QLink Physician Network Collaborates With Cigna to Improve Health and Lower Costs in Middle Tennessee

BRENTWOOD, Tenn., October 29, 2015 - Cigna (NYSE: CI) has launched a collaborative care initiative with Brentwood-based QLink Physician Network (QLink) that aims to improve patient access to health care, enhance care coordination, and achieve the goal of improved health, affordability and patient experience. The initiative became effective October 1 and is one of 10 Cigna Collaborative Care programs in place in Tennessee.

**Cigna Collaborative Care** is the company’s approach to accomplishing the same population health goals as accountable care organizations, or ACOs. The new arrangement will benefit nearly 20,000 people covered by a Cigna health plan who receive care from 73 QLink Physician Network doctors. QLink Physician Network, a subsidiary of TriStar Medical Network, is a physician-driven and physician-led clinical integration program in Middle Tennessee.

In places where it's been introduced, Cigna Collaborative Care is helping to improve the health of Cigna customers while effectively managing medical costs. The programs are helping to close gaps in care, such as missed health screenings or prescription refills, reinforcing the appropriate use of hospital emergency rooms, increasing the number of preventive health visits and improving follow-up care for people transitioning from the hospital to home.

"One of Cigna's strengths is our collaboration with health care professionals and the way we work together with doctors to provide value to Cigna customers," said Greg Allen, Cigna president for Tennessee. "Improving quality, access and costs makes a difference in the lives and household budgets of our customers. For doctors, having better information and more resources supporting their medical practice means they can focus more on treating patients."

"The QLink and Cigna partnership is an opportunity for physicians to band together to focus on coordination and quality of care," said Dr. Robert Quinn, president of the QLink Board.

Under the program, QLink doctors will monitor and coordinate all aspects of an individual's medical care. Patients will continue to go to their current physicians 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 QLink physician 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, heart disease and obesity.

Critical to the program's benefits are the registered nurse clinical care coordinators, employed by QLink, who will 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 physician group and Cigna, which will ultimately provide a better experience for the individual.

The care coordinators will enhance care by using patient-specific data from Cigna to help identify individuals being discharged from the hospital who might be at risk for readmission, as well as individuals who may be overdue for important health screenings or who may have skipped a prescription refill. The care coordinators are part of physician-led care teams that will help people get the follow-up care or screenings they need, identify potential complications related to medications and help prevent chronic conditions from worsening.
Care coordinators can also help individuals schedule appointments, provide health education and refer people to Cigna's clinical support programs that are part of their employer's health plan.

Cigna will compensate QLink for the medical and care coordination services it provides. Additionally, physicians may be rewarded through a "pay for value" structure for meeting targets for improving quality and lowering medical costs.

Cigna has been at the forefront of the accountable care organization movement since 2008 and now has 134 Cigna Collaborative Care arrangements with large physician groups that span 29 states, reach nearly 1.5 million commercial customers and encompass nearly 60,000 doctors, including approximately 30,000 primary care physicians and 30,000 specialists.

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 more than 89 million customer relationships throughout the world. To learn more about Cigna®, including links to follow us on Facebook or Twitter, visit www.cigna.com.

About QLink Physician NetworkSM

QLink Physician Network, a subsidiary of TriStar Medical Network, is a physician-driven and physician-led clinical integration program in Middle Tennessee. Clinical integration provides the opportunity to build on the core strengths of clinical quality and service excellence to take healthcare delivery to a higher level of performance - top quality care at lower cost. The vehicle to achieve this is a clinically integrated physician network, combining physicians and physician groups with hospitals to create a true, clinically-integrated organization.