

## White Paper: Delivering Innovation, Quality, and Access to U.S. Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families

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### Overview of UnitedHealth Group

UnitedHealth Group provides a highly-diversified and comprehensive array of health and well-being products and services that enable us to transform data into actionable intelligence and leverage the latest technologies to enhance customer experience, improve access, drive quality outcomes, and reduce health care costs. Our workforce of 150,000 people across all 50 states serve the health care needs of more than 85 million people across two distinct business platforms to help people live healthier lives and help the health care system work better for everyone.

**UnitedHealthcare:** Serving 45 million individuals at every stage of life, UnitedHealthcare's businesses combine modern benefits, consumer empowerment, clinical engagement, and delivery system modernization to deliver better quality and consistency at a lower cost. Our innovative consumer-focused approach creates smarter and more activated health care consumers and a simpler, more personalized health care experience.

**Optum:** Serving more than 64 million individuals, Optum engages consumers with innovative tools, aligns care delivery with integrated initiatives in partnership with care providers, and modernizes the system infrastructure with innovative health IT solutions. Optum provides services to two out of every five Fortune 500 employers, more than 400 global life sciences companies, and one in every five Americans.

### Meeting the Health Care Needs of our Military and Veterans

UnitedHealth Group is proud to bring our Enterprise-wide solutions to support the health care needs of service members, Veterans, and their families. Our breadth and scope uniquely position us to be able to apply our proven best practices from across the health care system to increase access, enhance quality, improve patient outcomes, and reduce costs for the military and Veterans communities we are privileged to serve. We are uniquely positioned to provide **mission critical support, enhanced access to behavioral health care and care in rural areas, and proven technology and innovative solutions** to deliver better care at an affordable cost. This White Paper describes but a sample of the capabilities that UHG can bring to the military and Veterans health arena.

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### Maximizing Capabilities to Meet Mission Critical Health Care Needs

UnitedHealth Group is engaged throughout the lifecycle of the service member, from recruitment, deployment, retirement, and transition to Veteran status, providing services that are "mission critical" to our Nation's service members, Veterans, and their families by managing large-scale health care programs to meet a continuum of health care needs:

- **Providing quality health care to military beneficiaries:** UnitedHealthcare Military & Veterans manages the health care benefits and services for nearly 3 million members of the military and their families in the 21-state TRICARE West Region.
- **Ensuring physical and mental readiness for duty:** Optum's Logistics Health Incorporated (LHI) has more than 25,000 trained and credentialed providers in its multi-specialty, nationwide network. In 2012, LHI provided more than 1.9 million health care services and served nearly 480,000 service members and Veterans through three core programs:
  - **U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command:** LHI performs specialty consultations and testing for military recruits in partnership with the Military Entrance Processing Command, ensuring timely medical processing of military applicants.

- **Department of Defense (DoD) Reserve Health Readiness Program:** LHI provides periodic health assessments and post deployment health assessments to Reserve and Guard members across the U.S., and provides the logistics and medical support to ensure these members are medically ready for deployment and provides critical assessment after deployments, including mental health.
- **Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Disability Exam Management Program:** LHI provides disability exams to Veterans in 5 regions of the U.S. encompassing 42 states. These evaluations may include behavioral health assessments for such mental health issues as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), as well as comprehensive physical exams.

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## Enhancing Access to Behavioral Health Services

Optum is the largest managed behavioral health organization in the nation, recognized as a proven and trusted leader in this industry, and has improved the quality of mental health care for our existing customers working to mitigate the stigma associated with seeking mental health services. Optum has provided behavioral health services for more than 25 years and currently serves more than 64 million people in both commercial and publicly funded programs through our vast provider network of over 115,000 clinicians nationwide. Optum's programs combine predictive modeling, evidence-based clinical outcomes management, and peer and family support, with access to the nation's largest comprehensive network of mental health and substance use disorder treatment providers.

### Innovative Approaches to Improving Mental Health

Military life presents unique and difficult challenges to service members and their families. As a result, military personnel and Veterans often experience increased rates of mental illness, including PTSD and other anxiety disorders, undiagnosed mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI), depression, and substance use that, if untreated, can lead to devastating consequences.

Optum's Clinical Model emphasizes engaging individuals in their own recovery, resilience, wellness and wellbeing. In order to assess each individual's needs, Optum utilizes the M3 Clinician tool to screen identified patients for behavioral health issues and place them in a low, medium, or high risk category to assign appropriate interventions based on the M3 result. The M3 tool has built in tracking and reporting features to monitor patient progress and clinical outcome measurements. Using the M3 Clinician tool, Optum can determine which patients fall within the top 20% of the most chronically ill (complex, costly, ongoing) or targeted high cost medical conditions.



