-adjudicates a claim, providers have an additional 120 days from the notification date in which to dispute the adjustment.

## V. Medicare Risk Adjustment

### Hierarchical Condition Category (HCC) Model

CMS previously reimbursed Medicare Advantage plans based on a Member's demographics. Now, however, CMS also considers a Member's chronic health conditions. This reimbursement method is called Medicare Risk Adjustment.

Under risk adjustment, health plans receive higher compensation for chronically ill Members in anticipation of the cost of paying for their care. Payments are calculated by the diagnoses on each Member's claims for the previous year.

VHP reviews all claims to identify conditions that yield varying reimbursement rates. To determine the reimbursement rate associated with the diagnosis codes that providers submit, the risk adjustment process relies on a model called "Hierarchical Condition Category" or HCC.

The HCC model is a list of standard diagnostic codes (ICD-9-CM until September 30, 2015; ICD-10-CM starting October 1, 2015) codes that have been separated into clinically related groups. The model identifies chronic diseases and conditions that may have a corresponding disease management program. The reimbursement also is based on the severity of each qualifying condition.

A qualifying diagnosis must appear on a Member's medical record at least once a calendar year to be counted for risk adjustment. In addition, the physician who dictated or documented the Member's condition must sign the record and note their credentials, regardless of the type of medical record.

The following chart gives a few examples of diagnosis conditions and their corresponding HCC category. (Note: These codes may change from year to year.)

## HCC to ICD-10 Corresponding Category\*

\*Note, these codes are for illustrative purposes only and is not a complete list.

HCC	HCC DESCRIPTION	ICD-10-CM CODE	ICD-10-CM DESCRIPTION
1	HIV/AIDS	B20	HIV Disease
1	HIV/AIDS	B9735	HIV-2 Infection, viral and chlamydial
2	Septicemia/Shock	A412	Sepsis due to unspecified staphylococcus
2	Septicemia/Shock	R6521	Severe sepsis with septic shock
2	Septicemia/Shock	A409	Streptococcal Sepsis, unspecified

HCC	HCC DESCRIPTION	ICD-10-CM CODE	ICD-9-CM DESCRIPTION
8	Metastatic Cancer and Acute Leukemia	C784	Malignant Neoplasm – small intestine
8	Metastatic Cancer and Acute Leukemia	C7800	Malignant Neoplasm-unspecified lung
9	Lung and Other Severe Cancers	C159	Malignant Neoplasm – esophagus, unspecified
9	Lung and Other Severe Cancers	C33	Malignant Neoplasm – trachea
19	Diabetes without Complication	E109	Type 1 diabetes mellitus without complications
19	Diabetes without Complication	E119	Type 2 diabetes mellitus without complications
21	Protein-Calorie Malnutrition	E41	Nutritional Marasmus
21	Protein-Calorie Malnutrition	E46	Unspecified protein-calorie malnutrition
28	Cirrhosis of Liver	K7030	Alcoholic cirrhosis of liver w/out ascites
28	Cirrhosis of Liver	K709	Alcoholic liver disease, unspecified
85	Congestive Heart Failure	I270	Primary pulmonary hypertension
85	Congestive Heart Failure	I509	Heart failure, unspecified
107	Vascular Disease with Complications	I713	Abdominal aortic aneurysm, ruptured
107	Vascular Disease with Complications	I2782	Chronic pulmonary embolism

## Provider's Role in Risk Adjustment

The provider's role is critical in the risk adjustment process because payments from CMS rely exclusively on complete medical record documentation and the submission of accurate diagnostic coding. The accuracy and quality of the medical record depend on thorough documentation and coding by providers and their staff.

Providers must sign, add their credentials after their signature and date all medical record information, including but not limited to notes, diagnostic results and reports received from specialists. A signature indicates that the provider has acknowledged and reviewed this information.

To ensure accurate payment, providers should consider the following steps to assist in capturing all chronic conditions that qualify under the HCC model:

- All PCPs should have at least one annual face-to-face visit with each Member assigned to their panel.
- At each visit, providers must document appropriately and provide their credentials. This includes recording all conditions and diseases, indicating the Member's name on each page of the medical record and signing and dating each entry, making sure to identify the provider's credentials.
- Providers should code a visit based on the documentation in the medical record.
- Providers should code to the highest known specificity for all conditions at the time of the visit.
- Providers should report all of a Member's chronic conditions, using the most updated standard diagnostic code set guidelines.

Providers should submit the ICD-10CM diagnostic data to VHP via a CMS-1500 claim form or electronic claim.

If a Member has more chronic conditions than provided for on the form, call Provider Services at 1-800-485-3793 so the codes may be manually entered into the system.

## VHP's Role in Risk Adjustment

The payments received by VHP are adjusted according to the severity of each Member's condition. To guarantee that compensation correctly reflects the Member's current health status, VHP must:

Educate all contracted physicians – To do so, VHP will provide the following:

- An annual provider meeting or tele-conference
- Individual meetings with providers and their staffs, as requested
- Educational materials upon request.

- Provide updated and accurate reports – VHP has created several reports for use by providers and their staffs to make sure providers capture correct diagnoses.
- Conduct chart reviews – VHP will conduct periodic reviews and educate providers and their staffs regarding the importance of capturing correct and full diagnoses. These reviews will be coordinated with the provider’s office staff.
- Submit the encounter data/claims detail to CMS – VHP must submit all encounter data and/or claims detail to CMS in a timely manner. Providers who need assistance submitting encounter data to VHP should contact Provider Services at 1-800-485-3793 as soon as possible.

## Frequently Asked Questions

These are a few of the most frequently asked questions regarding Medicare Risk Adjustment:

**Q:** *How often does the diagnosis have to appear to be counted for risk adjustment?*

**A:** The diagnosis has to appear at least once a calendar year.

**Q:** *Is a “typed” signature on a report acceptable for office consultation notes, a discharge summary and hospital consultations?*

**A:** No. The provider who dictated the report must sign it, regardless of the record type, and add his/her credentials. Electronic signatures are acceptable but must be accompanied by such words as “electronically signed by,” “authenticated by” or “signed by.”

