

Arkansas Health & Wellness Provider Newsletter



A Step in the Right Direction

As we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, it's important to support our members' physical and mental health. Diet and exercise are critical, but due to extended social distancing guidelines, it can be a challenge for our members to get the [recommended 150 minutes of physical activity every week](#). Exercising at home works for some, but distractions in the home, lack of space, or other obstacles may make it difficult for others. The good news is that there is a form of exercise that benefits their physical and mental health while still adhering to the CDC's social distancing guidelines: walking.

Regular physical activity promotes overall physical health. According to the CDC, [walking is a great way to work toward a healthier lifestyle](#). This means that no matter where your patient is in their health journey, walking can help them work toward their goals. Walking outside is also a great way to get out of the house and enjoy the fresh air while still maintaining a safe distance from others.

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Walking is also beneficial for our members' mental health, as it provides an opportunity to interact with others in a healthy and safe way. While walking outside, they may see a neighbor or friend and can talk while maintaining a safe distance. During the pandemic, many have suffered from mental health problems due to loneliness and isolation, so it's important to socialize safely when possible.

Taking a walk outside can also reduce the effects of [seasonal affective disorder](#) (SAD) by exposing our members to more sunlight. Being outside in general can improve their mood and mental health by boosting their energy and serotonin levels.

Walking is less strenuous than other forms of exercise, and it improves overall health. As the weather warms up, people may be more willing to add one or two outdoor walks to their daily routines. We recommend encouraging your patients to make daily walks part of their health journeys. While it may seem small, any step in the right direction can be a step toward helping our members reach their best health.

Coding and Documentation Tips

Arkansas Health & Wellness values the partnerships we have with you, and we want to help you provide the best care possible to our members. This is why we maintain current coding and documentation guidelines for Ambetter and Wellcare by Allwell on our Provider Resources page.

Our Risk Adjustment and Quality Improvement teams work to provide you with the most up-to-date information regarding HEDIS®, CPT®, CPT II, ICD-10, and HCPCS coding and documentation guidelines.

Risk Adjustment and Quality Improvement coding tips are available on our website at [ARHealthWellness.com](https://www.arhealthwellness.com). From the Provider Resources dropdown menu, select either Wellcare by Allwell Coding Tip Sheets and Forms or Ambetter Coding Tip Sheets and Forms. Covered topics include cardiac arrhythmias, chronic kidney disease, COPD and asthma, congestive heart failure, telehealth, provider signature requirements, and more. Quality Improvement coding tips can be found at the bottom of the page, below Risk Adjustment tips.

Note that the information listed on our website is not all-inclusive and should be used as a supplemental reference only. For the most current ICD-10, CPT, CPT II, and HCPCS coding and documentation guidelines, visit [cms.gov](https://www.cms.gov). Official HEDIS measures are available at [ncqa.org](https://www.ncqa.org).

If you have questions or concerns about the coding tips we post, don't hesitate to contact us. You can reach our Risk Adjustment and Quality Improvement teams by calling us at 1-800-294-3557 (TTY: 1-877-617-0392). You can also reach our Provider Services team via email at Providers@ARHealthWellness.com. You can get additional HEDIS resources by contacting the Quality Improvement team at QI_AR_HEDIS@centene.com.

Continuity of Care – Provider Incentive Program

The Continuity of Care (CoC) provider incentive program is designed to support your outreach to members for annual visits and condition management. Providers earn incentive payments that range from \$100 to \$300 for proactively assessing and addressing all of a patient’s current conditions as identified on their appointment agendas, and returning completed appointment agendas to us. Qualifying members have a 2022 claim with a provider within the organization.

Key 2022 CoC Program Dates:

Start Date:

February 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022

Products:

Ambetter and Wellcare by Allwell

Key Elements of the CoC Program

- ▶ Use the Secure Provider Portal to access targeted member lists and appointment agendas.
- ▶ Assess all conditions identified on the appointment agenda (valid/present or resolved/not present).
- ▶ Submit claims using applicable ICD-10 codes that support valid conditions.
- ▶ Complete appointment agendas and return them to us electronically. Appointment agendas may be submitted via fax, email, or the Secure Provider Portal.

Early Submission Bonus: Providers can earn an additional \$50 on all completed appointment agendas returned for members with a date of service between January 1, 2022, and June 30, 2022. Completed appointment agendas must be returned by July 31, 2022, to earn the extra incentive.

Provider Webinars

Each quarter, we host a variety of provider webinars to discuss health plan news, updates, and incentive program details. These webinars are designed to increase our dialogue with you, as well as offer important training and information that help better facilitate office administrative tasks. These topics can include orientations for providers new to our network, tips for navigating the provider portal, requirements and deadlines for our provider incentive programs, and topical updates for each quarter.