Optum has several approaches that will improve mental health for Veterans:

- **Peer support services:** Optum has implemented peer support services that have demonstrated significant improvements to clinical care for mental illnesses and in general, increased access to health care, social supports and community resources. Peer support comes naturally to Veterans who have been trained to rely on each other in battle. Peer-to-peer outreach helps Veterans overcome the perceived stigma of living with a mental illness, motivates them to seek treatment for the first time, and encourages Veterans to stay on a treatment plan once they have accessed care. Optum has experience engaging peers to serve as support and coaches for other mental health consumers, similar to VA's experience in successfully employing Peer Support Technicians. Certified Veteran peer coaches empower fellow Veterans using tools that have been shown to enhance recovery and engagement. Our proven tools and strategies provide support not only for Veterans, but extend to include support for their families as well. The results of our peer support programs include significant decreases in inpatient and outpatient visits, as well as significant decrease in overall costs for members enrolled in these programs. Optum also has WorkLife resources, which include legal, financial, and mediation resources, as well as referrals to community agencies. All of these resources could be used to ensure that our Peer Support staff has the necessary information to refer peers to community based supports to address Veterans' needs where they are located.

- **Access to the largest network of behavioral health clinicians:** Optum maintains the largest national network, with over 115,000 clinicians – master’s-level clinicians and nurses, psychologists (Ph.D., Psy.D.) and psychiatrists (M.D.) – who are licensed and have at least three years of post-licensure practice experience. To ensure Veterans are immediately referred to the specialist who is most qualified to treat their specific problem, our network represents a full range of clinical specialties (PTSD, TBI, military/ Veteran population, depressive disorders, addictions, eating disorders, etc.). Providers are carefully selected for their specialty areas, using defined protocols created by our medical directors. Network Managers in our behavioral network services department regularly analyze the network and recruit new clinicians to enhance the depth and breadth of our network. Staff members maintain and continually update a detailed, state-by-state action plan that identifies the specific geographic, clinical, and cultural recruitment needs for each state. We also have a network expansion unit that explores specific geographic regions to help Network Managers conduct targeted recruitment when needed. Much of our ongoing efforts are driven by customer-specific needs, whether it is a new customer or a population change of an existing customer.
- **The integration of mental health services into primary care settings:** UnitedHealth Group’s unique capabilities allow us to integrate mental health/ substance use and medical care – either directly, through integrated programs, or indirectly, through close collaboration with local resources or other health plans – and to partner effectively with other agencies in service of whole-person wellness and recovery. Integration of mental health into the primary care setting begins with employing the biopsychosocial model, which is based upon the theory that biological, psychological and social factors all play a significant role in human functioning in the context of disease or illness.

Through use of this model, a Veteran is able to access mental health services through a variety of settings, including a physical health provider or other resource such as our member portal or an Optum Intake Specialist. Each entry point would provide complete and clear information on how to access services. In other words, we use a “no wrong door” policy that would provide Veterans with more ways to access services and in ways that would be most comfortable for each Veteran. Rather than creating barriers to care, we achieve effectiveness in allocating resources through prevention, by encouraging early intervention and providing easy access to the most appropriate care provider.

Optum also has resources and technical support available to providers who are willing to adopt an integrated care approach. Optum can support the primary care team by providing an Integration Specialist to assess current workflows and practices in order to re-design and implement evidence based stepped care programs that will build the capacity of the primary care team to efficiently and effectively manage the behavioral health issues along with the medical issues the Veteran is presenting with. As part of this package, Optum has specific stepped care interventions that map back to the M3 stratification and scores. Additional resources include our Behavioral Health Toolkit for the Health Care Professional, an FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) Document for incorporating mental health providers in primary care and a variety of online supports, such as our provider portal. Benefits of the integrated approach include greater prevention opportunities, improved health outcomes, and increased adherence to treatment along with greater access to services in environments patients already frequent, all of which reduces the administrative and cost burden on providers. We also have network and provider relations staff that can support providers directly in answering their questions and removing barriers to operating a successful, integrated care practice.

- **Mental health screening:** As part of our integrated approach, we support and strive to incorporate screening for mental health and substance abuse issues in primary care settings. Within this approach, the primary care provider (PCP) identifies Veterans who may be at risk of a mental health condition and in need of mental health services allowing for prevention and early intervention. We supply the PCP and the Veteran with helpful resources and links containing important information about common mental health conditions and their treatment. We also assist the PCP in obtaining consultation and/ or referral services for Veterans with mental health conditions.
- **Online support mechanisms for both Veterans and providers:** Optum has a variety of online capabilities and support tools for Veterans and providers that promote the biopsychosocial approach to health care. Optum offers all of our members free access to our behavioral portal, a confidential mental health, work/ life resource center offering interactive assessments, service provider and medication databases, self-help programs, and extensive information and tools. The portal focuses on mind-body integration for a practical, low-cost approach to wellness and well-being. Additionally, the portal provides individuals with access to care and benefit self-management tools, prevention programs, searchable directories, educational materials, calculators, videos, and more. Our member portal includes a variety of content centers designed specifically for military service members, Veterans, and their families, which include educational materials, videos, and webinars.

