

Quality-Based Shared Savings Program (QSSP)

Frequently Asked Questions

Overview

As a UnitedHealthcare network care provider, you have options on where your patients, who are our commercial plan members, receive their surgical care. Like you, we're looking for new ways to achieve positive outcomes, which is one of the reasons we created the Quality-Based Shared Savings Program (QSSP). QSSP is a pilot program for qualifying care providers in select markets.

With QSSP, you have the opportunity to join other care providers and share a quarterly distribution for savings earned by performing clinically appropriate procedures at designated facilities and meeting certain quality metrics. The following frequently asked questions offer more details about the program and how to participate.

Frequently Asked Questions

Eligibility and Enrollment

Is QSSP available everywhere?

No. QSSP is only offered in California markets right now.

If the program is in my market, am I eligible for the distribution of Shared Savings?

To participate in QSSP, you must have a Participation Agreement with UnitedHealthcare that includes eligible commercial products. If you're invited to join, you'll receive an invitation letter and a QSSP Amendment to your Participation Agreement.

Care providers reviewed as part of UnitedHealthcare's Premium Designation Program who didn't pass the quality portion of the evaluation may not be eligible to participate in QSSP. If you have any questions, please contact your Provider Advocate.

Do physician assistants (PAs) or co-surgeons qualify?

No. At this time, QSSP is only available to primary care providers on qualifying QSSP cases.

How can I enroll?

Review the QSSP Amendment sent to you in your invitation letter and check that your contact information is correct. If required, sign and return to the listed address. If you have questions, contact your Provider Advocate.

Key Points

We created the Quality-Based Shared Savings Program (QSSP) for qualifying care providers in select markets.

You have the opportunity to join in on a Shared Savings distribution by performing clinically appropriate procedures at designated facilities and meeting certain quality metrics.

Is there an enrollment period, or can I join at any time?

Please review your QSSP Amendment for the program's effective date. You can start to share in savings after the effective date. New physicians at your practice or those who missed the launch deadline are welcome to join the program on a rolling quarterly basis.

Do all of my cases qualify, or just my UnitedHealthcare ones?

QSSP is sponsored by UnitedHealthcare, so only procedures performed for your patients, who are our commercial plan members, are eligible. The program doesn't include Medicare Advantage or UnitedHealthcare Community Plan (Medicaid) cases.

Certain UnitedHealthcare commercial cases also may not qualify for the incentive. Some self-funded benefit plans administered by us may choose not to participate in value-based incentive programs like QSSP. Products purchased on the exchanges also aren't eligible. For more information, please contact your Provider Advocate.

Shared Savings Distribution

When will the shared savings distribution occur?

QSSP shared savings based on quality performance will be distributed on a quarterly basis.

Will I receive a quarterly statement?

Yes. Care providers participating in QSSP will receive a report with a comparison of their clinical performance against the program thresholds, along with the shared savings total located on the Provider Portal.

Does QSSP affect my Participation Agreement with UnitedHealthcare?

No. Your existing relationship with UnitedHealthcare will stay as is, and the current rates for providing services to our plan members will be unchanged, regardless of the incentive amount you earn.

If your UnitedHealthcare Participation Agreement is terminated for any reason, your participation in QSSP will also end. However, the termination of QSSP or your participation in the program's pilot will not automatically terminate your UnitedHealthcare Participation Agreement.

How long will the program last?

Right now, QSSP is a pilot and we aren't sure how long it will last.

We're committed to growing successful, value-based programs for care providers and their patients, who are our plan members. We'll use QSSP results and feedback to make adjustments and/or decisions related to the program and how long it'll last.

Do I need to tell plan members about QSSP?

Yes, we recommend you share a disclosure statement with your patients, who are UnitedHealthcare plan members – certain state laws require you to do so. Copies of our suggested disclosure statement to have signed or posted in your office are available at [UHCprovider.com](https://www.uhcprovider.com) > Reports and Quality Programs > [Quality Shared Savings Program \(QSSP\)](#).

Where can I find out more information on outpatient groupers referenced in the QSSP Amendment?

To learn more about outpatient groupers, please visit UHCprovider.com > [Claims, Billing and Payments](#) > View Outpatient Procedure Grouper (OPG) Exhibits.

How were the designated facilities chosen?

To be selected as part of QSSP, designated facilities must meet certain criteria, including, but not limited to:

- Be an ambulatory surgical center credentialed and contracted with UnitedHealthcare for the applicable commercial products
- Be accredited with the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC), Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) or American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities (AAAASF)
- Have an in-network anesthesiologist available

What are the designated facilities in my area?

For a list of designated facilities near you, please visit UHCprovider.com > Reports and Quality Programs > [Quality Shared Savings Program \(QSSP\)](#) > Designated Facilities.

QSSP is a voluntary program. Our list is meant to illustrate designated facility options where your patients, who are our plan members, may receive a lower cost, higher quality health care experience for clinically appropriate procedures. Any final decision about where a procedure is performed is ultimately up to the discretion of the primary surgeon and their patient.

