

Provider Newsletter

Quarter 4 - 2025



Welcome to the Iowa Total Care Provider Newsletter, where we share news, training opportunities and more with our provider network!

As your partner in health, we want to support YOU in delivering the highest quality of patient care. Together, we will continue to transform the health of the communities we serve, one person at a time.

Blood Pressure and Hemoglobin A1c Screenings Due by Year-End

We encourage all providers to ensure that members diagnosed with cardiovascular disease and/or diabetes have had **at least one** documented annual **blood pressure (BP)** and **Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) screening**. Timely documentation and monitoring help close care gaps, particularly when the results are within controlled ranges.

Why It Matters

Best practice is to have routine monitoring. Timely screenings help:

- Detect and manage diabetes and hypertension.
- Improve member outcomes and reduce long-term complications.

What You Can Do

- **Review:**
 - Identify members who are due or overdue for blood pressure and HbA1c checks OR blood pressure and/or HbA1c values not well controlled:
 - $\geq 140/90$ for BP
 - > 8 for HbA1c
- **Schedule:**
 - Proactively reach out via calls, texts or portal messages to members encouraging them to schedule an appointment.
 - Use standing orders or walk-in options to facilitate quick screenings.
- **Document:**
 - Record exact readings — do not round.
 - Utilize CPT® II codes to report values on claims.
 - If a member's blood pressure is elevated ($\geq 140/90$), retake the blood pressure again during the same visit and ensure all readings are documented in the medical record.

Clinical Guidelines & Targets

Blood Pressure:

Per the 2025 American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology (AHA/ACC) guidelines, the treatment goal for most adults with hypertension is **$< 130/80$ mm Hg**; A reading of **$\geq 140/90$ mm Hg** indicates stage 2 hypertension. Effective blood pressure control reduces the risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney disease and cognitive decline.¹

Hemoglobin A1C:

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) recommends maintaining HbA1c levels below 8% for most adults with diabetes.²

The HbA1c should be assessed:

- **Twice annually** for patients with stable control.
- **Quarterly** for those not meeting goals or undergoing treatment changes.

Resources:

¹ American Heart Association & American College of Cardiology. 2025. New high blood pressure guideline emphasizes prevention, early treatment to reduce CVD risk | [American Heart Association.newsroom.heart.org](https://www.heart.org)

² American Diabetes Association. November 24, 2017. Glycemic Targets: Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes – 2018. diabetesjournals.org



PROVIDER COMMUNICATIONS – Spread the Word!

Please encourage your staff to sign up for important Iowa Total Care provider communications from provider alerts to newsletters.

Here's how:

Visit our [Sign Up for Provider Emails page](#), click on the [Provider Email Sign Up Page link](#) and fill out the following information:

- Email address
- First and last name
- Company name



Health Equity Provider Toolkit

Have you read Iowa Total Care's [Health Equity Provider Toolkit](#)? The Health Equity Provider Toolkit can be used for reference while working with our diverse member populations. Access this resource on our [Iowa Total Care Provider Toolkits webpage](#).

Health inequity remains a critical issue in Iowa, affecting marginalized groups, such as racial and ethnic minorities, low-income individuals and rural populations. These groups face significant barriers to accessing quality healthcare, leading to higher rates of chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

To request additional information or ask questions regarding the Health Equity Provider Toolkit, please connect with us: C&L@IowaTotalCare.com.

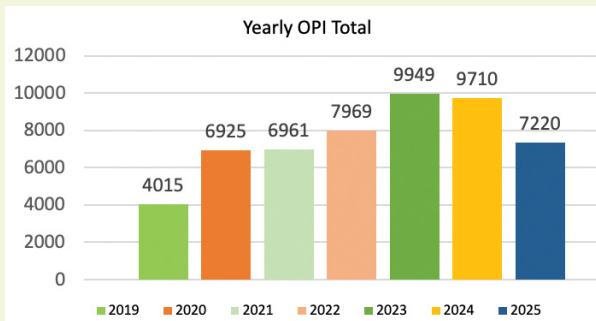


Race, Ethnicity and Language (REL) End of Year Data

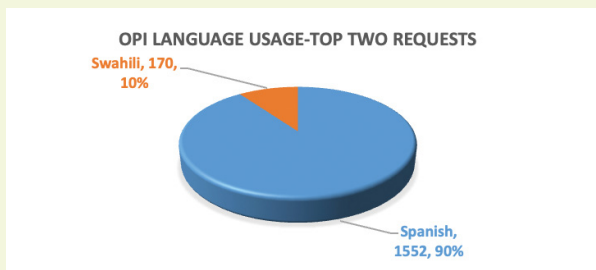
Iowa Total Care collects REL data throughout the year using our online member and provider portals. We collect REL data using a health risk screening and self-reporting by members and providers. Self-reporting is voluntary.

