



Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information for Providers

UCare is committed to protecting our members and the community from the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). The COVID-19 situation is changing quickly, and we are monitoring changes closely. To assist our provider partners in navigating this changing situation, UCare has created a [COVID-19 Information for Health Care Providers](#) page on our Provider Website.

Topics areas include:

- Adding Practitioners/Locations on a Temporary Basis
- Authorizations
- Billing and Payment
- Credentialing
- Pharmacy and Formularies
- Telehealth

Since the beginning of April, we have updated the following sections:

- Billing and Payment – Revised several items, added information about how claims will be handled as we update our systems.
- Pharmacy and Formularies (this is a new section).
- Adding Practitioners/Locations on a Temporary Basis (this is a new section).
- Credentialing – Made slight change to wording.
- Telehealth – Updated entire section.
- Authorizations – Added information about how UCare will extend previously approved prior authorizations for elective surgeries. Updated information about authorization and notifications requirements for post-acute care.

UCare has also developed a [COVID-19 Information for UCare Members](#) web page.

UCare is monitoring inquiries for common questions and will update these sites with additional information as it becomes available. We recommend visiting the sites regularly for the latest information.

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UCare Provider Website
www.ucare.org/providers
Provider Assistance Center
612-676-3300
1-888-531-1493 toll free

UCare's Provider Manual Q2 Update

UCare has updated the following chapters of the [Provider Manual](#) with the UCare Behavioral Health Team name change to Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Team: Restricted Recipient / Restricted Member Program, Medical Necessity Criteria for Services Requiring Authorization, Clinical Practice Guidelines - Medical & Behavioral Health and Behavioral Health. Specific updates are called out in the Appendix.

Market Withdrawal Alert – Ranitidine (Zantac) Products

On April 1, 2020, the FDA requested a market withdrawal of all remaining over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription ranitidine (Zantac) drugs. This means there will no longer be access to ranitidine drugs in the United States. The FDA has found a contaminant known as N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA) in ranitidine products. The NDMA levels can rise over time and when stored at higher than room temperatures. These increased levels pose a risk to patients and can cause increased risk of cancer if patients are exposed to higher NDMA levels over extended periods of time.

The FDA recommends patients should stop taking any OTC versions of ranitidine. Patients taking ranitidine as a prescription medication should speak to their prescriber before stopping the medication. UCare is sending letters to the impacted members and their prescribers informing them of this market withdrawal. Your patients may contact you to discuss alternative treatment plans. Alternatives available on all UCare formularies are famotidine, nizatidine, cimetidine, omeprazole, pantoprazole and lansoprazole.

In addition, UCare will be removing ranitidine products from our formularies in accordance with the timelines and processes set out by our regulators. [Read the April 24 bulletin](#).

Note to providers: There have been recent reports of supply shortages for the drug famotidine.

For additional information, including directions on safe disposal of this medication, please visit <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/questions-and-answers-ndma-impurities-ranitidine-commonly-known-zantac>.

PAC Holiday Closure

UCare and the Provider Assistance Center (PAC) will be closed **Monday, May 25** for Memorial Day. If you need assistance that day, log into the [Provider Portal](#) or you can use the self-service options on our interactive voice response system.



Adult Rehabilitative Health Services

Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARMHS) are rehabilitative services aimed at enabling members to develop and enhance psychiatric stability, social competencies, personal and emotional adjustment, independent living and community skills, *when these abilities are impaired by the symptoms of mental illness*. The services also support member ability to retain stability and functioning if the member is at risk of losing significant functionality or being admitted to a more restrictive service setting without these services. In addition, the services instruct, assist and support a member in areas such as medication education and monitoring, basic social and living skills, mental illness symptom management, household management, employment-related issues/skills or transitioning to community living.

