



## Did You Know? Information on Empire Plan Centers of Excellence

The Empire Plan Centers of Excellence Programs are available to all Empire Plan members, offering paid-in-full coverage for certain services. A select group of providers are accessible for cancer treatment, transplant surgery and infertility treatment. If an enrollee chooses to go to a Center of Excellence located more than 100 miles from their home within the United States, assistance is available for travel, lodging and meals expenses. A brief description of each program appears below. **More information including how to enroll is available by calling 1-877-7-NYSHIP.**

### • Centers of Excellence for Cancer Program

The Center of Excellence for Cancer Program, administered by UnitedHealthcare, provides paid-in-full coverage for cancer-related services received through a nationwide network known as Cancer Resource Services (CRS). Routine follow-up care provided at a CRS cancer center is also covered. The network includes many of the nation's leading cancer centers. Centers included are Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, and New York Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. Enrollment in the Program is required.

### • Centers of Excellence for Transplants Program

The Empire Plan Hospital Program, administered by Empire BlueCross, offers access to facilities in New York and across the nation that are recognized for their expertise in performing transplant surgeries.

Benefits under the Center of Excellence for Transplants Program are available for the following types of transplant surgeries: bone marrow, cord blood stem cell, heart, heart-lung, kidney, liver, lung, pancreas, pancreas after kidney, peripheral stem cell and simultaneous kidney/pancreas. Eligible enrollees receive paid-in-full benefits including the transplant and 12 months of follow-up care at the Center where the transplant was performed. Preauthorization is required from the Hospital Program administrator.

### • Centers of Excellence for Infertility Program

The Empire Plan Center of Excellence for Infertility Program, administered by UnitedHealthcare, offers the best in reproductive medical technology and infertility procedures. Centers are located throughout New York State. Enrollment in the program is required.

**To participate in these voluntary Programs, Empire Plan enrollees must call The Empire Plan toll free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447). They can press or say 1 at the main menu to reach UnitedHealthcare for the Center of Excellence for Cancer Program and Center of Excellence for Infertility Program or press 2 to reach Empire BlueCross for the Center of Excellence for Transplants Program.**

## Empire Plan Medical Program Copayments

As you've seen in prior issues of Network News and via standalone Empire Plan Medical Program Copayment Guide mailings, there have been Empire Plan copayment changes for 2019 and 2020. However, these changes apply only to certain Empire Plan employee groups as noted in the Copayment Guide. Not all Empire Plan employee groups have the same copayment requirements. Some have changed, but some have not.

Changes to date have been outlined below and are reflected in the January 2020 version of the Empire Plan Medical Program Copayment Guide included in the November 2019 issue of Network News and mailed directly in December 2019.

**Please be sure to review the Guide carefully and/or verify the patient's copayment liability via UHCprovider.com or by calling 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447).**

**The following employee groups continue to have a \$20 office visit copayment and have NOT had copayment changes at this time:**

- APSU
- Council 82
- PEF

**Enrollees in the Student Employee Health Plan (SEHP) continue to have a \$10 office visit copayment.**

The Excelsior Plan has a \$35 office visit copayment and experienced other copayment changes as of January 1, 2020.

The following employee groups have a \$25 office visit copay and experienced other copayment changes as of the date noted:

- PIA (NYS Police Investigators Unit) – January 1, 2020
- Unified Court System (COBANC) – January 1, 2020
- Management/Confidential – June 1, 2019
- NYSCOPBA – June 1, 2019
- CSEA – January 1, 2019
- District Council 37 – January 1, 2019
- NYS Retirees – January 1, 2019
- Participating Agencies – The Empire Plan (primarily local governments) – January 1, 2019
- Participating Employers (primarily public authorities) – January 1, 2019
- PBA – Supervisors – January 1, 2019
- PBA – Troopers – January 1, 2019
- Unified Court System – All Others – January 1, 2019
- UUP (Including Lifeguards) – January 1, 2019



### Don't Forget...

**Empire Plan Claim Submission Deadline for 2019 Services is April 29, 2020.** Empire Plan claims must be submitted to UnitedHealthcare no later than 120 days from the end of the calendar year in which covered services are rendered or within 120 days after Medicare or another insurance plan processes your claim, whichever is later. This means that Empire Plan claims for 2019 services must be submitted to the

Kingston Service Center by April 29, 2020.

When benefits are denied because the claim is submitted late, the participating physician or health care professional may not bill the patient for the charges on that claim.