**Q:** *Are medical records containing dictated progress notes that are dated but not signed acceptable for medical review?*

**A:** No. Medical record documentation should be signed and dated by the physician.

**Q:** *If providers submit an unsigned medical record, will VHP return the record to the provider for a signature?*

**A:** Yes, as long as it is within 30 days. Otherwise, providers must submit a new medical record with the provider’s signature to substantiate the HCC.

**Q:** *Can a pathology report alone substantiate a risk adjustment assignment?*

**A:** No. Pathology and other laboratory reports simply present the actual results and generally do not have a documented diagnosis and the physician’s signature. However, if such a report is signed by an M.D., has a final diagnosis and can be tied back to the actual visit, then it can be used as a coding source.

**Q:** *Can a radiology report alone substantiate a risk adjustment assignment?*

**A:** Radiology is not an acceptable source to report diagnoses for risk adjustment because it generally does not have a documented diagnosis but instead provides an impression of the findings.

**Q:** *May providers use ICD-10-CM code I25.2 if the only documentation of an old myocardial infarction (MI) is an EKG report?*

**A:** No. The EKG report cannot be used as a source until the procedure has been interpreted and documented in the medical record.

**Q:** *How often should providers document chronic conditions, such as an old myocardial infarction (MI)?*

**A:** Yearly, or as often as the diagnosis factors into the medical decision making.

## VI. Pharmacy – Part D Services

### Overview

The VHP Pharmacy Management Department helps manage healthcare dollars spent on prescription medications. In addition, the department works with Health Services to coordinate Member care regarding medications.

VHP partners with EnvisionRx, a Prescription Benefits Manager (PBM), to administer the prescription programs for VHP Members.

The VHP formulary may be viewed by going online to [www.valorhealthplan.com](http://www.valorhealthplan.com)

- Click on “Prospective Members” and then select “Formulary”
- On the next page, you can:
  - Search the formulary online
  - Download and print the comprehensive formulary

### Formulary Key Points

Physicians and clinical pharmacists on the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee develop and maintain the formulary for VHP. These Medicare Advantage prescription drug plans include the following features:

- Tiered copayments based on the type and use of medications
- Clinical programs to ensure appropriate use of medications
- Services for “specialty” medications that require extra information, handling, storage and use instructions
- In some plans, elimination of the Member’s Part D deductible
- In some plans, coverage of certain medications within the standard Part D coverage gap
- 90-day supply of medications available for pick up at network pharmacies
- Mail-order services through Envision Mail Service

A staff clinical pharmacist is available to do the following:

- Answer medication-related questions from providers and network pharmacies
- Assist in educating providers and network pharmacies about pharmacy changes
- Serve as a clinical resource for contracted providers and their staffs



The Prior Authorization Department may be contacted at:

<b>PHONE</b>	1-833-459-4423 (TTY users call 711)
<b>FAX</b>	1-877-503-7231
<b>MAIL</b>	EnvisionRxOptions ATTN: Coverage Decisions 2181 E. Aurora Road, Suite 201 Twinsburg, OH 44087
<b>WEBSITE</b>	<a href="http://www.valorhealthplan.com">www.valorhealthplan.com</a>

## Pharmacy Policies

### Generics

All formularies include the concept of generic medications as the preferred use medication. Copayments for most generic medications are lower than copayments for brand-name medications.

### Formulary

Most medications, unless they are benefit exclusions or non-formulary, are reimbursed under this program. This allows for accessibility of all medication classes required by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and permits providers to determine the most appropriate medication.

#### **Tier 1: (Preferred Generic Drugs)**

This is the lowest-cost Generic tier and includes preferred generic drugs. Generic drugs contain the same active ingredients as brand drugs and are equally safe and effective.

#### **Tier 2: (Brand Drugs)**

This is the middle-cost tier, and includes preferred brand drugs and sometimes non-preferred generic drugs. Some Tier 3 drugs have lower-cost Tier 1 or 2 alternatives.

## Coverage Determination

VHP has several processes that help ensure the effective and efficient use of medications under the prescription benefit offered to Members. VHP refers to these processes collectively as “coverage determination.”

The following list includes the various types of coverage determination requests:

- Formulary exception – Coverage for a Part D medication that is not on the formulary
- Prior authorization – Coverage for certain formulary prescription drugs that require specific clinical criteria
- Step therapy – Coverage for certain formulary prescription drugs that first require the trial and failure of other formulary alternatives
- Quantity limits – Coverage for certain medications that have quantity limits to ensure compliance with FDA guidelines and appropriate use of medications
- Tier exception – Coverage for a Non-Preferred Tier drug at a lower, Preferred Tier copayment

Each of these various types of coverage determinations has its own respective request form, which may be accessed in the following ways:

<b>PHONE</b>	1-833-459-4423 (TTY users call 711) 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday
<b>FAX</b>	1-501-372-1932
<b>MAIL</b>	EnvisionRxOptions ATTN: Coverage Decisions 2181 E. Aurora Road, Suite 201 Twinsburg, OH 44087
<b>WEBSITE</b>	<a href="http://www.valorhealthplan.com">www.valorhealthplan.com</a>

## Excluded Medications

Medicare has excluded certain medication classes from coverage by Part D Medicare programs. These classes include all drugs (brand and generic) and combination drugs that contain a medication within these classes:

- Medications used for erectile dysfunction
- Medications used for anorexia, weight loss or weight gain
- Medications used for cosmetic purposes or hair growth
- Medications used to promote fertility
- Medications used for the symptomatic relief of cough or colds
- Nonprescription medications – Medications that, by federal law, do not require a prescription
- Prescription vitamins and mineral products, except prenatal vitamins and fluoride preparations



### **Alert – No Appeal for Excluded Medications**

Medications falling into the categories listed above cannot be covered even for medical necessity. The decision of non-coverage cannot be appealed, nor can exceptions be made to allow for coverage.

## **Discontinuing, Changing or Reducing Coverage**

Generally, if a VHP Member is taking a formulary drug that was covered at the beginning of the year, VHP will continue coverage of the drug during the coverage year except when a new, less expensive generic drug becomes available or when adverse information about the safety or effectiveness of a drug is released.

Other types of formulary changes, such as removing a drug from the formulary, will not affect Members currently taking the drug and will remain available at the same cost sharing for the remainder of the coverage year.

