

From CHOICE to MISSION: What Health Centers Need to Know During the VA Transition Period to the Community Care Network (CCN) Program

NACHC Webinar, June 5, 2019

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- 1) What reimbursement rate will health centers be eligible to receive for approved services they provide Veterans?**

Response: During the transition to the Community Care Networks, TriWest will be the VA's Third-Party Administrator for all locations not included in one of the newly awarded Community Care Network contracts. To be eligible for payments during this transition, health centers must be certified by TriWest as a Patient Centered Community Care (PC-3) provider. TriWest will pay approved providers their established FQHC Medicare PPS rates. The VA is in the process of awarding contracts to administer parts of the Community Care Networks, including the payment for services rendered by approved community providers. At this point, two of the six regional contracts (Regions 1 & 2) have been awarded. Optum received both contracts, and they will pay approved providers their established FQHC Medicare PPS rates.

- 2) What is the timeline for awarding the Community Care Network contracts for the remainder of the US—Regions 3,4,5,6?**

Response: The VA had selected a contractor for Region 3, but that award was challenged and is currently being reviewed. Contracts for the other Regions are being reviewed, but the VA has not provided a date for when they will be awarded.

- 3) If a health center's providers were CHOICE providers with TriWest, are they automatically converted to PC-3 providers by TriWest?**

Response: No—health centers must initiate this request by submitting a "PC-3" provider application to TriWest.

- 4) Does a health center have to be an approved provider by TriWest or Optum (depending on the health center's location) to provide urgent care and receive payment? If yes, can health center applications be fast tracked?**

Response: Yes, both TriWest and Optum require a health center to be an approved provider. For TriWest, all FQHC contract requests are fast tracked at this time. Please

submit requests for contracts to the FQHC@Triwest.com email, and you will get a contract and copy of the application for review and completion.

5) How will eligible Veterans who live in one of the US freely-associated countries (FSM, Palau, and the Marshall Islands) be impacted by the MISSION Act? Will FQHCs in these locations be eligible to participate in Community Care Networks?

Response: The VAPCC (PC3) program includes Hawaii, Guam, CNMI and American Samoa, but does not include the US freely associated countries in the Pacific.

6) In the states where Optum has been awarded Community Care Network contracts (Currently, Regions 1 & 2), how do health centers get information about the provider networks they are building?

Response: Health centers can submit a request through Optum's contracting mailbox, vaccnprovidercontracting@optum.com. Health centers will need to submit the following information: Business Name; State; Phone Number; Email Address; Tax ID; and NPI.

7) What is the best way to contact TriWest about issues related to health centers being providers of care to Veterans?

Response: Health centers can email TriWest at: FQHC@triwest.com.

8) Can one search the TriWest Community Care Provider Network?

Response: No—this is not publicly available information.

9) Do health centers have to sign a new contract to be part of a community care network?

Response: Yes—even centers who have had CHOICE or “PC3” contracts will need to execute a new contract with the entity responsible for the Community Care Program in a specific Region. As noted above, the only entity currently identified is Optum for Regions 1 and 2.

10) Can Veterans schedule appointments directly with FQHCs and have the care received be covered and reimbursed by one of the VA's third-party administrators?

Response: Under the new Community Care Program, VA staff will refer Veterans directly to community providers and will directly schedule appointments. Veterans can also choose to schedule their own appointments with support from local VA staff.

11) How does a Veteran find out which community providers he or she can go to?

Response: At this point, a Veteran should contact the Business Office or the Care Coordination Office at the VA Medical Center that is nearest them. Community based outpatient centers (CBOC) do not have responsibility for this function.

12) Are Care Coordination Offices being established at all VA Medical Centers?

Response: At this point, the VA's intent is to establish these offices in all Medical Centers. Work has begun to achieve this objective in all parts of the country, regardless of the status of awarding the Community Care Network contract.

13) How long does it take to establish a "PC3" contract with TriWest?

Response: Once TriWest staff have the signed contract and completed application from the FQHC, processing can be completed in 4-6 weeks.

14) Does the community provider have to complete the Secondary Authorization Review (SAR) or Request for Services (RFS) or can it be completed by the community provider's nurse or aide?

Response: The SAR or RFS can be completed by the provider's nurse or aide. To ensure that you get the care you feel is most appropriate approved by VA, please be specific.

15) Are there any circumstances where Veterans are eligible to receive coverage for dental health services?

Response: It depends on several factors, including military history and current living situation. Based on these factors, VA places Veterans into a benefits class with specific benefits assigned to each class. The following website provides detailed answers for most situations: <https://www.va.gov/health-care/about-va-health-benefits/dental-care/>

16) Are there other VA issuances addressing the Community Care Program that health centers should be aware of?

Response: The VA posts updates regularly on its blog and community care webpages. Please see:

https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/providers/Community_Care_Network.asp

The following link provides access to a map of the geographic regions covered by CCN:

<https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/docs/programs/CCN-Regions-Map.pdf>