

## COVID-19 frequently asked questions: Population Health Solutions (PHS)

### **Population Health Solutions (PHS)**

#### **Are inbound call centers for Nurseline, Nurse24, HealthCare Advisor, Total Population Health, Care Management and Disease Management open and taking calls?**

Yes. We are doing everything possible to support the health of those we are privileged to serve. Population Health Solutions is handling the majority of calls for the UnitedHealth Group enterprise. While our call centers are currently experiencing high volumes, we remain committed to our obligation to the highest risk and vulnerable members.

#### **How will Optum inbound call centers support the influx of calls from those who are enrolled in their services?**

We have taken immediate actions to manage resources to support the needs of our members we serve around the world. These efforts include bringing in additional staff, assigning more complex cases to seasoned nurses, moving part-time staff to full time and approving overtime as applicable. In some areas the capacity has increased by 200%.

Optum and UnitedHealthGroup employ thousands of nurses. While those that engage with members in call centers are experiencing extremely high demand, others that conduct in-home visits or assist with elective procedures are being redeployed across the enterprise to meet the needs of members.

However, due to rising demand the time and care our nurses spend with our members to address their concerns, it is possible that callers may experience longer hold times and resolution lags.

We are committed to minimizing service disruptions as we navigate this evolving situation. Our call centers are using CDC guidelines to direct members who are low risk to self-isolation and high risk to appropriate care. We have also deployed digital tools such as Buoy, Vivify and Optum Healthy Beginnings app to support members remotely.

#### **What sources are you referring members to for COVID-19?**

The PHS clinical team is closely monitoring developments with the COVID-19 pandemic, and has teams of clinical and operational experts working around the clock on plans to mitigate risks. We are following all guidance and protocols issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local public health departments to support our members' needs. Our key priority is ensuring the health and well-being of our customers and patients, and the safety of our team members. We are doing everything possible to support the health of those we are privileged to serve.

Up-to-date information is shared regularly with our nursing staff when communicating with members/patients. We are closely monitoring this evolving situation and will continue to update our protocols and guidance as necessary.

### **What outreach is Optum doing for members who are currently enrolled in clinical programs?**

In addition to telephonic outreach, Optum is leveraging digital tools to engage and guide members to the right next steps and care. These digital tools are effectively helping members self-guide during this time of self-isolation and social distancing. We ensure the digital tools, like Vivify, Buoy and Optum Healthy Beginnings, also help guide members according to the CDC protocols issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local public health departments. Our teams make outbound calls to high-need members including those who have remote patient monitoring alerts related to COVID-19 issues.

### **What should members do if they have questions or concerns?**

**High-risk** members with any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 (fever, cough and shortness of breath) should call their physician to ask for guidance.

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. As with any potential illness, like the flu, it is important to follow good prevention practices.

Members at higher risk should adhere to the recent CDC and other public health recommendations that include avoiding nonessential travel and public places, (including public transportation), washing your hands frequently, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces like your phone or computer.

Strict adherence to public health guidelines for those at increased risk is essential and remains the best approach for everyone we serve. You can find more information from the CDC website at: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html).

## **Women's Health Solutions**

### **What sources are members being referred to for COVID-19?**

Members across all of the Women's Health programs have access to the most current information and guidelines provided by trusted sources, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), the Society of Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) and the American Society of Reproductive Medicine (ASRM).

### **What are the most commonly asked questions by members?**

The most commonly asked questions include the following:

- What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?
- Could I contract COVID-19 in the hospital?
- Will there be a delay in getting breast pumps shipped?
- Will I have to stay in a hospital longer due to COVID-19?
- Will maternity beds be available due to the influx of COVID-19 cases?
- Am I at higher risk for getting COVID-19 because I am pregnant?
- Should pregnant women self-quarantine?
- If I contract COVID-19, will the baby be affected?

### **What support does Optum® Fertility Solutions provide to members whose treatments may be impacted due to COVID-19?**

Many members are facing cancelled or delayed treatments causing additional stressors, including emotional and financial issues. Fertility nurses and social workers are available to provide up-to-date clinical support for members on the potential impact that COVID-19 may have on their unique fertility journey. Digital resources have been made available, such as Buoy's COVID-19 symptom checker for enhanced digital guidance on when to seek care for COVID-19-related symptoms. For members that are impacted midcycle of fertility treatment, potential exception opportunities are being identified, including embryo cryopreservation and storage. Guidance is regularly updated based upon trusted sources like the American Society of Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### **How does Optum support pregnant members?**

Pregnant members eligible for our Maternity Support program are being educated through communications that telephonic and digital support is available to them. For example, the Optum® Healthy Beginnings app has been updated to include appropriate guidance for COVID-19, and now includes a link to Buoy's COVID-19 symptom checker for enhanced digital guidance on when to seek care for COVID-19-related symptoms. Due to prenatal classes being cancelled, guidance and support for expectant mothers has increased. Pregnant members are given breastfeeding education that they would have otherwise received from their provider.

### **How does Optum® Neonatal Resource Services support members with babies in the NICU during this time?**

Ways to better fill clinical gaps remotely and virtually for high-risk managed members are continuously being evaluated during these health system capacity constraints (i.e., provider visit follow-up, Virtual Visit coordination/triage). Members are proactively educated on post-discharge care options, i.e., virtual provider visit during the period of social distancing. Members are supported on a case-by-case basis, including secondary placement for NICU discharging infants when a household member is in quarantine or an infant is being released to a relative's home.

### **How does Optum support members enrolled in the OB Homecare program?**

Optum OB Homecare nurses continue providing service to high-risk pregnant members. Protocols are being utilized to reduce the risk of aerosol transmissible disease exposure during field-based visits by conducting pre-visit assessments telephonically and utilizing personal protective equipment (PPE). Home visits and equipment/supplies distribution follow all CDC, WHO and state COVID-19 guidelines. OB Homecare continues to offer a 24/7 nurse line.



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