## **Notification of Formulary Changes**

If VHP removes drugs from the formulary; adds coverage determinations, such as prior authorizations, quantity limits, and/or step therapy restrictions on a drug; or moves a drug to a higher cost-sharing tier, VHP must notify affected Members and providers of the change at least 60 days before it becomes effective.

If the Food and Drug Administration deems a formulary drug to be unsafe or if the drug's manufacturer removes it from the market, VHP will immediately remove the drug from the formulary and notify Members who take the drug.

## **Transition Policy**

VHP may provide temporary coverage of medications for new Members who are taking non-formulary drugs or drugs that require coverage determination. VHP may grant a temporary 30-day supply within the enrollee's first 90 days of Membership, during which time the provider should initiate the same "coverage determination" process outlined previously.

Transition coverage also is available for residents of long-term care facilities or Members whose medications are affected by a level-of-care change (e.g., discharge from acute setting or admission to/discharge from long-term care facility).

## **Pharmacy Network**

Members must fill all medications at network pharmacies for coverage at the lowest out-of-pocket cost. Members who use non-participating pharmacies may pay higher out-of-pocket costs and must submit receipts for reimbursement.

Participating pharmacies include community-based pharmacies, pharmacies that serve long-term care facilities, specialty pharmacies (home infusion pharmacies) and pharmacies owned by Indian tribal councils.

## Mail-order Services

VHP offers mail-order services to our Members. Some of the benefits to the Members include:

- Save money: mail-order refills can save your patients up to 60% in costs and always come with no shipping cost for standard shipping.
- Personal service: 24-hour access to a pharmacist.

**\*Please note:** Members who used our “Automatic Refill” service in the past automatically received drug refills when our records indicated that they were about to run out. As of January 2014, Members need to provide permission to have their drugs refilled by mail.

To get mail-order forms and information about ordering prescriptions for your patients through mail order, go to our website [www.valorhealthplan.com](http://www.valorhealthplan.com) or call 1-833-459-4423.

## VII. Pharmacy – Part B Services

### Definition of Part B Coverage

Medicare Part B originally was designed to help people with Medicare pay for their medical costs but not for their medications.

Over the years, though, Congress added benefits to treat specific diseases, including medications used to treat those diseases. The Part B benefit does not apply to specific medications (Exceptions may apply for IPPB solutions and some diabetic supplies) but rather to the treatment of certain diseases.

Medicare Part B covers a limited number of prescription drugs. These Part B drugs generally fall into three categories:

- Drugs furnished incident to a physician’s service
- Drugs used as a supply to durable medical equipment (DME)
- Certain statutorily covered drugs, including:
  - Immunosuppressive drugs for beneficiaries with a Medicare-covered organ transplant
  - Hemophilia blood clotting factor
  - Certain oral anti-cancer drugs
  - Oral anti-emetic drugs
  - Pneumococcal, influenza and hepatitis vaccines (for intermediate to high-risk individuals)
  - Antigens
  - Erythropoietin for trained home dialysis patients
  - Certain other drugs separately billed by End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) facilities (e.g., iron dextran, vitamin D injections)
  - Home infusion of intravenous immune globulin for primary immune deficiency

Medicare Part B drug coverage has not been changed by implementation of the new Medicare Part D drug program. Drugs that were covered by Medicare Part B before the Part D prescription drug program became operational continue to be covered under Medicare Part B.

Copayments for each category are as follows:

- Part A – Generally No copayment (part of the Hospital payment)
- Part B – Generally No coinsurance (varies by plan and/or product)
- Part D – Generally No Member copayment (varies by plan and/or product and/or by tier level)

## **Part B Medication Authorizations and Claims**

Drugs furnished incident to physician's services follow the same authorization and claim procedures as other physician services.

For prescription medications dispensed by a pharmacy, the VHP pharmacy claims system is able to adjudicate Part B claims. Some prescription medications may require Part B vs. D coverage determination review.

## **Part B vs. D Coverage Determination for Prescription Medications Dispensed by a Pharmacy**

While the use of some medications is assumed to fall under Part B coverage, others require additional clinical information before coverage can be determined. Therefore, certain prescription medications are subject to prior authorization for Part B vs. Part D coverage determination. The intent is not to establish clinical grounds for approval but to determine the circumstances of the claim for payment purposes.

VHP will allow payment as a Part D benefit only when it can establish appropriate coverage. Otherwise, coverage is redirected as a Medicare Part B claim.

In addition:

- Some medications could be covered under Part B (medical) or Part D (prescription) depending on several issues, including the diagnosis, residential status of the Member or route of administration.
- Part B and D drugs have different copayments, and Part B drugs do not apply to True Out-of-Pocket costs (TrOOP).
- The process to determine if the drug is to be covered as Part B or Part D is the same process outlined previously for "coverage determination."

## VIII. Physician Rights, Responsibilities and Roles

VHP is committed to offering its Members access to physicians and healthcare services and facilities that provide quality care in a manner that preserves a Member's dignity, privacy and autonomy.

As such, VHP employees and contracted providers shall:

- Treat all Members with respect and courtesy.
- Not discriminate against Members in the delivery of healthcare services based on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, and source of payment or other protected class.
- Respond promptly to Members' questions and document communications with Members as appropriate.
- Protect Members' rights by publicizing such rights to Members, employees and network providers.
- Comply with all the legal and professional standards of care, ethics, conduct and behavior applicable to health maintenance organizations, their employees and their network providers.
- Provide Members with information concerning the benefits available to them so they may avail themselves of such benefits as appropriate.
- Make sure Members have reasonable access to the services to which they are entitled under their plans.
- Give Members (or their legal guardians, when appropriate) the opportunity to make informed decisions concerning their medical care, including information about withholding resuscitative service, forgoing or withdrawing life-sustaining treatment, or participating in investigation studies or clinical trials. Healthcare providers shall obtain informed consent as required by law.
- Inform Members of their rights to an appeal if a provider chooses not to supply a service or treatment requested by the Member.
- Preserve the integrity and independence of clinical decision making by network providers. In making such decisions concerning a Member's medical care, network providers shall not allow themselves to be influenced by financial compensation to the provider or provider network that results from such decisions or by coverage of a particular treatment or course of care by the Member's plan.
- Follow the guidance of provider marketing training as required by the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA).