Over-the-Phone Interpretation (OPI) Requests

The chart below presents the number of interpretation requests from January through September 2025. While the data shows a steady utilization increase from years 2019-2024, trends may increase or decrease based on Iowa Total Care's membership and over-the-phone usage. Our end of the year trajectory predicts a slight increase in requests from 2024 to 2025.



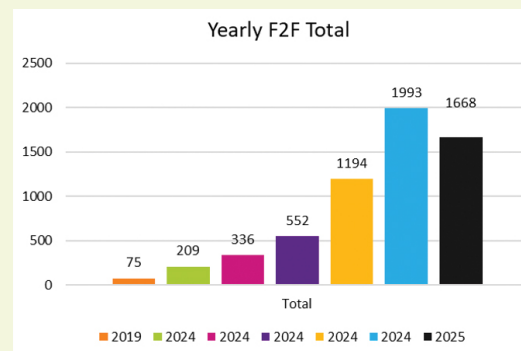
As of September 2025, the year-to-date of Iowa Total Care's over-the-phone requests was 7,220. The chart below represents the top two over-the-phone languages requested for interpretation from January through September of 2025.



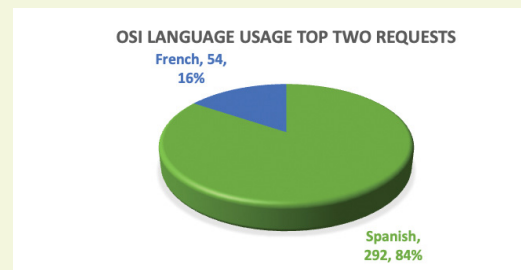
On-Site Interpretation (OSI) Requests

OSI consists of on-site interpretation, face-to-face or in-person requests.

The chart below represents the number of interpretation requests from January through September 2025. While the data shows a utilization increase from 2019-2025, usage may increase or decrease throughout the year based on Iowa Total Care's membership and on-site usage. Our trajectory predicts a 34% increase in requests from 2024 to 2025.



As of September 2025, the year-to-date of Iowa Total Care's on-site requests was 1,695. The chart below represents the top two on-site languages requested for interpretation from January through September of 2025.



We'll continue to share our REL statistics at least annually with you. If you have questions or request additional information, please reach out to: C&L@IowaTotalCare.com.



Help Members Stay Healthy

Have a member wanting to quit smoking? There are many medications available on the Iowa Medicaid's [Preferred Drug Lists webpage](#) to help members quit smoking. These include nicotine replacement products, bupropion (Buproban) and varenicline (Chantix). Members can earn [My Health Pays](#)® rewards when they use a prescription medication to help quit smoking and participate in tobacco cessation coaching with [Iowa Quitline](#).

Have a member wanting to stay healthy for 2026? Iowa Total Care covers vaccines and covers 90-day supplies of generic maintenance medications. Immunizations including influenza are a covered medical benefit. Be sure to provide these vaccines to members when they visit the office.

Prescribing the right medication will help members feel safe and ready for the new year!



Preferred Drug List (PDL) Updates

Iowa Medicaid made updates effective on October 1, 2025, including several manufacturers no longer participating in the rebate program. Medications made by those manufacturers are no longer eligible for coverage.

For additional information, visit Iowa Medicaid's [Preferred Drug Lists webpage](#) or [Provider General Letters webpage](#). The PDL is a great resource when prescribing for a Medicaid member.



Spread the Word

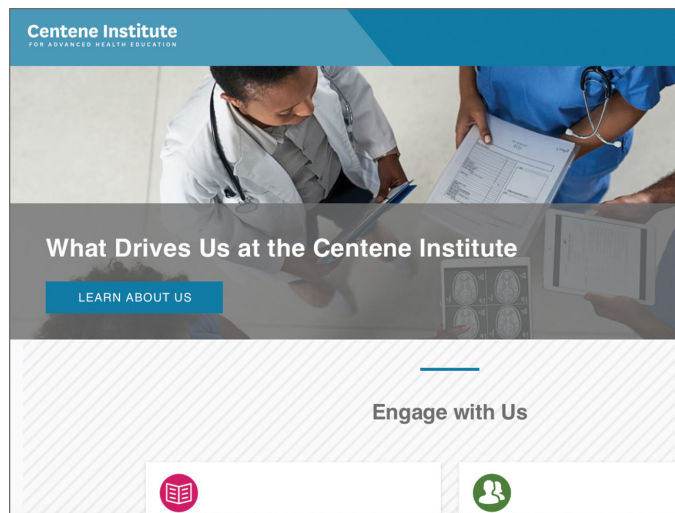
If Iowa Total Care members are pregnant or thinking about becoming pregnant, they should follow these steps:

