



UnitedHealth Group®

# Innovation: Unlocking the future of health care

4Q 2010

## Innovation Spotlight

UnitedHealthcare is leading the way into the future of health care. We continue to fund large scale investigations into the ways health care is delivered and used in order to meet everyone's needs – including doctors, customers, members and the quietly heroic personal caregivers. Then we apply these insights to develop new ways to connect people with the care they need, such as a new mobile application for managing prescriptions, or helping therapists monitor their patients. Together we see a vivid picture of what it means to innovate: Thinking constantly. Investigating deeply. And creatively expanding the space where people and the health care resources they need can come together.

### Cancer Care Reimbursement Model

UnitedHealthcare is conducting a pilot study with leading oncology groups to fight the most common cancers in creative, practical ways. There are two aspects of the study:

**First**, the new approach reimburses oncologists upfront for an entire cancer treatment program, instead of the current “fee-for-service” approach, which rewards volumes of care regardless of health outcomes.

**Second**, over the course of the pilot, various treatment regimens will be evaluated to identify which are the most effective for a range of clinical presentations.

#### Smarter reimbursement

Under the current system, oncologists recommend a specific treatment program that commonly includes chemotherapy drugs and administers them to the patient in his or her office. The oncologist then bills the patient's health insurance plan or payer for the retail price of the drugs, plus a charge for administering the drugs.

This new reimbursement model pays a new patient care fee for a patient's total cycle of treatment—it represents the profit margins oncologists made from the drugs. It will remain the same no matter what chemotherapy drugs are given, but the drug cost is always reimbursed. The new program, in effect, separates the oncologist's income from drug sales while preserving his or her ability to maintain a regular visit schedule with the patient.

#### Clinical best practices

Each medical group will choose a standard chemotherapy regimen for one of 19 clinical presentations and participate in performance reviews of their data to identify best practices. Treatment regimens will be evaluated based on the number of emergency room visits, incidence of complications, side effects

and, most importantly, health outcomes – that is, which treatments do the best job of fighting cancer.

As oncologists share best practices about which treatments are most effective – with no loss of revenue for the physician – we hope to see consistently improved patient outcomes.

### ALERT® Online

Successfully treating people with behavioral conditions is a difficult, complex process with many different variables. But we do know that therapists who regularly measure and monitor their patients' progress using brief questionnaires can achieve better outcomes, often in fewer sessions. Patients of therapists who received real-time feedback on their progress were 14 percent more likely to see improvement compared with patients of therapists who did not.<sup>1</sup>

ALERT Online is a web-based patient measurement tool from OptumHealth that graphs the patient's progress to an expected trajectory of change. This kind of feedback is especially important when the patient is not improving as expected, because it allows therapists to quickly respond and correct the course of treatment as needed.

ALERT Online helps our network clinicians improve their clinical outcomes, as well as compare their own effectiveness against their peers in the network. Members benefit too because clinicians with better-than-average outcomes are highlighted on our network directory, providing a valuable decision-making tool.

ALERT Online is the largest national program promoting outcomes-informed treatment. This innovative tool gives us the potential to help enhance the quality of mental health care for thousands of patients.

The ALERT Online pilot was rolled out in October to select provider groups in KY, MO, OR and TX. A national rollout is planned later in 2011.

## Client and Consumer Experience Program<sup>SM</sup>

Companies like Disney®, Best Buy® and Nordstrom® have led the way in designing what's called a "total customer experience" from a consumer perspective. Prescription Solutions is the first to apply these principles to the Prescription Benefit Management industry. It's called the Client and Consumer Experience Program.

One big goal of the program is to show that paying careful attention to our clients and their needs can help them make better pharmacy benefit decisions. A key example of how this works is a new program called the Benefit Preferences Tool. This is an interactive, real-time application that creates customized pharmacy benefit plans for prospects, clients or consultants – based on their unique needs and priorities.

Users provide their specific plan design preferences by responding to questions, comparisons and tradeoffs

that emphasize plan factors like lower overall drug costs versus increasing the use of generic drugs. They can also explore extending the effectiveness of our different disease management and clinical management programs in combination with their pharmacy benefit plan. Then the tool correlates their preferences to the plan offerings that best meets a client's goals.

The Client and Consumer Experience Program and Benefit Preferences Tool demonstrate our ability to innovate in order to strengthen our relationship with our clients and members. Now every member of our team, regardless of role, knows we all own the experience of our customers.

The Client and Consumer Experience Program is ongoing. The Benefit Preferences Tool (Phase II) will launch April 5, 2011.

## Innovation Bulletin board

### Mobile Consumer Portal

Prescription non-compliance has been called "the other drug problem." For example, only 50 percent of patients with heart disease, asthma or hypertension follow prescribing directions.<sup>2</sup>

To help combat this problem, Prescription Solutions has launched a strategic effort to make it easier for people to manage their prescription medications and therapy. This includes expanded web-based tools such as a new mobile version of our consumer website, as well as text message medication reminders. On the mobile site, registered users can refill mail service prescriptions, view prescription history, check the status of orders and more. Members can also use both the full and mobile sites to set up text message reminders to manage their medications.

Now our members can more easily manage their prescriptions with the technology they prefer. And we hope that will help keep them healthier and more compliant with their therapy.

### Caregivers of Veterans Study

The National Alliance for Caregiving, with funding from United Health Foundation, led a first-of-its kind effort to assess the needs of caregivers of veterans from WWII to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The study was designed to understand how providing care affects caregivers' lives. While some of the challenges caregivers of veterans face are shared by family caregivers in general, others are unique, such as dealing with physical disabilities plus emotional and mental health issues.

Our goal is for organizations serving caregivers of veterans to use the list of recommendations that came directly from the caregivers who participated in the study to improve, enhance or develop new programs and services to better meet their needs.

Visit [www.unitedhealthfoundation.org/veterans](http://www.unitedhealthfoundation.org/veterans) to download the full report or executive summary. In addition, you can also view a deeply moving video about veterans and their caregivers, presented by our Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Reed Tuckson.

1. Lambert, M.J., Harmon, C., Slade, K., et al (2005). Journal of Clinical Psychology, 61(2), 165-174.

2. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, <http://www.ahrq.gov/news/press/pr2010/hospmedpr.htm>