## **Provider Role in HIPAA Privacy Regulations**

VHP policies and procedures include regulatory information to make sure VHP complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations and the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act.

Hospitals and providers subject to HIPAA are trained to understand their responsibilities under these privacy regulations – as is the staff at VHP.

Throughout its business areas, VHP has incorporated measures to make sure potential, current and former Members' Protected Health Information (PHI), individually identifiable health information and personally identifiable financial information are maintained in a confidential manner, whether that information is in oral, written, or electronic format. VHP employees may use and disclose this information only for those purposes permitted by federal legislation (for treatment, payment and healthcare operations), by the Member's written request, or if required to be disclosed by law, regulation or court order.

VHP developed its referral/authorization request form in accordance with the core elements and required statements contained in the HIPAA privacy rules. To determine pre- service medical necessity, providers should complete, sign and return the referral/authorization form to VHP.

All Members receive VHP's Privacy Statement and Notice of Privacy Practices in their welcome kit materials. Members also receive a copy of the privacy information with their Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) and Evidence of Coverage (EOC). These documents clearly explain the Members' rights concerning the privacy of their individual information, including the processes established to provide them with access to their PHI and procedures to request to amend, restrict use and have accounting of disclosures. The documents further inform Members of VHP's precautions to conceal individual health information from employers.

VHP's Notice of Privacy Practices is separate and distinct from the Notice of Privacy Practices providers are required to give to their patients under HIPAA. To view the Privacy Statement and Notice of Privacy Practices, contact Provider Services at 1-800-485-3793.

## **Complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act**

Providers' offices are considered places of public accommodation and, therefore, must be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Offices are required to adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines and any of its amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and other applicable state or federal laws.

VHP requires that network providers' offices or facilities comply with these aforementioned statutes/laws.

The ADA and Section 504 require that providers' offices have the following modifications: (i) the office or facility must be wheelchair accessible or have provisions to accommodate

people in wheelchairs; (ii) patient rest rooms should be equipped with grab bars; and (ii) handicapped parking must be available near the provider's office and be clearly marked. These aforementioned requirements are not an exhaustive list of the standards or access requirements mandated by the ADA, Section 504, or any other applicable state or federal law.

## **Anti-Kickback Statute**

VHP is committed to conducting its business activities in full compliance with applicable Federal and State laws. In support of this commitment, VHP must ensure that all Providers adhere to the Federal Anti-Kickback Statute and state equivalents (the "Anti-Kickback Policy"), which applies to all covered persons.

The Anti-Kickback Statute states that anyone who knowingly and willfully accepts or solicits any remuneration (including any kickback, hospital incentive or bribe) directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, in cash or in kind, to influence the referral of Federal healthcare program business may face charges, including felony charges, and/or civil penalties, such as being barred from participation in federal programs.

Discounts, rebates or other reductions in price may violate the anti-kickback statute because such arrangements involve remuneration to induce the purchase of items or services payable by the Medicare Program.

In order to be permissible, an activity that implicates the anti-kickback statute must qualify for protection under a specific Safe Harbor. For a complete list of Safe Harbor activities, please refer to the Medicare and Medicaid Fraud and Abuse Statute (42 CFR Parts 1001 – 1005; Sections 1001.951 and 1001.952) or consult your legal counsel.



## **IX. Medicare Advantage and Part D Fraud, Waste and Abuse**

### **The Scope of Fraud, Waste and Abuse on the Healthcare System**

The National Health Care Anti-Fraud Association (NHCAA) website reports that healthcare loss due to fraud, waste and abuse has an impact on patients, taxpayers and the government because it leads to higher healthcare costs, insurance premiums and taxes. Healthcare fraud often hurts patients who may receive unnecessary or unsafe healthcare procedures or who may be the victims of identity theft.

Healthcare fraud is knowingly and willfully executing, or attempting to execute, a scheme or artifice to defraud any healthcare benefit program or to obtain (by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises) any of the money or property owned by, or under the custody or control of any healthcare benefit program.

Healthcare waste is the overutilization of services, or other practices that, directly or indirectly, result in unnecessary costs to the Medicare program. Waste is generally not considered to be caused by criminally negligent actions but rather the misuse of resources.

Healthcare abuse includes actions that may, directly or indirectly, result in: unnecessary costs to the Medicare Program, improper payment, payment for services that fail to meet professionally recognized standards of care, or services that are medically unnecessary.

### **Medical Identity Theft**

Medical identity thieves may use a person's name and personal information, such as their health insurance number, to make doctor's appointments, obtain prescription drugs, and file claims with Medicare Advantage Plans. This may affect the person's health and medical information and can potentially lead to misdiagnosis, unnecessary treatments, or incorrect prescription medication.

To limit the number of alleged incidents of medical identity theft involving Members, provider claim personnel should verify Member account numbers when filing medical claims for processing.

## Reporting Fraud, Waste and Abuse

Suspected incidents of fraud, waste and abuse may be reported anonymously to the **Compliance Department at 1-844-223-2371**.

You may also report suspected fraud, waste and abuse by regular mail by writing to:

Valor Health Plan  
339 E. Maple Street, Suite 100  
North Canton, Ohio 44720

Additional Information is available at the following websites:

- [www.insurancefraud.org](http://www.insurancefraud.org)
- [www.stopmedicarefraud.gov](http://www.stopmedicarefraud.gov)
- [www.ssa.gov/oig](http://www.ssa.gov/oig)
- [www.nhcaa.org](http://www.nhcaa.org)

# X. Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA)

## Rules Related to Marketing Medicare Advantage Plans

Effective January 1, 2009, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) imposed prohibitions on certain sales and marketing activities under Medicare Advantage (MA) and Medicare Advantage-Prescription Drug (MA-PD) plans. Such activities include door-to-door sales, cold calling, free meals and cross-selling of non-health-related products. These prohibited activities also include specific marketing activities in a healthcare setting by a plan sponsor or by providers with which the plan sponsor has a relationship, contracted or otherwise.