Our [provider webinars page](#) lists upcoming webinars and hosts a sign-up form where you can register to attend future webinars. You can also request topics for future webinars and view material from past presentations. The fastest way to get provider news and alerts, including information about upcoming webinars, is to sign up for our provider email distribution list using the form on our [provider resources page](#).



Helping Patients with Asthma

According to the CDC, [more than 25 million Americans have asthma](#). It can be caused by a variety of factors, including genetics, environment, and even occupation. Because patients with asthma are at greater risk of being hospitalized from COVID-19, it's important that we give our members the tools and education they need to manage their asthma and protect themselves from respiratory illnesses.

After diagnosis, you can help your patients manage their asthma by identifying their triggers, creating a treatment plan, and prescribing asthma medicines as needed.

Some of the most common asthma triggers include:

- ▶ Dust mites
- ▶ Tobacco smoke
- ▶ Air pollution
- ▶ Pets
- ▶ Mold
- ▶ Respiratory infections
- ▶ Allergies

The types and amounts of asthma medicine a patient needs depend on the severity of their condition. There are two main types — quick-relief and long-term control. Quick-relief medicines can help patients get their asthma attacks under control soon after they happen. Long-term control medicines, on the other hand, can help patients experience fewer attacks with milder symptoms. Long-term medicines will not help during an asthma attack, though, so patients may need to be prescribed both quick-relief and long-term control medicines.

The CDC's National Asthma Control Program (NACP) has developed a set of strategies to help asthma patients manage their symptoms. With [EXHALE](#), patients can learn the following strategies:

- E Education** on self-management.
- X X-tinguishing** smoking and unnecessary exposure to smoke.
- H Home visits** to reduce asthma triggers and increase self-management education.
- A Achievement** of guidelines-based medical management.
- L Linkages** and coordination of care across settings.
- E Environmental practices** to reduce asthma triggers from indoor, outdoor, and occupational sources.

Protecting Patients During COVID-19

Patients with moderate, severe, or uncontrolled asthma are more likely to be hospitalized from COVID-19. To help protect these patients, talk to them about what they can do to protect themselves. Encourage your patients to get vaccinated against COVID-19, and to get their booster shots. Emphasize the importance of wearing a mask that covers the nose and mouth, social distancing, avoiding crowds, and using hand sanitizer.

Resources for Patients

One of the best ways to help your patients succeed is to provide them with the tools they need to manage their conditions. The resources below can be used to help inform your patients about their asthma and teach them how to manage their symptoms.

[EXHALE Guide for People with Asthma, Their Families, and Their Caregivers \(PDF\)](#)

[Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America \(AAFA\) — Asthma Triggers](#)

[National Environmental Education Foundation \(NEEF\) — COVID-19 and People with Asthma](#)

Medicare and Marketplace Medical Record Retrieval Projects (MRR)

We are currently engaged in our annual medical record retrieval project for Ambetter and WellCare by Allwell. We are required by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to submit complete diagnostic data regarding members enrolled in the health plans. Accordingly, Arkansas Health & Wellness requests your cooperation to facilitate a medical record review.



We have engaged Change Healthcare and Ciox Health (Ciox) to conduct the medical chart review. A representative from one of these vendors will work with you to provide retrieval options as well as a list of the requested members' medical records.

MRR Project Dates:

WellCare by Allwell

October 2021-June 2022 – Requesting charts for dates of service January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021

Ambetter

November 2021-April 2022 – Requesting charts for dates of service January 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021

For more information about programs and questions regarding ICD-10 coding and documentation, please contact the Risk Adjustment Department at RiskAdjustment@ARHealthWellness.com

Managing Symptoms in Members with Allergies

With warmer weather on the way, many are looking forward to spending more time outside for exercise and recreation. Members with seasonal allergies may need additional support in managing their symptoms during the spring months. Additionally, those with stinging insect allergies may be more likely to experience insect stings in the spring and summer. Talk with your patients about any allergies they have and discuss their treatment options.

When recommending over-the-counter medicines to alleviate seasonal allergies, be sure to discuss questions and concerns your patients may have about these medicines, including possible side effects.

The CDC recommends the [following measures](#) to mitigate the effects of pollen:

- ▶ Check local pollen forecasts and try to limit time outdoors when levels are high.
- ▶ Take allergy medications as recommended by your doctor.
- ▶ Try to limit touching your eyes when you are outside, and always wash your hands when you go inside.
- ▶ Shower and change your clothes after being outside. This helps remove pollen from your skin and hair.
- ▶ Keep windows closed when pollen levels are high.
- ▶ Use high-efficiency filters in your heating and cooling system. Make sure your system can use high-efficiency filters and that using these filters doesn't violate the system's warranty.

