

To: AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Specialty Providers

Date: July 21, 2021

Subject: New AmeriHealth Caritas “Connecting Our Members to Premier Ancillary Services & Specialists” (COMPASS) Program

Summary: Summary: Beginning **August 25, 2021**, AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana will implement AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASSSM, a referral optimization initiative that will give referring Primary Care Providers (PCPs) information about specialists’ performance as measured by established and objective quality and efficiency performance measures. Initially, AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS will assess the performance of specialist providers, but ancillary service providers will be included in a later phase.

At AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana, our mission is to help people get care, stay well, and build healthy communities. To help achieve that mission, we are committed to providing members access to effective, efficient, and quality services. The AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS program is designed to support that objective.

This program, which is voluntary for PCPs and specialists, strives to increase member access to high-performing specialists by:

1. Twice per year, calculating the quality and efficiency of specialists’ performance based upon established and objective quality and efficiency performance measures,
2. Using that information to rank specialists in our provider network by a defined set of episode categories,
3. Assigning a AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS score to in-network specialist providers who meet the minimum number of episodes to participate in the program based on their ranked performance against their peers and,
4. Sharing the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS scores of providers who are participating in the program with PCPs (and specialists) in the form of an AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Referral Guide for each episode category, broken down by provider specialty and hospital referral region (HRR).

What are AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS episode categories?

The episode categories used in the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS program have condition-specific definitions that group the entire range of care used to treat a clinical condition for a specific time period across the continuum of care. The episode categories are defined by PROMETHEUS Analytics® and are used across the health care sector. Episode category descriptions are included in the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Program Guide.

What are AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS episodes?

An AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS episode is a measurement of a single occurrence that meets the criteria of an episode category (e.g., an asthma episode includes services occurring 30 days prior to the date of the trigger service and lasts until the end of the study period, or until the patient's date of death).

What episode categories are being implemented?

AmeriHealth Caritas will implement the initiative for the following episode categories:

- Bipolar Disorder
- Depression & Anxiety
- Pregnancy
- Schizophrenia
- Substance Use Disorder
- Trauma & Stressors Disorders

The publication of AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS scores is limited to the program participating specialists providing care that meets the criteria within the aforementioned set of episode categories for each of the bi-annual reporting periods.

How are AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS scores calculated?

In-network specialty providers are scored based on their ranked performance against peers meeting the episode category criteria within a HRR. HRRs are geographic delineations that use zip code area groupings to define unique healthcare market regions. After implementation, provider scores will be updated twice annually in the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Referral Guide for program participating providers.

AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS scores are calculated utilizing established and objective quality and efficiency performance measures through the following steps:

1. Attribute episodes to individual specialist providers based on episode category criteria. To qualify for program participation, individual specialist providers must be attributed to five or more episodes within a 1-year reporting period for chronic episode categories and a 2-year reporting period for procedural episode categories.
2. Calculate episode case rates.
3. Apply episode-specific risk adjustment.
4. Evaluate quality performance and efficiency performance.
5. Rank provider performance against like peers within the specialist's HRR.
6. Calculate AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS scores.
7. Publish AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS scores for providers who are participating in the program.

How will the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Referral Guide be used?

The AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Referral Guide will be a resource for PCPs who would like to access additional information to make informed referrals for their patients. The Referral Guide will be updated twice annually and will be available to both PCPs and specialists via our secure provider portal, NaviNet. The Referral Guide will be organized by episode category, provider specialty, and HRR. Providers with performance above the network average, as compared to peers, and who are participating in the program will be indicated by an AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS score of two and a half or more in the Referral Guide. Program-participating specialty providers with scores lower than two and a half will be listed in the Referral Guide in alphabetical order but will not have a score indicated. Specialist providers who do not meet the minimum number of attributed episodes for the episode category associated with their specialty, or who are part of a practice that has opted out of the program will not be listed in the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Referral Guide.

Although PCPs will have access to the Referral Guide to aid in making referrals, they are not required to utilize the Referral Guide in their referral process.

Referrals made on the basis of the information presented in the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Referral Guide should not affect a member's ability to choose who they see for in-network specialty care. Members have the right to decide the specialist from whom they ultimately receive care.

Can a specialist provider opt out of this program?

Practices may opt out of the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS program; individual specialists within a practice may not opt out individually. If your practice does not wish to appear in the initial AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Referral Guide, a practice representative must submit a written request to your [Provider Network Management Account Executive](#) by **August 18, 2021, which is at least seven (7) days prior** to the Referral Guide deployment on **August 25, 2021**. The request must include the practice name, practice Tax ID, and acknowledgement that once the opt-out request is submitted, no individual specialists within the practice will be listed in the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Referral Guide.

Practices wanting to opt out post-implementation must submit a request **at least fourteen (14) days prior** to the next scheduled AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Referral Guide update, which occurs bi-annually on or about April 1st and October 1st. Providers will be updated if the report publication date changes.

Once a practice has opted out, the specialist practice providers will not be included in AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Referral Guides unless a formal request is made by the practice to participate.

Failure to opt out of the program is equivalent to agreeing to participate. By agreeing to participate in the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS program, the practice permits AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana to publish the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS score of each specialist within your practice as described above and in the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Program Guide.

For detailed information about the AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS program (including a complete list of episode category descriptions, the opt-out process, and how to appeal AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS program determinations), please refer to the [AmeriHealth Caritas COMPASS Program Guide](#) on our website.

Questions: Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the care of our members. If you have questions about this communication, please contact AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Provider Services at 1-888-922-0007 or your [Provider Network Management Account Executive](#).

Missed an alert?

You can find a complete listing of provider alerts on the [Provider Newsletters and Updates](#) page of our website.

Where can I find more information on COVID-19?

AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana has updated its website to streamline communications and important notifications about COVID-19. Please visit <http://amerihealthcaritasla.com/covid-19> for up-to-date information for both providers and members, including frequently asked questions, and important provider alerts from AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana and the Louisiana Department of Health.