In general:

- Doctors and office staff may not encourage patients to enroll in the plan in any way; doing so is considered “steering.”
- CMS draws no distinction between exclusive and non-exclusive groups when it comes to regulations on steering.
- Providers may make available to their patients information for all plans with which they are affiliated, including common area availability for health plan events and CMS-approved marketing materials.

Providers may:

- Provide the names of plan sponsors with which they contract and/or participate (See Medicare Marketing Guidelines for additional information on affiliation).
- Provide information and assistance in applying for the Low Income Subsidy (LIS).
- Make available and/or distribute plan marketing materials.
- Refer their patients to other sources of information, such as State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs), plan marketing representatives, their State Medicaid Office, local Social Security Office, and CMS’ website at <http://www.medicare.gov> or **1-800-MEDICARE**.
- Share information with patients from CMS’ website, including the “Medicare & You” Handbook or “Medicare Options Compare” (from <http://www.medicare.gov>), or other documents that were written by or previously approved by CMS.
- Providers must remain neutral when assisting with enrollment decisions and may not:
  - Offer scope of appointment forms.
  - Accept Medicare enrollment applications.
  - Make phone calls or direct, urge or attempt to persuade beneficiaries to enroll in a specific plan based on financial or any other interests of the provider.
  - Mail marketing materials on behalf of plan sponsors.
  - Offer anything of value to induce plan Members to select them as their provider.
  - Offer inducements to persuade beneficiaries to enroll in a particular plan.
  - Conduct health screening as a marketing activity.
  - Accept compensation directly or indirectly from the plan for beneficiary enrollment activities.
  - Distribute materials/applications within an exam room setting.

## Plan Affiliations

Providers may:

- Release the names of plans with which they are affiliated.
- Announce plan affiliations through general advertising. Providers must make new affiliation announcements within the first thirty (30) days of the new contract agreement. However, new affiliation announcements that name only one plan may occur only once when using direct mail and/or e-mail. Additional communications must include all plans with which the provider contracts.
- Display affiliation banners, brochures and/or posters for all plans that have provided such materials and with which the provider is affiliated.

Providers should not:

- Make phone calls, direct, urge, offer inducements or attempt to persuade any prospective Medicare member to enroll in a particular plan.
- Suggest that a particular plan is approved, endorsed or authorized by Medicare.

## Plan Benefits

Providers should not compare plan benefits against other health plans, unless the materials were written or approved by CMS (for example, information generated through CMS' Plan Finder via a computer terminal for access by beneficiaries).

## Contact Information

When requested, providers may provide the plan's contact information to a beneficiary so that the beneficiary may contact the plan directly regarding an expressed interest in enrolling in a plan in which the provider participates.

However, for marketing purposes, providers shall not release a beneficiary's contact information to a plan or an agent unless the beneficiary requests that the plan contact him or her.

## Sales Presentations

Providers may allow health plans or plan agents to conduct sales presentations and to distribute and accept enrollment applications in their offices as long as the activity takes place in the "common areas" and patients are not misled or pressured into participating in such activities. ("Common areas" where marketing activities are allowed would include areas such as a hospital, nursing home or other health provider cafeteria, community or recreational rooms and conference rooms.)

Providers must not allow health plans to conduct sales presentations and distribute and/or accept enrollment applications in areas where patients primarily receive healthcare services. (These areas generally include, but are not limited to, waiting rooms, exam rooms, hospital patient rooms and pharmacy counter areas.)

## Marketing Materials

Providers may make available marketing materials about VHP and inform beneficiaries where they can obtain information on all available options within the service area (e.g., 1-800-MEDICARE or [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)). If providers choose to allow information for one plan, they must allow other plans affiliated with that provider to do the same.

Providers must not make available sales or plan promotional Medicare Advantage materials that are not CMS-approved (CMS-approved material would have a footer in the lower right corner with a Material ID assigned by the plan), nor should they mail marketing materials (e.g., enrollment kits) on behalf of plans with which they participate.

## Distributing Information

Providers may distribute CMS-approved “Plan Finder” information. They may print out and share such information from the CMS website with their patients.

Providers may provide links on their website to all plan enrollment applications and/or provide downloadable enrollment applications to all plans with which they participate. In the alternative, providers may feel free to offer a link to the CMS Online Enrollment Center (OEC).

Providers must not perform health screening when distributing plan sponsor information to patients. This is prohibited under MIPPA.

Providers are encouraged to participate in educational events, including health fairs. However, they must not engage in marketing activities at such events.

Providers must not accept enrollment applications from beneficiaries or offer scope of appointment forms to beneficiaries.

Providers must not expect or accept compensation, directly or indirectly, in consideration for the enrollment of a beneficiary or for enrollment or marketing activities.

Questions should be directed to Provider Services at 1-800-485-3793.

# **XI. Legal and Compliance**

## **Overview**

A sound Medicare Advantage (MA) Corporate Governance program requires adherence with legislation, regulation and general good practice. Compliance itself is the demonstrable evidence of an entity to meet prescribed standards and be able to maintain a history of meeting those standards, which form the requirements of an established compliance structure.

The MA Compliance Program provides a framework from which the organization can assess its compliance with applicable State and Federal regulations and established organizational policies and procedures.

In this section, Legal and Compliance refers to State and Federal regulations as well as Federal laws governing the Health Information Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA), the protection and security of a Member's Protected Health Information (PHI) and the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act.

## **The Compliance Program**

VHP has established a comprehensive Compliance Program and is committed to ensuring that all organizational areas are, and remain, compliant with applicable State and Federal regulatory requirements. The Compliance Program is an organizational value-based system that will identify, detect, prevent, correct and report suspected non-compliance with State and Federal regulatory requirements. VHP works collaboratively with State and Federal regulatory agencies to achieve the mutual goals of providing quality healthcare and the effective elimination of fraud, waste and abuse.

The Plan designed the Compliance Program and all efforts surrounding this program to establish a culture that promotes prevention, detection and resolution of conduct that may not conform to State and Federal laws, including Federal healthcare program requirements as well as the Plan's ethical and legal policies and standards of conduct.

In practice, the Compliance Program and the Code of Conduct effectively articulate and demonstrate the Plan's commitment to legal and ethical conduct.

