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## Medicaid redeterminations

As you know, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) announced a pause in Medicaid procedural terminations until it implements an ex-parte (autorenewal) process for individuals, per Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) guidance. CMS is requiring DHS to reinstate impacted individuals from the July, August and September cohorts. The first procedural terminations will be Dec. 31, 2023 for the October renewal cohort. See the [DHS Mitigation Plan 2.0](#) for more information.

According to the current DHS mitigation plan, we know that counties are taking on a significant amount of work to reinstate impacted members and manually conduct ex-parte renewals. UCare greatly appreciates your efforts in this process and strives to support you in this effort. We are working with DHS to make sure our communications are accurate and that our teams have the most up-to-date information when working with our members.

UCare offers rides to MNSure Navigator organizations and county or tribal agencies within 90 days of the member's renewal date. Members can call Health Ride at 800-864-2157 to arrange transportation.

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## UCare County Satisfaction Survey complete – Thank you!

Thanks to all who responded to UCare's 2023 County Satisfaction Survey. We had 154 responses this year. Your feedback helps shape our work. We are busy analyzing and internally sharing county feedback. We will identify appropriate action items to improve the work we do with you and the services we provide our members. Look for future newsletter articles on actions we will take in 2024. Thank you for your feedback!

## Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP) benefit updates for 2024

The Minnesota Legislature made significant changes to MHCP in the 2023 legislative session. Here are the key changes taking place for our MHCP members in 2024.

### Benefit Changes

On Jan. 1, 2024, or upon federal approval and notice by the state if earlier, dental coverage for non-pregnant adults will include all medically necessary dental services.

Other additional benefits include:

- Coverage for gender-affirming surgery
- Seizure detection devices
- Payment of long-acting contraceptives provided during hospitalization for childbirth
- Recuperative care, a model of care that prevents hospitalization or re-admission through post-acute medical care and support services for members experiencing homelessness

Look for future updates from UCare and the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) about effective dates and coverage policy details.

### Intensive Treatment in foster care

Intensive Treatment in foster care is now called Children’s Intensive Behavioral Health Services.

### Cost sharing

Cost sharing was removed for all Medicaid (Medical Assistance) plans, and MinnesotaCare cost sharing changed for members with copays.\*

MinnesotaCare cost sharing for members with copays*		
Category	2023 Cost sharing	2024 Cost sharing
Prescription drugs (per prescription)		
Anti-psychotic drugs	\$0	\$0
Brand name prescription drugs	\$35	\$25
Generic prescription drugs	\$10	\$10
Brand name multisource drug (preferred status)	\$10	\$10
Copoly maximum	\$70	\$70
Non-preventive visit (except for mental health or substance use disorder services)	\$30	\$28
Non-routine dental	\$15	\$0
Emergency department visit	\$100	\$100
Inpatient hospital	\$250 per admission	\$250 per admission
Outpatient hospital	\$0	\$0
Ambulatory surgery	\$0	\$0
Radiology service	\$45	\$45
Eyeglasses	\$25	\$10
Durable medical equipment	0% coinsurance	0% coinsurance

\*Cost sharing exemptions remain the same, including: MinnesotaCare children, pregnant members, American Indians receiving care from Indian Health Services (IHS), American Indians in a federally recognized tribe, substance use disorder services and preventive services.

## Supplemental benefits

New benefits for UCare's Minnesota Senior Health Options (MSHO) members with hypertension, diabetes, congestive heart failure or ischemic heart disease include:

- A \$50 monthly household utilities allowance that will be loaded to the member's UCare Healthy Benefits+ Visa® card
- One ride per week to participating grocery stores for members who qualify for the Healthy Savings food allowance

Enhancement to existing UCare's MSHO benefits:

- Expansion of caregiver support through Caregiver Assurance with the removal of qualifying conditions

UCare Connect + Medicare members with hypertension, diabetes or a lipid disorder will receive these additional benefits in 2024:

- Healthy Savings food allowance will increase to \$50 per month
- One ride per week to participating grocery stores for members who qualify for the Healthy Savings food allowance

In 2024, all UCare Connect + Medicare members are eligible for an easy-to-use activity tracker plus personal emergency response system (PERS). This device features:

- 24/7 emergency call-for-help to a support agent directly through the watch
- Step and heart rate tracking
- Built-in GPS

It is ready-to-use right out of the box. It does not need to be set up or paired with a cell phone or Wi-Fi. Members with hypertension who use the activity tracker plus PERS are eligible for one blood pressure monitor per year.

Both UCare's MSHO and UCare Connect + Medicare members will receive the following new benefits:

- Quarterly over-the-counter (OTC) allowance through CVS to purchase eligible OTC items including surgical masks, vitamins, allergy medications, first aid supplies, toothpaste and more
- Added coverage for therapeutic massage, acupuncture and routine chiropractic care to support eligible members with pain management

No new supplemental benefits will be added in 2024 for UCare's Medicaid-only SNBC product, UCare Connect, or UCare's Minnesota Senior Care Plus (MSC+) plan.

