

Press Release



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Cigna Medical Group Receives Highest Level of Recognition for Physician Group Medical Homes from National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)

- NCQA recognition applies to all 22 of Cigna Medical Group's health care centers in Phoenix
- Cigna Medical Group and CIGNA HealthCare have formed a collaborative accountable care program to improve access to care and improve quality while lowering medical costs
- Program includes registered nurse care coordinator and emphasizes preventive care, disease management and health improvement

PHOENIX – March 8, 2011 – Cigna Medical Group, the multi-specialty medical group practice division of CIGNA HealthCare of Arizona, has received the highest level of recognition possible from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) for meeting national quality standards for physician group **medical homes**. The NCQA recognition applies to all 22 of Cigna Medical Group's health care centers in Phoenix.

In 2010 CIGNA HealthCare, health care subsidiaries of CIGNA Corporation (NYSE: CI), and Cigna Medical Group launched a **collaborative accountable care medical home** program, a care model designed to **improve quality** and **lower medical costs** by expanding **access** and improving **care coordination** for patients. The program is one of eight such initiatives that CIGNA HealthCare has launched since 2008 to test and refine this model of care and is the first **patient-centered** program in the Phoenix area involving a large medical group practice and a single private payer.

Through this initiative, the Cigna Medical Group physician practice coordinates all aspects of an individual's medical care - especially for patients with chronic illness or ongoing medical needs. Patients do not need to do anything differently to receive the benefits of the collaborative accountable care program and should continue to see their Cigna Medical Group physician.

One key to this initiative is a registered nurse who serves as the individual's clinical **care coordinator** and emphasizes wellness, chronic condition management and health improvement through direct communication with patients. The care coordinator is essentially a navigator who helps connect patients to CIGNA HealthCare's clinical programs, such as health and lifestyle coaching and chronic condition support; and assists high risk patients with physician appointments.

"Collaborative accountable care programs can help put the health care system's focus back where it needs to be, on the relationship between patients and their doctors," said Dr. Mark Wiest, chief medical officer for CIGNA HealthCare of Arizona. "We're working with Cigna Medical Group to support the physician-patient relationship and helping physicians address potential gaps in care, which will lead to healthier people and lower costs."

"We really view this collaboration with CIGNA HealthCare as an extension of our care team," said Dr. Jim Burrell, chief medical officer of Cigna Medical Group. "Together, we can provide a more seamless health care experience for our patients."

A CIGNA HealthCare case study conducted in 2010 showed that patients whose care was coordinated by physicians at Cigna Medical Group had a seven percent **lower total medical cost** than their matched comparison group. The study also showed that Cigna Medical Group physicians attained a three percent **higher quality performance** compared to their market peers, driven largely by higher breast cancer testing rates and better management of diabetes and hypertension.

“A key driver of these outcomes is the high level of patient access we provide through outpatient services, urgent care locations with after-hours care, and online e-visits - which are all key components of the patient-centered medical home,” said Burrell. “Cigna Medical Group has long incorporated the principles of the patient-centered model so we are pleased to be recognized by NCQA.”

CIGNA HealthCare’s collaborative accountable care initiatives use the principles of the patient-centered medical home as their foundation. These programs promote physician accountability by providing additional compensation to doctors only if they meet specifically-defined targets for **improved health outcomes** and **lowered medical costs**.

In a patient-centered medical home model, care is customized to an individual patient’s needs and is anchored in the patient-physician relationship. With a primary care team coordinating and overseeing all aspects of patient care, this model encourages coordinated care rather than the fragmented, episodic care that many acute and chronically ill patients currently experience. It also encompasses:

- **integrated care:** coordination across all elements of the health care system, including specialists, hospitals and outpatient services;
- **quality and safety:** evidence-based medicine, **electronic health records** to track medical history, NCQA certification; and,
- **enhanced access:** better appointment availability, extended hours, e-visits, on-call availability, onsite urgent care

CIGNA's patient-centered programs include multi-payer pilots in [Colorado](#), [New Hampshire](#), [Pennsylvania](#), and [Vermont](#), as well as CIGNA-only collaborative accountable care initiatives in [Connecticut](#), [Georgia](#), Maine, [Missouri](#), [New Hampshire](#), [Tennessee](#) and [Texas](#). CIGNA has been a member of the [Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative](#) since October 2007.

About CIGNA

CIGNA Corporation (NYSE: CI) is a global health service and financial holding company dedicated to helping people improve their health, well-being and sense of security. CIGNA Corporation's operating subsidiaries in the United States provide an integrated suite of health services, such as medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy and vision care benefits, as well as group life, accident and disability insurance. CIGNA offers products and services in over 27 countries and jurisdictions and has approximately 65 million customer relationships throughout the world. All products and services are provided exclusively by such operating subsidiaries and not by CIGNA Corporation. Such operating subsidiaries include Life Insurance Company of North America, CIGNA Life Insurance Company of New York, and Connecticut General Life Insurance Company. To learn more about CIGNA, visit www.cigna.com. To sign up for email alerts or an RSS feed of company news, log on to <http://newsroom.cigna.com/rss>. Also, follow us on Twitter at [@cigna](#), visit CIGNA's YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com> and listen to CIGNA's podcast series with healthy tips and information at <http://www.cigna.com/podcasts> or by searching "CIGNA" in iTunes.

About Cigna Medical Group

Cigna Medical Group, the multi-specialty group practice division of CIGNA HealthCare of Arizona, Inc., is one of the Valley's largest group practices with 22 medical offices, three with onsite Urgent Care centers, and 10 CMG CareToday convenience care clinics located throughout Metropolitan Phoenix. To learn more about Cigna Medical Group and the services they provide, please visit www.CignaMedicalGroup.com.