## **Responsibilities**

The Compliance Program has responsibilities in three functional areas:

- Medicare Advantage Operational Compliance;
- Monitoring & Delegated Entity Oversight (MDO) and
- Compliance – Sales Oversight (CSO)

The following three sections detail of each areas responsibilities:

## **Medicare Advantage Compliance Operational Oversight**

This functional area includes:

- Managing regulatory affairs
- Distributing and providing guidance regarding interpretation of CMS Health Plan Management System (HPMS) released policy and other regulatory updates
- Ensuring operational and technical compliance across all operations and clinical areas via internal monitoring and audits and open lines of communications
- Enforcing disciplinary and corrective actions for compliance violations and deficiencies
- Ensuring the development and maintenance of operational and corporate policies and procedures
- Building and maintaining relationships with CMS
- Managing the review and approval of all collateral materials including sales and marketing as well as all Member, Agent and Provider materials

## **Compliance Monitoring & Delegation Oversight**

This functional area includes:

- Annual and routine monitoring of the activities of delegated entities and the various Business Areas
- Assignment and oversight of the Internal Corrective Action Plan process
- Validation of the timely implementation of regulatory mandates which may impact current processes and protocols
- Annual Risk Assessment
- Ensuring the appropriate and timely management of activities to prevent, detect and correct fraud, waste and abuse
- Providing oversight for the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

## **Compliance Sales & Marketing Oversight**

This functional area includes:

- Investigating allegations of agent misconduct
- Ensuring appropriate Agent training and certification
- Market Event Surveillance activities (i.e. event secret shopping)
- The Compliant registration of agent marketing/sales events with CMS
- Ongoing review and processing of the HPMS Complaints Tracking Module
- Agent Quality, including, but not limited to, Agent verification call monitoring, telephonic scope of appointment monitoring, monitoring applications for timeliness, etc.
- Ongoing auditing and monitoring of all Agent activities within the marketplace as well as oversight of sales support, which includes sales training, Agent contracting, Agent commissions and sales quality

## **Seven Elements of an Effective Compliance Program**

The Corporate Compliance Program fulfills all of the requirements as provided by the Office of Inspector General (OIG), Health and Human Services (HHS) and CMS for a comprehensive Compliance Program.

The seven elements of an effective Compliance Program are as follows:

1. Written policies and procedures
2. Designated Compliance Officer and Compliance Committee
3. Effective training and education
4. Effective lines of communication
5. Internal monitoring and auditing
6. Enforcement of standards through well-publicized disciplinary guidelines
7. Prompt response to detected problems through corrective actions

The Compliance Program, as part of each of these elements, addresses the prevention, detection and correction of potential compliance issues as well as the on-going oversight of Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA) by plan sponsors. Throughout the Compliance Program there are provisions for interpretive rules and guidance to help establish and maintain an effective Compliance Program to prevent, detect and correct FWA and potential Medicare program non-compliance.

VHP providers and contractors are defined by CMS as “first tier, downstream and related entities,” (FDRs) which are individuals or entities that furnish services to Medicare Advantage members under written agreement with the Plan or contracted entities. VHP is obligated under its CMS contracts to ensure that all these entities receive the Code of Conduct.



## **XII. Federal & State Regulations**

### **Overview**

There are a number of Federal Regulations that affect VHP's day-to-day operations. These regulations set the benchmarks by which the compliance department reviews all internal operational processes as well as external business initiatives and relationships.

These regulations include, but are not limited to:

- The Health Information Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- The Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA)
- The False Claims Act and Fraud Enforcement Recovery Act
- Physician Self-Referral Law (Stark Law)
- Anti-Kickback Statute
- Fraud, Waste and Abuse
- The HITECH Act

### **Health Information Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA)**

Congress introduced this act in 1996 to protect health insurance coverage for workers and their families when they change or lose their jobs. It also requires the establishment of national standards for electronic healthcare transactions and national identifiers for providers, health insurance plans and employers; and helps people keep their information private.

### **Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA)**

Congress introduced this act in 2008 to enhance the quality of healthcare, expand access to care and provide coverage for certain preventative services. MIPPA is addressed in more detail in a prior section of this Manual

### **False Claims Act and Fraud Enforcement Recovery Act**

The False Claims Act (31 U.S.C. Sections 3729-33) allows a private individual or "whistleblower," with knowledge of past or present fraud on the Federal government, to sue on behalf of the government to recover stiff civil penalties and triple damages. The person bringing the suit was formally known as the "Relator." The False Claims Act is also called the "Qui Tam statute."

Generally, only the Relator who is the first to file a lawsuit can receive a reward for reporting the fraud. Even if one person uncovers the fraud, someone else can file the lawsuit first and bar the first whistleblower from sharing in any recovery.

Congress strengthened and broadened the scope of the False Claims Act by passing the Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act (FERA) of 2009. FERA extends the liability for False Claims Act

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violations to claims not directly submitted to the government (e.g., the False Claims Act attaches for false claims presented to Medicare Advantage plans). FERA strengthened whistleblower protection, relaxed the standard for False Claims Act violations, and made retention of overpayments made to a provider a violation of the False Claims Act.

## **Physician Self-Referral Law (Stark Law)**

Congressional concern with the implications of self-referral arrangements led to the inclusion in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1989 (“OBRA 1989”) of a provision barring self-referral arrangements for clinical laboratory services under the Medicare program.

The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (“OBRA 1993”), known as “Stark II,” extended the ban, effective January 1, 1995, to an additional list of services and applied it to Medicaid at the same time. CMS has issued a series of implementing regulations. CMS issued “Phase III” of the final regulations September 5, 2007.

“Self-referrals” occur when physicians refer patients for services in which they (directly or indirectly) have a financial interest. This interest can be in the form of ownership or investment interest in the entity; it may also be a compensation arrangement between the physician and the entity.

In September 2010, CMS published the Medicare Self-Referral Disclosure Protocol (“SDRP”) which sets forth a process to enable providers to self-disclose actual or potential violations of the Stark Law. For further information on SDRP, please use the email [1877CallCenter@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:1877CallCenter@cms.hhs.gov) or call 410-786-4568.