- Go before they show! Encourage members to go to their doctor as soon as they think they are pregnant. Early and routine care will help and protect them and their baby.
- Complete an Iowa Total Care Notification of Pregnancy (NOP) form online in [our member portal](#).
- Join our [Start Smart for Your Baby](#)® program for care and support throughout pregnancy.
- Keep healthy lifestyle habits! This includes exercising, eating healthy meals and resting for 8-10 hours each night.

Iowa Total Care members can earn up to **\$60 in My Health Pays**® rewards by going to the doctor and completing an NOP form in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.



Iowa Total Care is excited to offer behavioral health, physical health and long-term services and supports trainings for all Iowa providers – at no cost!



Centene Institute

Iowa Total Care is a subsidiary of Centene Corporation (Centene) and offers trainings through the Centene Institute for Advanced Health Education. The trainings promote interprofessional continuing education to external providers and clinical employees at no cost.

The mission of the Centene Institute is to educate teams of healthcare professionals through empowering, research-informed content that aims to improve the skills, strategy, and performance of the healthcare team, patient quality of care and health outcomes of the community.

Create an Account

Visit Centene Institute's [Log-In / Create account page](#). Please select the "Create New Account" button, complete all required fields, and submit.

Register for a Course

If you are interested in attending an activity (a course), Centene Institute's [Course Catalog](#) to view courses. To register for an activity, click on the course and then click on the "Register" tab.

For additional information, visit [Centene Institute's website](#).

Successful 2025 Be Well. Eat Well. Community Health Fairs

Iowa Total Care had another successful season with our Be Well. Eat Well. initiatives. Through our Be Well. Eat Well. initiatives, we educate Iowans on where and why they should access affordable, nutritious food.



One of the ways we connect to our members through this initiative is our Community Health Fairs! Our Community Health Fairs showed up across the state and provided fresh, free produce and resources for Iowa communities.

In conclusion, for the 2025 [Be Well. Eat Well.](#) initiatives we:

- Gave out a total of 22,743 pieces and 2,018 pounds of fresh, free produce.
- Over 4,000 attendees served.
- 851 baby items
- 226 health risk screenings

Iowa Total Care will continue our [Be Well. Eat Well.](#) outreach in 2026 to continue promoting healthy living through healthy eating. Stay up to date on upcoming 2026 Community Health Fairs on our [Be Well. Eat Well. webpage](#).



Iowa Total Care

Coverage that cares.



IN THIS EDITION

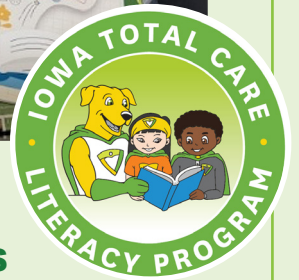
Five-year flashback
Fighting food insecurity
Giving back to local communities
100 Literacy Program 2024 recipients
ISU partnership supporting community gardens
Why behavioral health matters
The importance of literacy

2024 COMMUNITY
IMPACT REPORT

Community Impact

At Iowa Total Care, we are strong believers in the power of local partnerships. We highly value all our community partners and prioritize our community outreach.

Visit our [Community Impact webpage](#) and follow along with our community impact initiatives!



Bringing Literacy to Life with Clover Kids

In October 2025, Iowa Total Care proudly launched a new partnership with the 4-H Foundation's Clover Kids program as part of the Iowa Total Care Literacy Program. This initiative promotes early childhood literacy through engaging resources and statewide collaborations. To learn more about our partnership, visit 4-H Foundation's [press release](#).

Together, we introduced a seven-book socio-emotional series designed to help children build essential life skills - like confidence, teamwork and communication through interactive activities. Available in 100 county locations, these books make reading fun while supporting social and emotional growth.

By combining literacy with hands-on learning, we're helping young readers develop skills that last a lifetime.

To learn more, visit our [Iowa Total Care Literacy Program webpage](#). For details on Clover Kids, visit Iowa State University Extension and Outreach's [Clover Kids page](#).