Within the provider portal, Optum has developed a webpage for practitioners serving military and Veteran beneficiaries that includes links to the following resources related:

- Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress;
  - VA/ DoD Clinical Practice Guidelines;
  - Mild Traumatic Brain Injury Pocket Guide Mobile Application;
  - Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center; and
  - Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health & Traumatic Brain Injury.
- **Supporting reintegration of Veterans in the workforce:** Optum's Liveandworkwell is a member and family resource site for people with questions regarding behavioral Health, employee assistance or WorkLife benefits. Through this program, we provide confidential access to professional care, self-help programs, interactive tools, and educational resources to help with life's changes and challenges. The Wellbeing website for Military and Federal Employees and their families offers the following services:
    - Supportive resources on suicide prevention/ PTSD;
    - Age-Appropriate children's resources to help with various different matters; and
    - Access to professional care, self-help programs and educational resources.
  - **Mental Health First Aid:** OptumHealth offers Mental Health First Aid Training to members and their families, employers, supervisors, nursing home staff, parole officers, law enforcement, teachers, clergy, among others. Mental Health First Aid is a groundbreaking public education program that helps the public identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. Mental Health First Aid is offered in the form of an interactive 12-hour course that presents an overview of mental illness and substance use disorders in the U.S. and introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, builds understanding of their impact, and overviews common treatments. Those who take the 12-hour course to certify as Mental Health First Aiders learn a five-step action plan encompassing the skills, resources and knowledge to help an individual in crisis connect with appropriate professional, peer, social, and self-help care.

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## Enhancing Access to Health Care in Rural Areas

Rural areas present challenges in providing timely, quality health care in the same manner our members have access to in urban areas. These rural health challenges go beyond just provider access and include higher turnover rates for service providers, as well as isolation by the health care professionals who remain. Results may include poorer continuity of care, lower levels of rapport between members and providers, and less consultative support across providers to address members' complex health care conditions.

Optum uses a multi-faceted approach to address rural behavioral health care. Taking into consideration the unique challenges of the providers and members in these areas, we leverage local as well as remote resources and services to address members' holistic health care needs and support rural behavioral health providers. Examples of these resources include field-based clinicians, community resources, peer support services, 24/7 crisis services and post stabilization follow-up, nurse advice line, and telepsychiatry.

- **Telehealth:** Optum currently administers telehealth in numerous locations to expand access to care for rural and frontier populations. Our telehealth services offer flexible, interactive, live consultations through the web or by telephone. Key features of our telehealth services include:
  - Ease of use through an immediate connection only requiring a computer and internet;
  - Ease of identifying available telehealth providers;
  - Ability to store clinical history and integrate information with personal health records and historical data including gaps in care and medication management information;
  - HIPAA compliance;
  - Transaction security; and
  - Clinical and administrative reporting.

- **Telepsychiatry:** Optum has endorsed the use of telepsychiatry in rural and frontier areas where we deliver public behavioral health. These services are particularly important in order to extend access to behavioral health services in underserved areas. Optum’s telepsychiatry model uses HIPAA-compliant video technology and secures web-based platforms to provide convenient, virtual access to quality psychiatric care. Telepsychiatry is improving overall patient outcomes by providing comprehensive, patient-centered coordinated care, reducing hospital readmissions, and improving compliance for high risk/ high cost patients, particularly in rural areas. One of our largest Telepsychiatry programs is in New Mexico. We conduct approximately 1,000 telepsychiatry encounters per month for New Mexico recipients, including children, Spanish-speaking users, the hearing impaired, and prison populations.

Utilizing cell phone technology, Optum’s LifeLens app allows nurses and case managers to take a picture or video and securely send it to a cloud storage location. From this protected online data storage site, other clinical professionals can review the image or video and provide consultation or next steps – without ever having to move the patient. Currently, the app is being utilized in multiple pilots in Arizona, Maryland, Nevada, and New Mexico.

In addition to Optum’s telehealth capabilities, NowClinic is an Internet-based service of Optum that allows consumers to select and interact with independent physicians and other health care providers at a fixed cost. Patients in rural areas can turn to NowClinic online care for acute conditions like bronchitis or a sinus infection; for chronic conditions like allergies, insomnia or a urinary tract infection; or for common viral maladies, including coughs, colds and the flu. Most conversations take just 10 minutes – no appointment is necessary – and they don’t require a time-consuming drive across town.