## **Anti-Kickback Statute**

VHP is committed to conducting its business activities in full compliance with applicable Federal and State laws. In support of this commitment, VHP must ensure that all Providers adhere to the Federal Anti-Kickback Statute and state equivalents (the “Anti-Kickback Policy”), which applies to all covered persons.

The Anti-Kickback Statute states that anyone who knowingly and willfully accepts or solicits any remuneration (including any kickback, hospital incentive or bribe) directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, in cash or in kind, to influence the referral of Federal healthcare program business may face charges, including felony charges, and/or civil penalties such as being debarred from participation in federal programs.

Discounts, rebates or other reductions in price may violate the Anti-Kickback Statute because such arrangements involve remuneration to induce the purchase of items or services payable by the Medicare Program.

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In order to be permissible, an activity that implicates the Anti-Kickback Statute must qualify for protection under a specific Safe Harbor. For a complete list of Safe Harbor activities, please refer to the Medicare and Medicaid Fraud and Abuse Statute. (42 CFR Parts 1001 – 1005; Sections 1001.951 and 1001.952) or consult your legal counsel.

## **Fraud, Waste and Abuse**

Congress enacted Fraud, Waste, and Abuse in 2007 as part of the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005. This act requires entities to establish written policies providing detailed information about fraud, waste and abuse in Federal healthcare programs and to distribute these policies to employees, agents and contractors.

## **The HITECH Act**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was signed into law on February 17, 2009. Among many other things, the ARRA dedicates substantial resources to health information technology that supports the secure electronic exchange and use of health information.

Title XIII of Division A and Title IV of Division B of the Act are referred to as the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act, or HITECH Act. The HITECH Act includes a number of measures designed to broaden the scope and increase the rigor of HIPAA compliance. The HITECH Act expands the reach of HIPAA data privacy and security requirements to include the Business Associates of those entities (healthcare providers, pharmacies, and the like) that are subject to HIPAA. Business Associates are companies such as accounting firms, billing agencies, law firms or others that provide services to entities covered under HIPAA.

Under the HITECH Act, companies are now directly subject to HIPAA security and privacy requirements as well as to the same civil and criminal penalties that hospitals, pharmacies and other HIPAA-covered entities face for violations. Before HITECH came into force, Business

Associates that failed to properly protect patient information were liable to the covered entities via their service contracts, but they did not face governmental penalties.

The HITECH Act specifies that Business Associates will be subject to the same civil and criminal penalties previously imposed only on covered entities. As amended by the HITECH Act, civil penalties range from \$100 to \$50,000 per violation with caps of \$25,000 to \$1.5 million for all violations of a single requirement in a calendar year. Criminal penalties include fines up to \$50,000 and imprisonment for up to one year. In some instances, fines are mandatory.

## **State Regulations**

Many state regulations also have an impact on the Plan's day-to-day operations. Many of these regulations relate to Medicaid and/or relationships existing between governmental entities and VHP.

In addition, many states now have enforceable regulations related to HIPAA, the False Claims Act and Patient Anti-Broking or Anti-Referral Acts, which mirror the Federal regulations and, rather than being pre-emptive, are in addition to the Federal mandates under which VHP operates.

To address these regulations on a state-by-state basis would be too voluminous to include in this provider manual. However, the Compliance Department is always available to Providers to discuss any concerns or questions regarding the applicability of state regulations to our relationship with Providers.

## **XIII. Glossary and Abbreviations**

### **Glossary of Healthcare Terms**

#### **Abuse**

Incidents inconsistent with accepted medical or business practices, improper or excessive.

#### **Advance Directive**

A written document that states how and by whom a Member wants medical decisions to be made if that Member loses the ability to make such decisions for himself or herself. The two most common forms of Advance Directives are living wills and durable powers of attorney.

#### **Ancillary Services**

Healthcare services that are not directly available to Members but are provided as a consequence of another covered healthcare service, such as radiology, pathology, laboratory and anesthesiology.

#### **Benefit plan**

The schedule of benefits establishing the terms and conditions pursuant to which Members enrolled in VHP receive covered services. A benefit plan includes, but is not limited to, the following information: a schedule of covered services; if applicable, copayment, coinsurance, deductible and/or out-of-pocket maximum amounts; excluded services; and limitations on covered services (e.g., limits on amount, duration, or scope of services).

#### **Board-Certified**

Term describing a practitioner who has completed residency training in a medical specialty and has passed a written and oral examination established in that specialty by a national board of review.

#### **Claim**

A request by a healthcare Provider for payment for services rendered to a Member.

#### **Clean Claim**

A claim that has no defect or impropriety. A defect or impropriety shall include lack of required substantiating documentation or a particular circumstance requiring special treatment that prevents timely payment from being made on the claim. The term shall not include a claim from a healthcare Provider who is under investigation for fraud and abuse regarding that claim.

#### **Coinsurance**

A cost-sharing requirement under a health insurance plan that provides that a Member will assume responsibility for payment of a fixed amount or percentage of the cost of a covered service, where the cost is generally the allowed amount under the fee schedule.

#### **Complaint**

A dispute or objection regarding a Provider or the coverage, operations, or management policies of a managed care plan that has not been resolved by the managed care plan and has been filed with the plan or with the appropriate state Department of Insurance. A complaint is not the same as a grievance.

### **Coordination of Benefits (COB)**

The process to prevent duplicate payment of medical expenses when two or more insurance plans or government benefits plans provide coverage to the same person. The rules that determine which insurer provides primary or secondary coverage are governed by healthcare industry standards and, in some instances, by applicable regulatory agencies.

### **Copayment**

Cost-sharing arrangement in which the Member pays a specified flat amount for a specific service (such as an office visit or prescription drugs).

### **Covered Services**

Healthcare services for which a health plan is responsible for payment according to the benefit package purchased by the Member.

### **Credentialing**

VHP's review procedure in which potential or existing network Providers must meet certain standards to begin or continue participation in the network of VHP. The credentialing process may include examination of a Provider's certifications, licensures, training, privileges and/or professional competence.

### **Deductible**

Amount Member may be required to pay for covered services before VHP begins to pay for such services.

### **Disenrollment**

Process of termination of a Member's coverage.

### **Durable Medical Equipment (DME)**

Medical equipment, owned or rented, that is placed in the home of a Member to facilitate treatment and/or rehabilitation.

