

# Highmark Wholecare Practitioner Excellence (HWPE) Pediatric Shift Care Incentive Program



# Welcome to the Highmark Wholecare Practitioner Excellence (HWPE) Pediatric Shift Care Incentive Program!

At Highmark Wholecare, we value the important role that practitioners play in serving our members. Highmark Wholecare would like to welcome you to the Highmark Wholecare Practitioner Excellence (HWPE) Pediatric Shift Care Incentive Program. This Program supports our mission to improve the health and wellness of the individuals and the communities we serve by providing access to integrated, superior health care.



# Table of Contents

- Eligibility Criteria ..... 4**
  
- Medicaid Quality Performance Requirements ..... 5**
  - General Guidelines..... 5
  - Program Evaluation and Scoring..... 6



When you see this icon, click it to return to the table of contents.

This document is intended as a guide and is not all-inclusive. The information contained within does not guarantee compliance with Highmark Wholecare’s incentive programs. Always refer to the National Guidelines for complete coding and technical specifications. Coding may be subject to change based on National Guidelines and CMS updates. Examples of potential coding opportunities for metric compliance and exclusion are provided in this document. The examples provided are meant for guidance only. Listing of a code in this document does not equate to coverage under Highmark Wholecare’s medical policy.

This information is issued on behalf of Gateway Health Plan, Inc. d/b/a Highmark Wholecare, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Highmark Wholecare provides Medicaid coverage for Blue Shield in 14 counties in central PA and Blue Cross Blue Shield in 14 counties in western PA. Highmark Wholecare provides Medicare Dual-Eligible Special Needs Plans (HMO D-SNP) for Blue Shield in 17 counties in northeastern PA, 13 counties in central PA, 5 counties in southeastern PA, and for Blue Cross Blue Shield in 27 counties in western PA.

Highmark Wholecare offers HMO plans with a Medicare Contract. Enrollment in these plans depends on contract renewal.

# Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for participation in this Program, shift nursing providers must have a minimum of 3,500 monthly authorized shift care hours at the entity level. Shift care agencies who meet the required number of authorized hours at the entity level are automatically eligible for and included in the Program, with no additional opt-in requirement. The 2026 HWPE Pediatric Shift Care Incentive Program includes quality performance from dates of service April 1, 2026–Dec. 31, 2026.



# Medicaid Quality Performance Requirements

## General Guidelines

The following is to assist your practice with understanding eligibility criteria, requirements for Program inclusion, and general best practices related to the Program.

This measure requires an entity have a minimum of 3,500 monthly authorized hours in order to qualify to be scored. Providers with the required number of authorized hours are automatically eligible for and included in the Program, with no additional opt-in requirement.

Providers may earn incentive payment through percentage point improvement on the number of uncovered authorized hours year-over-year (if they achieve a percentage point improvement ranging from 1 through >10 over 2025 performance in the number of uncovered authorized hours—that is if a lower rate of uncovered authorized hours is better). Payment is calculated based on each authorized previously uncovered hour (for example, 3 percentage point improvement earns \$5 per authorized previously uncovered hour).

Providers are eligible for incentive payment based on available funds. The payment will be awarded to the shift nursing provider who is attributed to the member on the last day of the quarter. The measurement period for the Program will run Q2–Q4 2026. Quarterly payments will be calculated based on authorized hours through the end of each quarter, with the initial payment for Q2 expected by the end of Q3, and the final payment for Q4 expected by the end of Q1 2027. In the event of any residual DHS funds, providers may be eligible for a bonus payment. Any potential bonus would be paid to providers by June 30, 2027.

**Example of a payment for the Program:** Provider A has 100,000 authorized hours per quarter with a benchmark of 25% of those hours being uncovered. At the end of the first quarter, the provider submits 50,000 hours with an uncovered hourly rate of 22%, for a 3 percentage point improvement. This 3 percentage point improvement is the equivalent of 1,500 hours. For this payment, the provider would earn \$5 multiplied by 1,500 hours, or \$7,500 for the quarter.

Percentage Point Improvement	Payment
<5	\$5
5–10	\$10
>10	\$15

In addition to payment for percentage point improvement, providers may also earn incentive payment for maintaining an authorized covered hours rate of 80% or greater throughout the program year. Incentive earned for maintaining a rate of 80% or greater will be paid based on eligible funds remaining after the allocation of funds based on percentage point improvement (for example, \$x.xx\*x number of authorized covered hours).



## Program Evaluation and Scoring

Highmark Wholecare will measure provider success in the HWPE Pediatric Shift Care Incentive Program by monitoring performance on a quarterly and annual basis. Providers will receive an electronic quarterly scorecard outlining their member-specific numerator compliance. The quarterly scorecard will be sent electronically in conjunction with each quarterly incentive payment.

If you have any questions on the program, your scorecard, or your incentive payment, please contact [HWC\\_ProviderEngagementTeam@highmark.com](mailto:HWC_ProviderEngagementTeam@highmark.com) for assistance.