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## Transportation request process enhancements

To best assist our members, and anyone calling on their behalf, UCare updated our process to find rides for members who call at least two business days in advance. Should a ride not be able to be found on the initial call, UCare created a team who will continue reaching out to transportation providers to find a ride until the day of the appointment. This will eliminate the need for members, or those working on their behalf, to call back multiple times to find a ride.

As a reminder, for regularly occurring appointments such as dialysis, UCare can schedule all upcoming rides up to 30 days out. This eliminates the need to call for each appointment when a ride is needed.

## 2024 Pharmacy Benefit Manager change

Beginning Jan. 1, 2024, UCare will transition to a new Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM), Navitus Health Solutions. Navitus will process pharmacy claims, perform first-level prior authorization reviews, manage UCare's pharmacy network and manage the Pharmacy Help Desk for all UCare plans. All UCare members will receive a new member ID card for 2024 with new pharmacy billing information.

Beginning in 2024, UCare is teaming up with [Costco Mail Order Pharmacy](#) as our new mail order pharmacy. Members don't need to be a Costco member to use this service. Members may ask providers to send their prescriptions to Costco Mail Order Pharmacy in 2024.

Visit [ucare.org/pbm](https://ucare.org/pbm) for more information about these 2024 changes.

Members can call the [customer service](#) number on the back of their member ID card if they have questions.

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## Six-month timely filing of claims for Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP)

The Minnesota Legislature amended Minnesota Statute, §256B.69, subd. 5a directing managed care organizations (MCOs) to implement timely filing deadlines of six months for initial claims for MHCP products. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) instructed all MCOs to immediately implement this change effective for claim dates of service of Aug. 1, 2023, and later. As a result, UCare updated its timely filing requirements from 12 months to six months, effective Aug. 1, 2023, for Prepaid Medical Assistance Program (PMAP), MinnesotaCare, Minnesota Senior Care Plus, UCare's Minnesota Senior Health Options (MSHO), UCare Connect and UCare Connect + Medicare.

UCare revised its Provider Manual to reflect this change. The following is the updated language in the Timely Filing section of the Claims & Billing chapter:

Effective for dates of service Aug. 1, 2023, for Medicaid products, including dual plans where UCare is the primary payer, initial claims must be received no later than six months after the date of service. For all other product lines, including Medicare and Individual and Family Plans, initial claims must be received no later than 12 months after the date of service. All claims must be submitted in a format approved by UCare and in compliance with state and federal law.

## NEW for 2024: UCare Healthy Benefits+ Visa Card

In 2024, we will combine UCare reward and allowance programs onto one card -- the UCare Healthy Benefits+ Visa Card.

The UCare Healthy Benefits+ Visa Card offers flexibility, choice and ease of use with access to:

- Healthy food allowance (for UCare Connect + Medicare and UCare's MSHO members with qualifying chronic conditions)
- Utility allowance (for UCare's MSHO members with qualifying chronic conditions)
- Grocery discounts
- Rewards and incentives



Members who have a rewards balance on their UCare Rewards Benefit Mastercard are encouraged to spend the balance before Dec. 31, 2023. On Jan. 1, 2024, any unused rewards funds will be transferred to the new UCare Healthy Benefits+ Visa card for active members.

If a member is leaving UCare in 2024, they won't be able to use the reward dollars after Dec. 31, 2023.

Members can check their UCare Rewards Benefit Mastercard balance by calling 1-866-609-4651 toll free, TTY 711.

Any reward vouchers submitted to UCare in December 2023 will be processed and loaded to the new UCare Healthy Benefits+ Visa card in 2024.

The Health Promotion Team continues to see great engagement with our preventive care rewards and incentives program, which resulted in a significant influx in returned vouchers the second half of this year. Because of this, the expected time to see the reward dollars added to the member's UCare Rewards Benefit Mastercard has increased to 6-8 weeks. Please communicate this to any members inquiring about their earned rewards. Only reach out to the Health Promotion Team regarding member rewards if the member mailed in their voucher before September 2023.



## Medicare enrollment periods and Special Enrollment Periods (SEP) for UCare's MSHO and UCare Connect + Medicare

Individuals can only join, switch or drop a plan at certain times, called enrollment periods. We are in the middle of the Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) that runs from Oct. 15 – Dec. 7 with a Jan. 1 effective date.

More information on enrollment periods is available at [medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov).

If certain events happen, like an individual moves or loses other coverage, they can make changes during Special Enrollment Periods (SEPs). Individuals who are dual eligibles (have both Medicare and Medicaid) have quarterly SEPs allowing them to make plan changes once per quarter, during the first three quarters of the year. MSC+ and UCare Connect members may use these quarterly SEPs to upgrade to UCare's MSHO or UCare Connect + Medicare. More information on SEPs is available at [Special Enrollment Periods | Medicare](#).