UCare follows [Minnesota Department of Human Services \(MN DHS\) state statute](#) and the [MN DHS provider manual](#) for the delivery and management of ARMHS services and expects providers of the service to do the same. UCare's Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Team is committed to assisting our members and consequently the providers who are delivering ARMHS services. To avoid adverse ARMHS decisions, the team is happy to assist providers with questions about UCare's threshold limits or the prior authorization process required, should a member need ARMHS services beyond the threshold. Below are a few reminders that may assist you when serving UCare members.

For services to be covered by UCare, the member must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be actively enrolled in Minnesota Senior Care Plus (MSC+), Minnesota Senior Health Options (MSHO), UCare Connect, UCare Connect + Medicare, Prepaid Medical Assistance Program (PMAP) or MinnesotaCare (MnCare)
- Be 18 years old or older
- Have a primary diagnosis of a serious mental illness determined by a Diagnostic Assessment ([State guidelines for a diagnostic assessment](#))
- Have a completed Level of Care Utilization System (LOCUS) assessment that indicates a Level 3 or Level 2
- Have a significant impairment in functioning in three or more areas of the Functional Assessment (FA) domains specified in statute ([State requirements for functional assessments](#))

COVERED SERVICES*

The following services are considered billable ARMHS:

- Basic living and social skills
- Certified peer specialist services
- Community intervention
- Individual treatment plan
- Medication education
- Transition to community living services

*Except for community intervention services all services must be provided face-to-face. *UCare will not cover services when there are more than one ARMHS provider involved in the members care concurrently. ** Special exceptions may be made during the COVID 19 pandemic.*

NON-COVERED SERVICES

The following services are not covered ARMHS:

- Patient transporting services
- Services provided and billed by providers not enrolled to provide ARMHS
- ARMHS performed by volunteers
- Provider performance of household tasks, chores, or related activities, such as laundering clothes, moving the patient's household, housekeeping, and grocery shopping for the patient
- Time spent "on call" and not delivering services to patients
- Activities that are primarily social or recreational, rather than rehabilitative
- Job-specific skills services such as on-the-job training
- Time included in case management services
- Outreach services to potential patients
- Room and board services
- Services provided by more than one provider concurrently

Please refer to the authorization grid and ARMHS payment policy found on [UCare's website](#) as a reference tool for payment and authorization questions or call the Mental Health and Substance Use Intake Team at 612-676-6533 or 1-833-276-1185.

References:

https://docs.ucare.org/filer_public/files/pp_armhs_sc15p0049a4.pdf – link to payment policy

https://docs.ucare.org/filer_public/files/bhauth_2020_medicaid.pdf – link to auth grid

https://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=dhs16_155980 – link to Functional Assessment

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/9505.0372/> – link to DA statute

https://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=id_058153 – link to provider manual ARMHS

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/256B.0623> – link to ARMHS statute

Support a Healthy Lifestyle for UCare Members

UCare is committed to helping keep our members healthy and safe. To help you understand which programs are available to the UCare members you serve, we will highlight a health program for eligible members each month. These programs and services help our members lead a healthy lifestyle. Visit UCare's [Health and Wellness](#) web page to learn more.

HEALTH CLUB SAVINGS

All UCare health plan members are eligible to participate in the Health Club Savings benefit. Eligible UCare members who belong to a participating health club can receive a reimbursement of up to \$20 in their health club membership fees each month. To participate, UCare members can show their UCare Member ID card to sign up at a participating location.

UCare Medicare, UCare Medicare with M Health Fairview & North Memorial and EssentiaCare members can participate in Health Club Savings if they are not participating in SilverSneakers and their club is not in the SilverSneakers network.

Other Details:

- No monthly visit requirement for Medicare members
- Participating health clubs include:
 - Select [Life Time Fitness](#)
 - Select [Healthy Contributions](#) clubs
 - Select [National Independent Health Club Association \(NIHCA\)](#) clubs

Learn more about participating in [Health Club Savings](#).