## Referral Reminders

While The Empire Plan does not require formal referrals, Empire Plan Network physicians and providers have contractual requirements regarding certain services rendered or procured at their own practice location.

As noted in the *Empire Plan Network Administrative Guide* and *Empire Plan Physician & Provider Manual*:

<i>Anesthesia Services</i>	Provider will ensure that all anesthesia services rendered at provider's practice location with regard to Covered Persons are rendered by participating providers for as long as the Agreement is in effect.
<i>Laboratory Services</i>	Provider will conduct any office laboratory services in a Clinical Laboratory Information Act (CLIA) certified office laboratory and will be reimbursed for only those services that provider is certified through CLIA to perform. Provider cannot bill plan participants for any laboratory services for which provider lacks the applicable CLIA certification. In those instances where provider collects the specimen in the office but does not perform the laboratory services, all such laboratory work must be directed to a network commercial laboratory.
<i>Other Services</i>	When a UnitedHealthcare Empire Plan network physician or provider determines that an Empire Plan participant requires treatment or care/services from another practitioner, the physician or provider will use reasonable efforts to refer the participant to another network provider or to a provider participating in the programs referenced below, whenever appropriate.

You can view the Empire Plan Participating Provider Directory online at *EmpirePlanProviders.com* or you can speak with a representative toll-free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447), Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4:30 pm. In addition to our vast network of physicians and other healthcare professionals, the Empire Plan Network has contractual relationships with numerous laboratories, including a large regional laboratory (Centrex Clinical Laboratories, Inc.) and two national laboratories (Laboratory Corporation of America and Quest Diagnostics). We also have relationships with a number of home care providers and medical equipment vendors as well as with Prosthetic and Orthotic Management Associates Corporation (POMAC) to make available a network of participating prosthetic and orthotic suppliers.

You can also view the Empire Plan Network Administrative Guide and Empire Plan Physician & Provider Manual online at *UHCprovider.com*.

## NOW AVAILABLE:

### Easier Way to Manage Empire Plan Pre-Determination of Benefits Requests

You can now utilize the Prior Authorization and Notification tool on Link to request **Pre-Determination of Benefits\***, upload applicable medical notes and photographs, check status and update cases — without faxing or calling!

#### With the online Prior Authorization and Notification tool, you can:

- ✓ Complete most Pre-Determination of Benefits requests within the tool
- ✓ Find out which procedures require additional information and what to include
- ✓ Upload any required medical notes, photographs, or other attachments and add messages about them for the reviewer
- ✓ Check the status of all your Pre-Determination of Benefits requests and submit updates

#### How to Access the Tool

Sign in to Link by clicking on the Link button in the top right corner of *UHCprovider.com*. Then, select the Prior Authorization and Notification tile on your Link dashboard.

#### Learn More

For more information, including quick reference guides and videos to help you use the Prior Authorization and Notification tool, visit *UHCprovider.com/paan*. If you have questions, please call the UnitedHealthcare Connectivity Help Desk at 866-842-3278, option 1, from 8 am to 10 pm EST, Monday through Friday.

\* A Predetermination of Benefits is a request for verification of benefits before the services are provided. The Empire Plan offers this service as a courtesy to providers on behalf of its members. They are recommended when the service could be considered experimental, investigational, or cosmetic.

Empire Plan Network Management  
UnitedHealthcare  
PO Box 2300  
Kingston, NY 12402-2300

ADDRESS SERVICE  
REQUESTED



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Send your Empire Plan claims and written inquiries regarding claims issues to:

**Empire Plan Claims**  
**PO Box 1600**  
**Kingston, NY 12402-1600**

Send written inquiries regarding Empire Plan Network participation issues and changes to your contractual identifiers, such as tax identification number(s) or practitioners joining/leaving your practice, to:

**Empire Plan Network Management**  
**PO Box 2300**  
**Kingston, NY 12402-2300**

Send changes to your practice demographic information, such as address(es), telephone number(s), etc., via:

- **My Practice Profile / LINK tool at UHCprovider.com;**
- **Email: [hpdemo@uhc.com](mailto:hpdemo@uhc.com);**
- **Fax: (844) 897-5439; or**
- **Paper: The Empire Plan Network Management address above** (only if you do not have internet or fax access).

If you are unsure regarding any aspect of The Empire Plan, please call **1-877-7NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447)**.