New/Ongoing Initiatives



CMS Prior Authorization Update

On January 1, 2026, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will implement new prior authorization (PA) response time requirements for all providers.

- Standard prior authorization requests will be completed within 7 calendar days, with a possible extension up to 14 calendar days under certain circumstances.
- Expedited/Urgent prior authorization requests will be completed within 72 hours from receipt of the authorization request.

With shorter response times for supporting clinical information requests, all necessary clinical information should be submitted at the time of the authorization request.

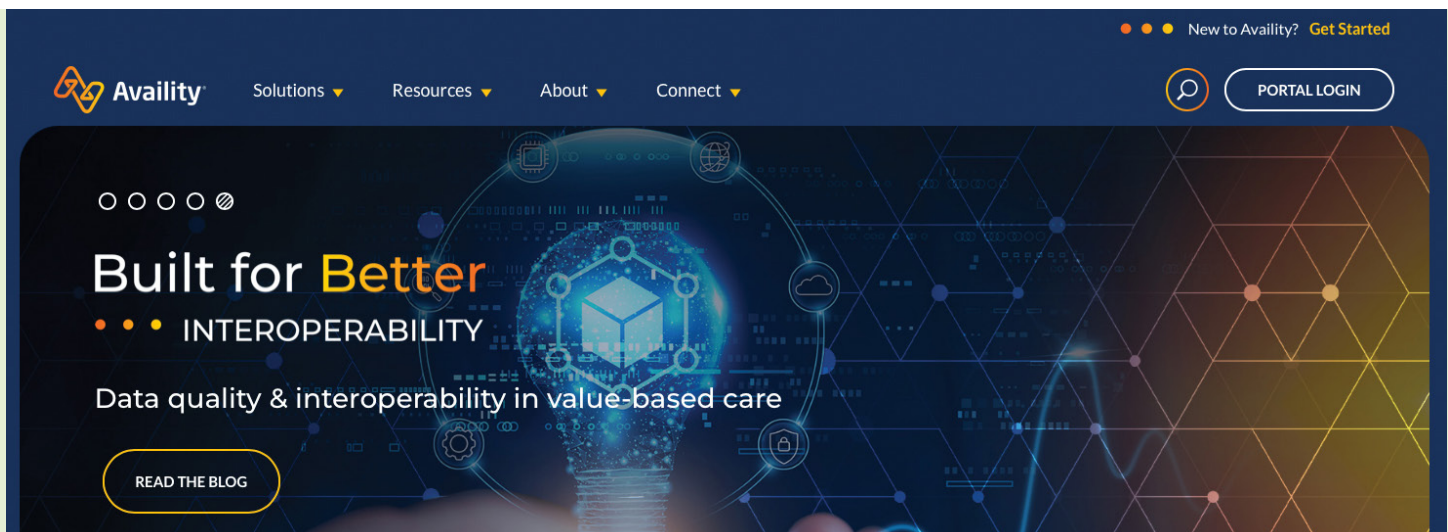
Additional Information

- Complete clinicals include diagnosis, history and current condition, treatment plan and interventions and relevant diagnostic tests.
- Response times can be lessened if all information is submitted with the authorization request.
- Missing clinical information may lead to a denial due to inadequate supporting records.
- Submitting prior authorization requests via the secure Availity portal allows for faster review.

Centene clinical policies and criteria can be found at [Availity](#) or on Iowa Total Care's [Clinical, Payment & Pharmacy Policies webpage](#).

Iowa Total Care is a 4-star NCQA plan!

Iowa Total Care was named a 4 star NCQA health plan. The overall rating is the weighted average of a plan's HEDIS® and CAHPS® measure ratings. This award is thanks to you, our provider partners, to Iowa Total Care staff and a collective commitment to transforming the health of the communities we serve, one person at a time.



Availity Essentials Secure Provider Portal

The [Availity Essentials](#) secure provider portal is a one-stop resource for key tools and information to support your practice. Through the portal, you can:

- Verify member eligibility and view health records
- Access the primary care physician (PCP) panel, patient list and person-centered service plan (PCSP)
- Submit and check prior authorizations, including requirements and status
- View and submit claims or adjustments, and check claim status
- Verify coding guidelines and view payment history
- View PCP quality incentive reports and gaps in member care

We encourage you to [log in](#) regularly to ensure you have the most up-to-date information available.

Clinical Practice Guidelines

Iowa Total Care clinical and quality programs are based on evidence-based preventive and clinical practice guidelines. Whenever possible, Iowa Total Care adopts guidelines that are published by nationally recognized organizations or government institutions, as well as state-wide collaborative and/or a consensus of healthcare professionals in the applicable field.

