

# Iowa Department of Human Services

Terry E. Branstad  
Governor

Kim Reynolds  
Lt. Governor

Charles M. Palmer  
Director

For Immediate Release  
April 4, 2014

## ***Providers Sign ACO Agreements with Medicaid Program Will Encourage Healthy Behaviors for Iowans***

(DES MOINES, Iowa) - The State of Iowa has signed agreements with two large accountable care organizations (ACOs) to encourage healthy behaviors and improve health outcomes for thousands of Iowans covered by the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan.

ACOs are groups of doctors, hospitals, and other health care providers, who have agreed to provide integrated care to patients. The goal is to achieve better health results for Iowans, as well as foster accountability in their care.

Under these agreements, health care providers assume financial risk to deliver high-quality outcomes of a defined patient population - in this case, Iowa Wellness Plan members. The two major entities, University of Iowa Health Alliance LLC and UnityPoint Health Partners, have signed up to be accountable for the Iowa Wellness Plan population effective April 1, 2014. The State of Iowa is engaged in discussions with other providers who may sign up soon.

"This is an exciting step in helping Iowans complete healthy behaviors," said IME Director Jennifer Vermeer. "By coordinating care for Wellness Plan members, we are working to ensure that patients get the right care at the right time, with the goal of spending health care dollars wisely and with better outcomes."

The State of Iowa has aligned its ACO approach with Iowa's major commercial health insurance payor, Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield. This spreads value-based reimbursements across payors, allowing providers to make achievable, sustainable changes. In addition, the federal Medicare program currently operates ACOs in Iowa, further aligning new payment strategies.

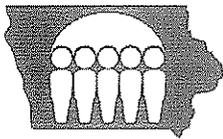
ACOs are incentivized by quality bonuses that align with the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan's Healthy Behaviors program. Under that program, members' monthly contributions are waived if they complete a risk assessment and annual physical. If the activities are completed in 2014, the monthly contributions would be waived in 2015.

To date, more than 84,000 individuals have signed up for the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan. Of those enrolled, more than 17,000 have a primary care provider affiliated with either the University of Iowa Health Alliance LLC or UnityPoint Health Partners.

The ACOs:

- **University of Iowa Health Alliance LLC** is comprised of health systems, county hospitals, RHCs, and Federally Qualified Health Centers across Iowa and include systems like, Genesis Health System, Mercy Health Network, and the University of Iowa Health System.
- **UnityPoint Health Partners** is comprised of UnityPoint Clinic, Trimark Physicians Group (Fort Dodge), Central Iowa Hospital Corporation (Blank Children's) and St. Luke's Health Resources (Sioux City).

For more information  
Amy Lorentzen McCoy  
amccoy@dhs.state.ia.us  
515-281-4848



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Director

May 16, 2014

## ***Iowa Health and Wellness Plan Enrollment Tops 100,000 State Launches Dental Wellness Plan***

(Des Moines, Iowa) - The Iowa Department of Human Services announced Monday that more than 100,000 Iowans have signed up for the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan.

Enrollment continues year-round for both options under the bi-partisan-approved plan, which is based on a commercial model and rewards members for taking part in wellness activities.

"The Iowa Health and Wellness Plan provides comprehensive benefits, local access to care and incentives for healthy behaviors," Director Charles M. Palmer said. "Iowa is a leader in health care assistance, implementing this innovative plan in under a year."

As of Monday, about 79,000 Iowans ages 19 to 64 had signed up for the Wellness Plan (0-100 percent FPL), and more than 21,000 were enrolled in the Marketplace Choice Plan (101-133 percent FPL). Together, these programs make up the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan.

Its benefits include:

- Minimal cost-sharing where members can either pay a contribution of \$5 to \$10 per month, or have their premiums waived by participating in healthy behaviors. There are no deductibles or co-payments in either plan.
- Access to a statewide network of providers, which allows members to find a doctor close to home.
- Choice in who delivers care from thousands of participating providers.
- Enrollment open year-round, and no cap on the number of eligible Iowans who can sign up.

Earlier this month, DHS launched the Dental Wellness Plan for Iowa Health and Wellness members. The commercial plan provides comprehensive dental benefits through Delta Dental.

"Members are offered incentives for completing preventive services that promote good oral health, which supports greater overall health," said Iowa Medicaid Enterprise Director Jennifer Vermeer. "In addition, providers have better reimbursement rates and their own incentives for providing quality care."

More details are available at <http://www.ime.state.ia.us/iowa-health-and-wellness-plan.html>

For more information  
Amy Lorentzen McCoy  
[amccoy@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:amccoy@dhs.state.ia.us)  
281-4848