### **Emergency Services**

Any healthcare service provided to a Member after sudden onset of a medical condition that manifests itself by acute symptoms of sufficient severity such that a prudent layperson who possesses an average knowledge of health and medicine could reasonably expect the absence of immediate medical attention to result in:

- placing the health of the Member (or for a pregnant woman, the health of the woman or her unborn child) in serious jeopardy,
- serious impairment to bodily function, or
- serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part.

Emergency transportation and related emergency service provided by a licensed ambulance

service shall constitute an emergency service, if the condition of the Member is as described above.

**Encounter Data**

Data relating to treatment or service rendered by a Provider to a Member regardless of whether the Provider was reimbursed on a capitated or fee-for-service basis. Used in determining the level of service.

**Enrollment**

Process by which a health plan signs up groups and individuals for Membership.

**Explanation of Benefits (EOB)**

Statement that explains the benefits provided; the allowable reimbursement amounts; any deductibles, coinsurance or other adjustments taken; and the net amount paid.

**Fraud**

The intentional deception or misrepresentation that an individual knows to be false or does not believe to be true and makes, knowing that deception could result in some unauthorized benefit.

**Grievance**

A type of complaint you make about us or one of our network Providers or pharmacies, including a complaint concerning the quality of your care. This type of complaint does not involve coverage or payment disputes.

**Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO)**

Sometimes called “managed care organizations,” HMOs contract with doctors and hospitals who agree to accept their payments. In an HMO, you receive your care from the doctors, hospitals, and other Providers who contract with the HMO.

**Health Plan Employer Data Information Set (HEDIS)**

A core set of performance measures developed and managed by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) to assist employers and other purchasers in evaluating health plan performance. Also used by government agencies to monitor quality of care provided or arranged by health plans.

**Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**

Regulations regarding the use and disclosure of certain information held by “covered entities” (generally, healthcare clearinghouses, employer sponsored health plans, health insurers, and medical service Providers that engage in certain transactions.). Establishes regulations for the use and disclosure of Protected Health Information (PHI), which is any information held by a covered entity concerning health status, provision of healthcare or payment for healthcare that can be linked to an individual.

**Medicare Advantage Plan**

Medicare Advantage Plans are health plan options offered by private insurance companies that

are approved by Medicare. If you join one of these plans, you generally get all of your Medicare- covered healthcare through that plan. Medicare Advantage Plans (called MA Plans) combine Part A (hospital insurance) and Part B (medical insurance) together in one plan, and they can also be combined with Part D prescription drug coverage (called MA-PD Plans).

### **National Provider Identifier**

The number used to identify healthcare Providers in standard transactions, such as healthcare claims. The NPI is the only healthcare Provider identifier that can be used for identification purposes in standard transactions by covered entities. It eliminates UPIN numbers – multiple Provider numbers assigned by Medicare, Medicaid and private payers.

### **Network**

Group of physicians, hospitals, laboratories and other healthcare Providers who participate in a health plan's healthcare delivery system. The Providers agree to undergo VHP's credentialing process, follow VHP's policies and procedures, submit to monitoring of their practices and provide services to Members at contracted rates.

### **Out-of-Area Care**

Care for illness or injury that is delivered to Members traveling outside the designated service area.

### **Out-of-Network Care**

Care performed by Providers who do not participate in VHP's network.

### **Out-of-Pocket Expenses**

Payments toward eligible expenses that a Member funds for himself/herself and/or dependents, including copayments, coinsurance and deductibles.

### **Participating or Network Provider**

Facility, hospital, doctor or other healthcare Provider that has been credentialed by and has a contract with a health plan to provide services.

### **Primary Care Physician (PCP)**

A healthcare practitioner who, within the scope of his/her practice, supervises, coordinates, prescribes or otherwise provides or proposes to provide healthcare services to a Member, initiates Member referral for specialist care and maintains continuity of care for enrolled Members of an HMO.

### **Specialist**

Provider or practitioner who specializes in a particular branch of medicine, such as cardiology, dermatology, orthopedics or surgery.

### **Waste**

Acting with gross negligence or reckless disregard for the truth in a manner that could result in an unauthorized benefit.



## Abbreviations

**ADA**—Americans with Disabilities Act

**ASA**—American Society of Anesthesiologists

**CAD**—Coronary Artery Disease

**CAHPS**—Consumer Assessment of Health plan Survey

**CCI**—Correct Coding Initiative

**CDC**—Centers for Disease Control

**CHF**—Congestive Heart Failure

**CLIA**—Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments

**CME**—Continuing Medical Education (credits)

**CMS**—Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

**COPD**—Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

**CPT**—Current Procedural Terminology

**CRNA**—Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist

**CRNP**—Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner

**DO**—Doctor of Osteopathy

**DME**—Durable Medical Equipment

**DPM**—Doctor of Podiatric Medicine

**EAP**—Employee Assistance Program

**EDI**—Electronic Data Interchange

**E&M**—Evaluation and Management

**EPO**—Exclusive Provider Organization

**EOB**—Explanation of Benefits

**ESRD**—End-Stage Renal Disease

**FDA**—Food and Drug Administration

**HCC**—Hierarchical Condition Category

**HCFA**—Health Care Financing Administration

**HEDIS**—Health Plan Employer Data Information Set

**HIPAA**—Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

**HMO**—Health Maintenance Organization

**ID**—Identification

**IPA**—Independent Practice Association

**LPO**—Local Physician Organization

**MD**—Medical Doctor  
**MI**— Myocardial Infarction  
**MRA**—Medicare Risk Adjustment

**NCQA**—National Committee for Quality Assurance  
**NDC#**—National Drug Classification Code number  
**NP**—Nurse Practitioner  
**NPI**—National Provider Identifier  
**NSAIDs**—Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs

**OB-GYN**—Obstetrician-Gynecologist  
**OTC**—Over-the-Counter

**PA**—Certified Physician Assistant  
**PCP**—Primary Care Physician  
**PRO**—Peer Review Organization  
**PSA**—Prostate Specific Antigen

**QICC**—Quality Improvement Compliance Committee

**TrOOP**—True Out-Of-Pocket

**UB**—Uniform Billing code  
**UPIN**—Universal Provider Identification Number