

Provider Potentially Preventable Readmission Review (PPPR) program – 14-day readmission reviews

Frequently asked questions

Overview

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan conducts a medical record review of hospital readmissions that fall within 14 days of a prior inpatient discharge (referred to as the index admission) at the same hospital or an affiliated hospital.

These quality reviews investigate for the causes and preventability of the readmission. This review process follows the **Provider Potentially Preventable Readmission Review (PPPR) program** developed by the Washington Health Care Authority (HCA), Washington State Hospital Association, hospital representatives and the Apple Health managed care organizations (MCOs).

We've compiled a list of frequently asked questions to assist hospitals with the readmission review process.

What happens if a readmission occurs within 14 days that is deemed to be potentially preventable?

We'll request complete records of both admissions to determine whether the readmission was preventable.

How is a provider potentially preventable readmission (PPPR) defined?

A readmission is considered "potentially preventable" if there was a reasonable expectation that it could have resulted from any of the following:

- The quality of care provided during the initial admission
- Clinical instability of the member at the time of discharge
- Inadequate discharge planning, discharge process and/or discharge follow-up and care

What happens if it's determined the readmission was preventable?

If we determine the readmission was preventable, we'll recoup payment for the second admission. We'll also recoup payment if we don't receive complete clinical records within 30 days of the records request.

How is the payment recouped?

The hospital may refund the readmission claim or UnitedHealthcare Community Plan will adjust the claim and offset future payments.

Are there exclusions to this policy?

Yes. Common exclusions include:

- Readmission for reasons unrelated to conditions or care from the first admission
- Hospitalization with a discharge status of "left against medical advice" for prior admission
- Planned readmissions, including but not limited to:
 - Inpatient psychiatric care
 - End of life and hospice care
 - Obstetrical claim admissions after an antepartum admission
 - Neonatal inpatient services
 - Required treatments for cancer
 - Repetitive, planned treatments or procedures for conditions such as chronic anemia, burn therapy and renal failure

- Planned therapeutic or procedural admissions following diagnostic admissions when the therapeutic treatment clinically could not occur during the same admit

For a complete list of exclusions, please see [Washington Administrative Code \(WAC\) 182-550-2950](#).

What's the dispute process if I disagree with a determination that the readmission was preventable?

The 3-step dispute process is as follows:

1. Reconsideration
 - You have 30 calendar days from the date of the denial letter to submit a reconsideration. This is reviewed by UnitedHealthcare Community Plan.
 - You can use the **Claims tool** on the Provider Portal to submit the reconsideration
2. Appeal
 - You have 30 calendar days from the date of the reconsideration denial letter to submit an appeal. This is reviewed by UnitedHealthcare Community Plan.
 - You can submit the appeal 1 of 2 ways:
 - Online: Use the [Claims tool on the Provider Portal](#)
 - Mail:
UnitedHealthcare Community Plan
Attention: Formal Claim Appeals
P.O. Box 31364
Salt Lake City, UT 84131-0364
3. Final dispute review with HCA
 - If you receive an appeal denial letter, you can submit a final dispute review within 30 calendar days from the date of the appeal denial letter to UnitedHealthcare
 - We'll submit a dispute on your behalf to HCA
 - We have 14 calendar days to gather all related materials and complete the submission to HCA
 - HCA will review all related documentation and will make a final determination on the dispute within 30 calendar days and issue their determination letter directly to the hospital and UnitedHealthcare

Where can I learn more about this policy?

See the HCA [Inpatient Hospital Services Billing Guide](#) for more information.

Who can I call if I have questions?

If you have questions, please contact your hospital advocate or call UnitedHealthcare Provider Services at **866-574-6088**.