[Clinical Practice & Preventative Health Guidelines \(PDF\)](#) provides the most current version of the guidelines adopted by Iowa Total Care. A paper copy of the practice guidelines can be requested by calling Provider Services: 1-833-404-1061 (TTY: 711).

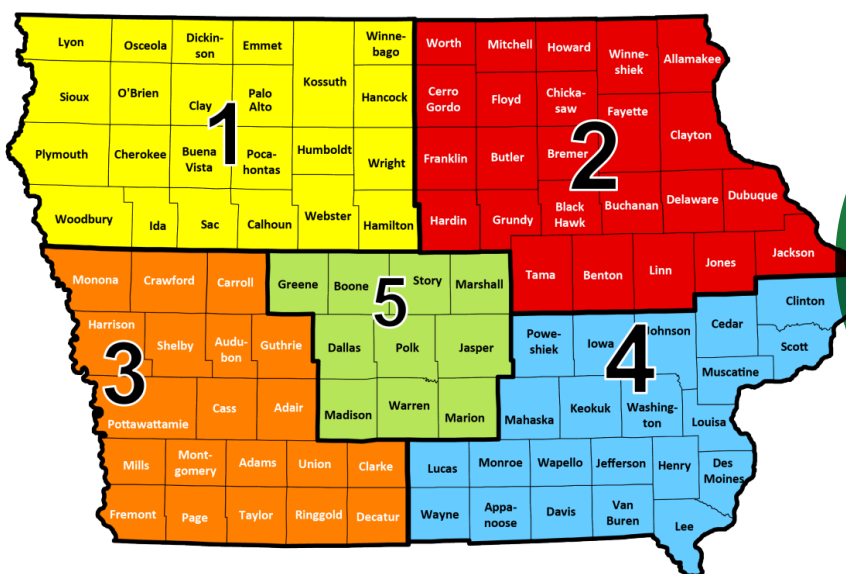
Policy Review

New, Revised, Retired: Clinical, Payment & Pharmacy Policies

Iowa Total Care continually reviews and updates our payment and utilization policies to ensure they are designed to comply with industry standards while delivering the best patient experience to our members. As a part of that review, some policies were revised or changed. For more detailed information about these policies, please refer to the [Clinical, Payment & Pharmacy Policies page](#) on our website.



Provider Relations Specialist Territory Map



View the [Provider Relations Territory Map](#) to find the provider engagement account managers assigned to each region.

Iowa Total Care's provider relations department uses the provider engagement model approach, aligning staff skillsets to support our diverse providers. We believe the provider engagement model will better serve our providers end to end.

Provider onboarding, training and education will align with the appropriate subject matter experts (SMEs) within the health plan. That way, Iowa Total Care can better assist providers and improve their experience once onboarded. This will also allow staff to broaden their knowledge of provider types and offer more comprehensive, in-depth support to our valued provider partners across the state.



Stay Connected

Visit our [provider website!](#)

Want to hear how Iowa Total Care is making a difference in the community? [Sign up for our Community Outreach Newsletter.](#)