As with any chronic condition, remember to document allergies in your patient's medical record during their annual wellness visit.

Policy Updates and Changes

We share important clinical and payment policy updates with our providers on a regular basis. When policies are updated, we will alert you via mail 90 days prior to the effective date of the new or updated policy.

What Are Clinical Policies?

Clinical policies are a set of guidelines used to help administer health plan benefits via prior authorization or payment rules. They include policies relating to evolving medical technologies and procedures, as well as pharmacy policies.

All Arkansas Health & Wellness clinical policies apply to both Ambetter and Wellcare by Allwell members. These policies may feature either an Arkansas Health & Wellness or Centene heading.

We use InterQual® criteria for medical technologies, procedures, or pharmaceutical treatments for which an Arkansas Health & Wellness clinical policy does not exist.

What Are Payment Policies?

Payment policies are guidelines used to assist in administering payment based on accepted principles of correct coding. They are used to help identify whether healthcare services are coded correctly for reimbursement.

Each payment rule is sourced by a coding principle. These include claims processing guidelines referenced by CMS, state-specific claims reimbursement guidance, and health plan clinical policies based on the appropriateness of care and medical necessity.

Occasionally, we may employ a vendor that applies payment policies to specific services. In these cases, the vendor's guidelines may be used to determine whether a service has been coded correctly. Additionally, other policies or contract terms may determine whether a technology, procedure, or treatment not addressed by Arkansas Health & Wellness is payable by the health plan.

Where Can I Find More Information?

Clinical and payment policies for Arkansas Health & Wellness are available online at [ARHealthWellness.com](https://www.arhealthwellness.com). From the For Providers menu, select Provider Resources, then Clinical & Payment Policies.

If you have questions or concerns about the policies listed on our website, we're happy to talk with you. Please contact our Medical Management team at 1-800-294-3557 (TTY: 1-877-617-0392).

In-Office Assessments – Provider Incentive Program

The Optum In-Office Assessment (IOA) program promotes early detection and ongoing assessment of chronic conditions for Ambetter and WellCare by Allwell members. Providers earn an incentive payment of \$100 for assessing and addressing all the patients' conditions. The information on the assessment should be used to assist you in addressing care opportunities during the patient encounter.

Key elements of the Optum IOA program:

Utilizing information on the form at the time of the encounter to assess all conditions identified.

Submitting assessments and supporting medical record documentation within 60 days of the latest date of service to allow for early recognition of remaining care opportunities and additional outreach to improve quality of care.

Working with your assigned Health Care Advocate (HCA) to maximize earning potential.

2022 In Office Assessment Project Dates:

Start Date:

Q1, December 31, 2022

Products:

Ambetter and WellCare by Allwell

Pharmacy Benefits – Preferred Drug Lists

Arkansas Health & Wellness has preferred drug lists (PDLs) for both Ambetter and Wellcare by Allwell. The PDLs provide you with information on which drugs we cover. Both brand-name and generic drugs that have been approved by the FDA are included in the PDL.

Note that our PDLs are not intended to be a complete list of all drugs covered by the health plan. For example, not all dosage forms or strengths of a drug on a PDL may be covered. Additionally, some drugs that are not listed on a PDL may be covered if they are proven to be medically necessary for a patient.

Arkansas Health & Wellness reviews our PDLs periodically, and the information provided in our PDLs is subject to change. Drugs may be added or removed, or additional requirements may be implemented for the continued use of a specific drug.

Our most current PDLs are available online via our health plan websites. Refer to the information below to learn how to access the PDLs for Ambetter and Wellcare by Allwell.

Ambetter from Arkansas Health & Wellness

You can access the Ambetter PDLs by visiting Ambetter.ARHealthWellness.com. From the For Providers menu, select Drug Coverage. The most current PDLs will be available in a PDF format. You can also find prior authorization forms on this page.

Wellcare by Allwell

The Wellcare by Allwell PDL is available online at Wellcare.ARHealthWellness.com. From the homepage, select Pharmacy Benefits, then select List of Drugs (Formulary) beneath the Pharmacy Resources heading.

The PDLs for Ambetter and Wellcare by Allwell are also accessible from the Pharmacy page on ARHealthWellness.com.

Questions?

Arkansas Health & Wellness is happy to assist you with any questions or concerns you may have regarding our pharmacy benefits. If you have questions, please contact us at 1-800-294-2557 (TTY: 1-877-617-0392).