Special Bulletin

Highmark Plans Transition of Essential Plan Administration to Wellpoint Starting January 1, 2025*

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield in Western New York is pleased to announce our plan to expand our collaboration with Wellpoint Partnership Plan, LLC (formerly Amerigroup Partnership Plan, LLC) to administer and manage services for our Essential Plan members. We are preparing for this transition to be **effective January 1, 2025**.

Wellpoint Partnership Plan, LLC (Wellpoint) currently manages Highmark's Medicaid Managed Care (MMC), Health and Recovery Plan (HARP), and Child Health Plus (CHP) in Western New York as well. Our collaboration started in 2016 and has allowed us to work together to provide dedicated, quality service to our MMC, HARP, and CHP members.

What You Should Know

If you currently see patients who are members of Highmark's MMC, HARP, or CHP plans, the processes to submit authorization requests, claims, and receive reimbursement for Essential Plan members will be familiar to you. If not, we will communicate detailed guidance on how to perform those transactions soon on our websites and through email. Please note the following:

- These changes do <u>not</u> apply to Highmark's commercial, Affordable Care Act, or Medicare Advantage plans.

- Essential Plan members will receive notification about this transition in September. They will also receive new identification (ID) cards, ID numbers, and prefixes before the benefit year begins. Please request their new information when they visit your office/facility starting in January.

- Wellpoint will begin reaching out to providers currently contracted with Highmark for the Essential Plan in July to ensure you are part of the Wellpoint IPA network for Essential Plan.

Prepare for the Transition

To ensure a smooth transition for our valued providers, both Highmark and Wellpoint will communicate with you regularly regarding this transition in the coming months, but there are a few things that you can do now to prepare:

- **Watch your mail/email inbox.** Wellpoint will start sending IPA contract offers or amendments to providers currently contracted with Highmark for Essential Plan in the next few weeks. Please review and return your contract to Wellpoint as quickly as possible, so that we can ensure a seamless transition for your organization.

- **Update your contact information.** Ensure your contact information at Highmark, including mailing and email addresses, is updated for us to effectively communicate with you regarding this transition. You can review and update your information as follows:
    - Log into Availity Essentials.
    - Choose New York state.
    - Click on Payer Spaces and choose the Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield (WNY) plan.
    - Scroll down and select Provider Data Maintenance under the Applications tab.

- **Sign up for eSubscribe.** It's Highmark's mailing list for news and announcements regarding this transition, as well as other critical network information.

- **Register for Availity.** If you are not already registered for Availity Essentials – the provider portal for both Highmark and Wellpoint – please do so now. For details, visit the Register and Get Started with Availity Essentials webpage. If you are already registered for the portal, there is no need to re-register.

Questions

If you have any questions about these changes, please contact Highmark's Provider Service Center at **800-950-0051**.

Thank you for your partnership and dedication to caring for our members.

Pending state approval.

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