Contact Us

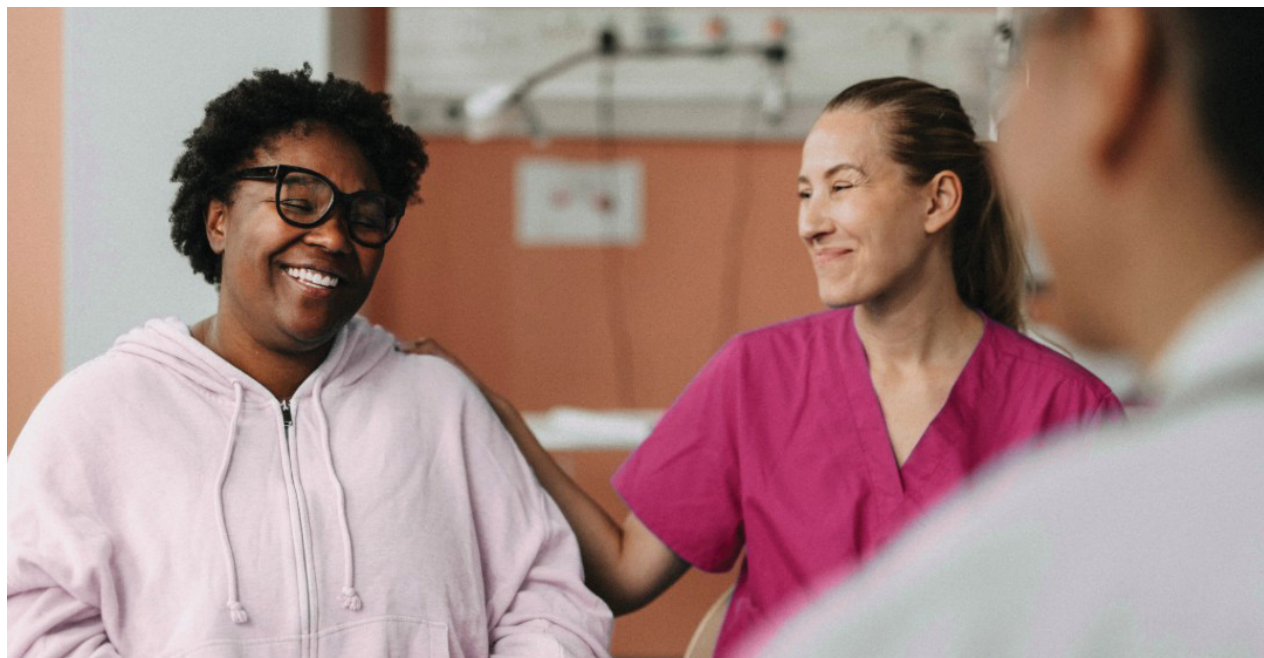
Provider Services is available by phone at
1-833-404-1061 (TTY: 711)
Monday through Friday
from 7:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.



Join Iowa Total Care on LinkedIn!

Iowa Total Care invites you to join us on [LinkedIn!](#) We would love to connect and share our community impact efforts with you. Follow us to see our most recent outreach efforts, volunteer events, and more!

Ambetter provides market-leading, affordable health insurance in the marketplace. Ambetter delivers high quality, locally based healthcare services to its members, with our providers benefiting from enhanced collaboration, and strategic care coordination programs.



Marketplace Insurance and Helping Members: What Should Providers Ask?

As Marketplace insurance costs rise across the industry and the expiration of Advanced Premium Tax Credits (APTC) approaches, members are facing tough decisions about their healthcare coverage. Providers play a key role in helping members make informed decisions that support continuity of care.

One of the most important factors members should consider is whether their preferred providers are in-network. By proactively discussing coverage needs, providers can help members avoid unexpected costs and disruptions in care.

Key questions to ask members:

- Is your current provider in-network with this plan?
 - Encourage members to ensure you're in-network using the insurer's [Find A Provider](#) tool to verify.
- Are your specialists and local hospitals included?
 - Network limitations can impact access to care and increase out-of-pocket costs.
- Does the plan require referrals or prior authorizations?
 - Understanding these rules helps avoid delays in treatment.
- Are there any geographic restrictions?
 - Some plans limit access based on location or provider tiers.

Member education is a shared responsibility. By working together, we can help members make informed decisions that align with their health goals and financial realities.

To check if your office is in-network with Ambetter Health, use our [Find A Provider](#) tool. For more information on Marketplace health benefits and coverage, visit [Healthcare.gov](#).

For more than 20 years, Wellcare has offered comprehensive plans featuring affordable coverage and innovative benefits beyond original Medicare..

- Local management with national expertise.
- Full continuum of Medicare products including:
 - HMO ○ CSNP ○ PSP ○ PDP
 - DSNP ○ MMP ○ EGWP

Medicare Prior Authorization Requests transition from Evolent to Wellcare

Effective January 1, 2026, all Wellcare (Medicare) prior authorization requests will transition from Evolent to Wellcare. This transition is **only for Wellcare (Medicare)**. There is no change to Iowa Total Care (Medicaid) prior authorization processes.

The following Wellcare (Medicare) services will **transition from Evolent to Wellcare**:

- Advanced/cardiac imaging
- Physical, occupational and speech therapies
- Orthopedic and spine surgeries
- Interventional pain management
- Medical oncology
- Radiation oncology
- Cardiac surgical procedures

Beginning January 1, 2026, all Wellcare (Medicare) prior authorization requests for the services listed above must be submitted to Wellcare's [secure provider portal](#).

We encourage you to use Wellcare's [Pre-Auth Needed Tool](#), to verify prior authorization requirements for specific procedure codes.

You may contact Iowa's provider engagement account management team at providerrelations@IowaTotalCare.com.

Thank you for your partnership with Wellcare.