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## Leveraging Technology to Build a Better Health System

UnitedHealth Group is uniquely positioned at the intersection of health and technology. The nation’s largest health and wellness company is also a leader in health information technology. UnitedHealth Group has been recognized by Fortune Magazine as the #1 Innovator in Managed Healthcare for the fourth consecutive year. While there are many within UnitedHealth Group working to innovate and change the health system, within the UnitedHealth Group Information Technology (HIT) organization there is a team dedicated to seeking and leveraging innovations to the benefit of our military and Veterans. UnitedHealth Group is also a pioneer in health informatics and analytics.

- **Innovation partnership with VA:** UnitedHealth Group is a founding partner with the new VA Center of Innovation (formerly the VAI2) and has been collaborating closely with the VA’s innovation team over the last two years. The goal of this partnership is to collaborate to leverage the resources of both UnitedHealth Group and the VA to facilitate significant creative innovation. The unique innovation partnership between UnitedHealth Group and the VA Center for Innovation helps facilitate collaboration between these two unique health organizations. By collaborating and sharing of ideas, new concepts, and unique expertise, innovation opportunities can be shared and leveraged beyond what either organization could do alone.
- **Supporting data driven decision making:** UnitedHealth Group has the largest database of claims derived health records in the country and has a history of leveraging that data and technology to innovate. As one of the nation’s leading health analytics organizations providing products, services and consulting expertise, Optum utilizes a number of tools to enhance visualization of data to identify cost drivers, health care trends, and opportunities to target key programs to specific populations. Health Plan Manager is a unique analytic resource to evaluate plan sponsors’ health cost trend performance. Comparing a plan sponsor’s results to various industry benchmarks – prior experience, book-of-business norms, and industry peers – Health Plan Manager can segment data by dozens of attributes to analyze financial, clinical and individual decision-making patterns. Sponsors benefit from a targeted, data-driven roadmap to optimize their overall health plan performance. Few, if any, organizations have the history of leveraging Business Intelligence and data to change the health care system on the scale of Optum.
- **Largest private sector supporter of the VA Blue Button program:** UnitedHealth Group has provided Blue Button branded PHR’s to 29 million Americans as a show of support to the VA program. We continue to be active supporters of the program and work closely with the VA and HHS team on defining standards and adoption. UnitedHealth Group is a “Committed Member” of the Automated Blue Button Initiative, partnering with the VA and HHS to create national standards for the next generation sharing of health information across organizations.

- **Leader in health research informatics:** With the creation of Optum Labs in early 2013, consisting of a data and research partnership between the Mayo Clinic and Optum, Optum Labs is working to become the single largest repository of both clinical and administrative health data in the world. Functioning in the model of a nonprofit, Optum Labs is in the process of partnering with the leaders and major data holders of health information to become the nation's leading health research informatics organization. Optum Labs recently acquired Humedica, the industry leader in leveraging data for health research. Optum Labs already has administrative data on over 100 million lives spanning 20 years. When matched with de-identified clinical data from Mayo, major universities, and others, the Optum Labs research center located in Boston near Harvard and MIT will be optimally suited to fully leverage the promise of health care analytics to cure diseases and improve health. The goal of Optum Labs is to become for health informatics research what the Hadron Collider is to physics; a powerful coalition of data and experts that is able to do more collectively than any one organization could do alone. The VA leadership has already begun potential partnership discussions with Optum Labs. Led and facilitated by the VA Center for Innovation, the VA recognizes the unique opportunity and capability of Optum Labs to improve health for Veterans and all Americans. Those exploratory discussions are currently in process.
- **Measuring quality and efficiency:** Another example of leveraging technology and innovation to improve health is UnitedHealth Group's Premium Designation program. Using national, evidence-based guidelines for quality and local market benchmarks for cost efficiency, UnitedHealth Group objectively measures the quality and efficiency of doctors nationally. UnitedHealth Group can not only help consumers identify the providers that get the best clinical outcomes, and it can also help them identify those that are efficient and the highest value. The related ability to identify and offer transplant patients access to the best transplant doctors and facilities in the country has both lowered costs and improved outcomes for many in a way that was not previously possible or fact based.
- **Enhancing health care cost transparency:** While a number of cost estimators are on the market, UnitedHealthcare's myHealthcare Cost Estimator is unique in that it gives patients, on mobile devices, access to the actual costs for a given doctor for a given procedure based on the contract rate UnitedHealth Group has with the doctor or facility. Now patients can not only compare quality, they can see and compare the true cost and more fully engage with their doctors to optimize their care. Today, due to the leveraging of real time data, patients can have a fact based conversation with their doctor about getting a procedure at a facility with lower cost and higher quality. Armed with information like this, consumers can now begin to change the quality and delivery of health care.

## Summary

UnitedHealth Group is committed to applying our leading innovations, data analytics, and expertise to ensure the service members, Veterans, and their families are receiving the best health care. UnitedHealth Group proven record of innovation and quality, along with programs that are leveraging technology to build a better health system, provide a solid foundation for collaboration and partnerships with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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