OVER THE COUNTER (OTC) BENEFIT Q1 USAGE UPDATE

UCare Medicare and UCare Medicare with M Health Fairview & North Memorial plan types have a \$25 quarterly OTC benefit through Healthy Savings. These members can use their OTC benefit to purchase eligible items like band aids, allergy medication, vitamins and more. Member can purchase these eligible OTC items at any of the 314 [participating stores](#) across Minnesota, online at healthysavings.com/ucare and over the phone via the number on the back of their Healthy Savings card.

In the first quarter of 2020, over 35% of these members activated their Healthy Savings OTC card and many of them used their benefit. In addition to the OTC benefit, members also have access to Healthy Savings food discounts at participating grocery stores.

REMINDER: MEMBERS CAN SAVE MONEY ON HEALTHY FOOD

Through UCare's Healthy Savings program, members receive special discounts on healthy foods at the grocery store on items such as milk, eggs, fruits, vegetables and so much more. In 2019, UCare members saved over \$37,000 at more than 180 grocery stores across Minnesota. Participating stores include Walmart, Cub Foods and Hyvee. To learn more about the Healthy Savings program, visit healthysavings.com/ucare.

Ineligible Provider List Updated April 8, 2020

Contracted UCare providers must make sure that they, their company, owners, managers, practitioners, employees and contractors are not on the UCare Ineligible Providers List.* Providers should search the list of UCare Ineligible Providers on a regular basis, and before hiring or entering into contracts with individuals to provide services or items to UCare members. The most current list can be found under Provider Inquiries on the [Provider Portal](#). Please reference Chapter 5 of the UCare Provider Manual for additional information.

Questions regarding the UCare Ineligible Providers List should be directed to compliance@ucare.org.

*Please note: This list is in addition to any prior and ongoing communications regarding ineligible individuals that network providers may receive.

Keep Important News Coming to Your Inbox

Many workplaces set email security to screen out certain messages that could be spam. Often, emails that you signed up to receive end up in your spam or junk email folders. By adding the sender's email address to your safe senders or contact list, you can help ensure you receive these messages. Each email program has different ways to do this, so check with your IT department or email provider for instruction. To make sure you keep receiving *Health Lines* and other provider communications from UCare, please add providernews@ucare.org to your safe senders list.

Documentation Improvement: COVID-19

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world.¹ Those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions.

In order to accurately report COVID-19, it is important to clearly document the condition in the patient's medical record. Provider documentation must include the following:

- Presenting symptoms.
- If testing occurred and if the test results are available, the results should be documented on the record.
- Document positive result and confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Link any additional respiratory disease (e.g., viral pneumonia) or signs or symptoms of respiratory disease (e.g., shortness of breath or cough).
- Document any comorbidities such as acute respiratory failure, ARDS, COPD, PNA, CHF, MI, etc.²

Providers should document as much detail as possible in the medical records including laboratory testing, etc. Be sure to also document and report any underlying chronic conditions that may contribute to the care plan. Clear documentation of COVID-19 will help clinical communication, data and patient care.

1. CDC. What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others. April 15, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>.
2. NJHA. Coding and Documentation of COVID-19. <http://www.njha.com/media/594200/NJHA-HBS-Coding-and-Documents-2020-04-15.pdf>. Accessed April 2020.

UCare Foundation COVID-19 Funds Support Communities in Need

The UCare Foundation is providing \$500,000 in short-and long-term assistance to benefit Minnesotans impacted by COVID-19. The funds support needs related to social isolation, telehealth, food insecurity and personal protective equipment.

The new UCare Foundation COVID-19 funds comes in two phases: 1) short-term immediate aid to the community; and 2) longer term infrastructure grants up to \$25,000 to small provider groups and community clinics for enhancements to provide care in a COVID-19 environment.