UCare receives and reviews UCare's MSHO and UCare Connect + Medicare applications, however, CMS and DHS have final ruling.

County staff and individuals can call UCare's Special Needs Plan (SNP) Sales team at 612-676-3554 for more information.

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## One Pass

One Pass is a complete fitness solution for an individual's body and mind, available at no additional cost for eligible members in UCare's MSHO, UCare Connect and UCare Connect + Medicare plans. Members have access to more than 23,000 participating fitness locations nationwide, plus:

- Thousands of on-demand and live-streaming fitness classes
- Workout builders to create their own workouts and walk them through each exercise
- Home fitness kits for members who are physically unable to get to a participating fitness location or who reside at least 15 miles from a participating fitness location
- Personalized, online brain training program to help improve memory, attention and focus
- Social activities, community classes, and events available for online or in-person participation

Members can go to [ucare.org/onepass](https://ucare.org/onepass) or call 877-504-6830 (TTY 711), 8 am – 9 pm, Monday – Friday to get their One Pass member code. Members bring their One Pass member code to a participating fitness location to start their free standard membership.

## Combatting social isolation through community education class discounts

Social isolation poses many mental and physical health risks. Those experiencing social isolation experience higher risks of high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, depression, cognitive decline and more.

UCare is working to reduce social isolation among our members by offering discounts on in-person and virtual community education classes to encourage social connection. We partner with 100+ community education programs across Minnesota, and our members can receive up to a \$15 discount on classes at a partnering community education program. With this discount, we hope to remove the cost barrier and help our members stay engaged in their communities.

To receive the discount, members supply their UCare member ID information when enrolling in the class. Members can check a local community education catalog or contact the local school district for class times and locations.

Do you know a community education program that would like to participate in UCare's discount program? Please have the community education program staff contact UCare at [wellness@ucare.org](mailto:wellness@ucare.org).

To learn more about the UCare Community Education Discount program, visit [our community education classes website](#).

### UCare Companion Service Program

The UCare Companion Service Program will end on Dec. 31, 2023, and will not be available in 2024.

Here are other resources for members looking for companion services in MN:

- [Senior companion services](#): 888-205-3770 or
- Senior LinkAge Line: 800-333-2433 (TTY 711)

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## UCare network

UCare Provider and Pharmacy directories are available online:

- [PMAP, MinnesotaCare, MSC+](#)
- [UCare's MSHO](#)
- [UCare Connect](#)
- [UCare Connect + Medicare](#)

We also provide an online [provider search tool](#) so anyone can search by provider name, provider type, geographic location and more. Search results are printable and can be sent via email. The list includes dental, chiropractic and pharmacy networks, as well as medical facilities and providers.

## 2024 Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Star Ratings

CMS rates Medicare on a five-star quality ratings system, with five being the highest score based on a series of clinical and performance measures. UCare’s 2024 Medicare Star Ratings reflect performance in 2022 and 2023 on measures including chronic condition management, health maintenance, patient experience, customer service and pharmacy services. Star Ratings help shoppers learn what plans perform best in important areas and are displayed on [medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) in the Medicare Plan Finder. Plans with Star Ratings of at least four stars receive bonus payments that are used to offer additional benefits to members.

CMS continues to make significant changes to this program, changes that make it harder for plans to achieve high ratings. These changes caused a decrease in Star Ratings among health plans nationwide; for example, 37% of plan scores dropped from last year. For the 2024 plan year, there are only 31 five-Star plans nationally, compared to 57 in 2023. Despite the challenges, EssentiaCare and our MSHO plan **improved** this year, and UCare Medicare maintained its high rating of 4.5 out of five Stars!

CMS also rates qualified Individual & Family Plan (IFP) products on a five-star ratings system. Plans are rated on 2022 performance in areas such as clinical quality management, enrollee experience, as well as plan efficiency, affordability and management. The ratings help consumers make informed decisions and are displayed on the MNsure marketplace. For the third year in a row, UCare’s IFP plans received four out of five stars!

<b>CMS Ratings</b>
<b>UCare Medicare</b> 4.5 out of 5 Stars
<b>EssentiaCare</b> 4.5 out of 5 Stars
<b>UCare’s MSHO</b> 4 out of 5 Stars
<b>IFP</b> 4 out of 5 Stars
<b>UCare Connect + Medicare</b> 3.5 out of 5 Stars
<b>UCare Medicare with M Health Fairview and North Memorial</b> 3.5 out of 5 Stars







## UCare's Mobile Dental Clinic is on the road!

Check our MDC [schedule](#) and note these upcoming dates and locations below:

**December 4 – 8**  
 Minneapolis (South)  
 Diamond Lake Church  
 5760 Portland Ave. S

**December 11 – 15**  
 North Mankato  
 Nicollet County Social  
 Services  
 2070 Howard Drive

**December 18 – 22**  
 Forest Lake  
 Faith Lutheran Church  
 886 North Shore Drive

