

Village Health Partners and Cigna Start Accountable Care Program to Improve Health Outcomes and Lower Costs

PLANO, Texas & BLOOMFIELD, Conn., January 15, 2013 - Cigna (NYSE:CI) and [Village Health Partners](#), a nationally-recognized primary care practice serving more than 40,000 patients throughout North Texas through two locations, have launched a [collaborative accountable care](#) initiative to expand **patient access** to health care, improve **care coordination**, and achieve the "**triple aim**" of **improved health outcomes** (quality), **affordability** and **patient satisfaction**.

Collaborative accountable care is Cigna's approach to accomplishing the same population health goals as **accountable care organizations**, or **ACOs**. The program will benefit individuals covered by a Cigna health plan who receive care from a Village Health Partners physician. The program with Village Health Partners is Cigna's third such collaboration in North Texas and its sixth in the state.

"As a primary care practice, nothing is more important to our organization than helping the communities we serve thrive by engaging our patients through preventive care and education," said Dr. Christopher Crow, co-founder of Village Health Partners. "Cigna's commitment to changing the paradigm from volume to value fits with the vision we have at Village Health Partners."

Under the program, Village Health Partners monitors and coordinates all aspects of an individual's medical care. Patients continue to go to their current physician and automatically receive the benefits of the program. Individuals who are enrolled in a Cigna health plan and later choose to seek care from a doctor in the medical group will also have access to the benefits of the program. There are no changes in any plan requirements regarding referrals to specialists. Patients most likely to see the immediate benefits of the program are those who need help managing chronic conditions, such as diabetes or heart disease.

Critical to the program's benefits are clinical care coordinators, employed by Village Health Partners, who help patients with chronic conditions or other health challenges navigate the health care system. The care coordinators are aligned with a team of Cigna case managers to ensure a high degree of collaboration between the medical group and Cigna that ultimately results in a better experience for the individual.

The care coordinators will enhance care by using patient-specific data from Cigna to help identify patients being discharged from the hospital who might be at risk for readmission, as well as patients who may be overdue for important health screenings or who may have skipped a prescription refill. The care coordinators are part of the physician-led care team that helps patients get the follow-up care or screenings they need, identifies potential complications related to medications and helps prevent chronic conditions from worsening.

Care coordinators can also help patients schedule appointments, provide health education and refer patients to Cigna's clinical programs, such as disease management programs for diabetes, heart disease and other conditions; and lifestyle management programs, such as programs for tobacco cessation, weight management and stress management.

Cigna will compensate Village Health Partners for the medical and care coordination services it provides. Additionally, the medical group may be rewarded through a "pay for performance" structure if it meets targets for improving quality and lowering medical costs.

"Cigna's collaborative accountable care program aims to change the U.S. health care system from one that emphasizes the amount of care that doctors deliver to one that emphasizes the quality of that care," said Dr. Frederick Watson, Cigna's senior medical director for North Texas. "A patient-centered system that's focused on prevention and wellness, and that rewards doctors for value rather than volume of services, will ultimately result in a healthier population and lower medical costs, which is good for individuals, families, employers and doctors."

The principles of the patient-centered medical home are the foundation of Cigna's collaborative accountable care initiatives. Cigna then builds on that foundation with a strong focus on collaboration and communication with physician practices. Cigna is now engaged in [52 collaborative accountable care initiatives](#) in 22 states, encompassing nearly 510,000 Cigna customers and more than 14,000 doctors, including more than 6,500 primary care physicians and more than 7,500 specialists. Cigna launched its first collaborative accountable care program in 2008 and its goal is to have 100 of them in place with one million customers by the end of 2014.

About Village Health Partners

Founded in 2007, Village Health Partners is a nationally-recognized primary medical practice serving more than 40,000 North Texas patients through two locations in Plano, Texas. Village Health Partners focuses on the quality, access and convenience of care for its patients. The practice is dedicated to helping the communities it serves thrive, by offering access to unsurpassed value in healthcare delivery. Village Health Partners and its physicians have been recognized by Congress for their efforts to improve healthcare and have received numerous awards including "Practice of the Year," by Physicians Practice, The Davies Award by the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS). Village Health Partners was the first practice in North Texas to achieve the National Center for Quality Assurance's (NCQA) Patient Centered Medical Home Certification as well as Excellence in Diabetes Care. The practice has been repeatedly recognized for Best Doctors in Family Medicine by D Magazine and Texas Monthly. To learn more visit www.villagehealthpartners.com.

About Cigna

Cigna Corporation (NYSE: CI) is a global health service company dedicated to helping people improve their health, well-being and sense of security. All products and services are provided exclusively by or through operating subsidiaries of Cigna Corporation, including Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, Life Insurance Company of North America and Cigna Life Insurance Company of New York. Such products and services include an integrated suite of health services, such as medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, vision, supplemental benefits, and other related products including group life, accident and disability insurance. Cigna maintains sales capability in 30 countries and jurisdictions, and has approximately 71 million customer relationships throughout the world. To learn more about Cigna®, including links to follow us on Facebook or Twitter, visit www.cigna.com.

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available: <http://www.businesswire.com/multimedia/home/20130115005485/en/>