Does QSSP apply to other surgery centers where I operate?

QSSP was created to help promote quality care and an enhanced patient experience in a cost-effective care setting appropriate for UnitedHealthcare plan members. That's why the QSSP shared savings pool only applies to procedures performed at designated facilities.

Are my practice partners eligible if they don't currently work at a designated facility?

All in-network care providers interested in performing procedures at a designated facility are eligible for QSSP. To become credentialed at a designated facility, they'll need to reach out directly to a facility contact and complete the enrollment process. This may take 4 to 6 weeks.

Quality Metrics

Are there quality metrics I have to meet?

Yes. To be successful with QSSP, you need to meet a set of quality metrics based on National Quality Forum (NQF) measures when performing procedures at a designated facility.

The following table offers more detail on the measures, their definition and the maximum threshold not to exceed per quarter. Designated facilities will notify us if any of these metrics are missed.

Measure	Definition	Maximum threshold not to exceed per quarter
Wrong (see definition)	Not in accordance with the intended site, side, patient, procedure or implant	Zero – any wrong results in no payment
Burn	<p>Unintended tissue injury caused by any of these six recognized mechanisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemical • Contact • Electrical • Fire • Radiation • Scalds <p>Example: Burn from warming devices, prep solutions, electro-surgical unit or laser</p>	Exceeding zero per quarter
Antibiotic Timing	<p>Antibiotic must be administered on time:</p> <p>Infusion initiated within 1 hour before the initial surgical incision or the beginning of the procedure – for example, introduction of endoscope, insertion of needle, inflation of tourniquet</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Infusion initiated 2 hours before if vancomycin or fluoroquinolones are administered</p> <p>Timing begins at the time antibiotic infusion is started.</p>	Exceeding two incorrect timings for one quarter and zero for the following two quarters
Infection	<p>A superficial incisional, deep incisional or organ space surgical site infection (SSI), as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)</p> <p>Infection tracking for 30 or 90 days, depending on the type of procedure – for example, presence of implant, etc.</p>	Exceeding one for one quarter and zero for the following two quarters
Transfer	Any transfer/admission from an ambulatory surgical center (ASC) directly to an acute care hospital, which includes a hospital emergency room	Exceeding one for one quarter and zero for the following two quarters
Return to Operating Room (OR)	Any secondary procedure performed on the same day as the primary procedure because of a complication from the primary procedure	Exceeding one for one quarter and zero for the following two quarters

Do the metrics differ by specialty?

At this time, the metrics will be the same across all specialties during this pilot phase.

What happens if I don't meet any of the quality metrics?

Participating care providers who don't meet one or more of the quality metrics will be ineligible to receive any QSSP incentives for procedures performed in that quarter.

If any metrics are disputed, we'll follow the procedures in the Dispute Resolution section of your participation agreement, along with those outlined in the UnitedHealthcare Administrative Guide, available at UHCprovider.com > [Administrative Guides](#).

To help you make the most out of Quality-Based Physician Incentive Program (QPIP), please keep the following in mind.

- Comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations and credentialing requirements outlined in the medical staff bylaws of your designated facility.
- Make sure you have an executed Participation Agreement with UnitedHealthcare and be in compliance with that contract.
- If required, sign and return your QPIP Amendment to us at the address listed in your invitation letter.
- Conduct yourself competently and professionally as required in the rules, regulations and medical staff bylaws at your designated facility.
- Participate in performance improvement and peer review activities, as required by UnitedHealthcare or your designated facility.
- Take part in quality assurance, utilization review and risk management programs developed by UnitedHealthcare and/or your designated facility.
- Continue to participate in good standing in our applicable commercial plan networks.
- Use UnitedHealthcare in-network ancillary care providers, including anesthesiologists.

Who can I contact for more information?

For more information about QSSP or other programs that can help support your patients who are UnitedHealthcare plan members, please contact your Provider Advocate. Thank you.

Insurance coverage provided by or through UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or its affiliates. Health plan coverage provided by UnitedHealthcare of Arizona, Inc., UHC of California DBA UnitedHealthcare of California, UnitedHealthcare Benefits Plan of California, UnitedHealthcare of Colorado, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of the Mid-Atlantic, Inc., MAMSI Life and Health Insurance Company, UnitedHealthcare of New York, Inc., UnitedHealthcare Insurance Co. of New York, UnitedHealthcare of Oklahoma, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of Oregon, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of Pennsylvania, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of Texas, Inc., UnitedHealthcare Benefits of Texas, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of Utah, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of Washington, Inc., Optimum Choice, Inc., Oxford Health Insurance, Inc., Oxford Health Plans (NJ), Inc., Oxford Health Plans (CT), Inc., All Savers Insurance Company or other affiliates. Administrative services provided by OptumHealth Care Solutions, LLC, OptumRx, Oxford Health Plans LLC, United HealthCare Services, Inc. or other affiliates. Behavioral health products provided by U.S. Behavioral Health Plan, California (USBHPC) or its affiliates.