EXAMPLES OF UCARE FOUNDATION COVID-19 FUNDING

Social isolation

- Purchasing technology tools such as iPads to enable video interactions with Hennepin Healthcare OB/GYN practitioners and to help clients of Leading Age Minnesota (nursing home and assisted living locations).
- Providing engagement tools such as board games, word-search and puzzles to senior centers, nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

Telehealth

- Supplying remote home monitoring equipment for managing chronic medical conditions – kit contents include thermometers, blood pressure monitors and weight scales – for use by patients of the University of Minnesota Department of Family Medicine, NorthPoint Health & Wellness, Federal Urban Health Network of 10 Minnesota Federally Qualified Health Center ACOs.
- Providing program supports for individuals with chronic medical conditions, mental health and substance use disorders to Wellness in the Woods, a rural mental health services organization with counseling and telephone support accessible statewide.

Food insecurity

- Supporting processes that identify individuals experiencing food insecurity during the pandemic and connect these individuals to appropriate resources.
- Collaborating with local food banks and food shelves through tote bag donations and food sponsorships.
- Distributing MATTERbox snack packs in partnership with Health Fair 11 to the Twin Cities Mobile Market, People Serving People, Higher Ground Shelter, Mary's Place, Hennepin Healthcare and Carris Health (Wilmar, MN).
- Supplying Minnesota Recovery and the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority with toothbrushes and toothpaste.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Providing disposable medical masks to group homes, transportation providers and non-physician small allied providers.

The UCare Foundation is a community-directed initiative focused on supporting innovative services, education, community outreach and research that improve health.

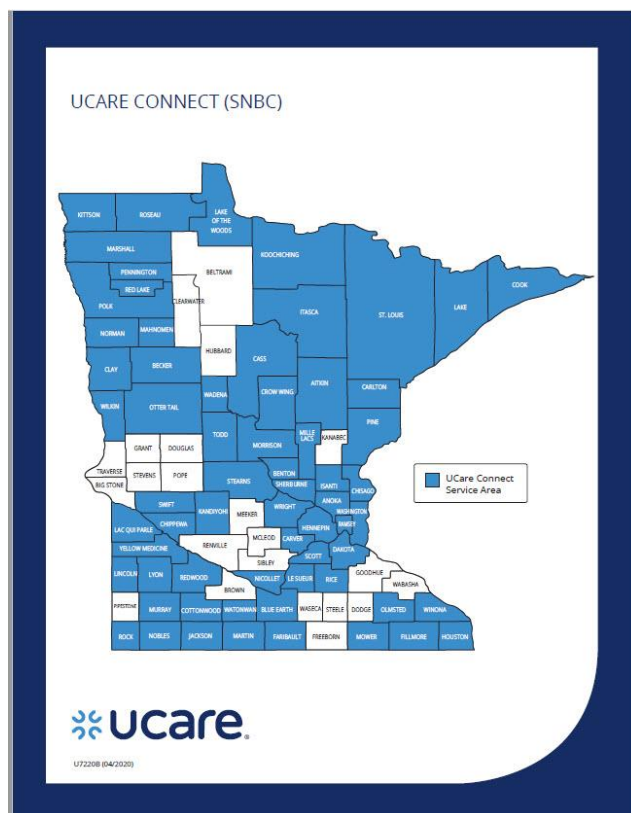
UCare Connect (SNBC) Expands to Todd, Wadena and Morrison Counties June 1, 2020

UCare Connect, our Special Needs BasicCare Plan (SNBC) for people eligible for Medical Assistance (MA) and a certified disability, is expanding to Todd, Wadena and Morrison counties beginning June 1, 2020. With the addition of these three counties, UCare Connect is now available in 65 Minnesota counties.

UCare Connect gives members all the benefits of MA, plus UCare's added benefits and services, including:

- Care coordinators
- Additional dental coverage and help scheduling appointments
- At-home wellness kits
- Savings on healthy foods at participating grocery stores
- And much more

Additional information is available online at ucare.org/connect. See the map for the UCare Connect coverage area.



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