UNC Health Alliance and Cigna Collaborate to Improve Health and Value in North Carolina

BLOOMFIELD, Conn., 18 October, 2016 - Cigna (NYSE: CI) together with UNC Health Care and UNC Health Alliance, a Clinically Integrated Network are launching a collaborative care initiative that aims to improve the quality and value of health care and the patient experience, while making an impact on the health of the community through enhanced access to care, care coordination and affordability. The initiative will be the ninth Cigna collaborative care program in the Carolinas.

Cigna Collaborative Care is Cigna's approach to accomplishing the same population health goals as accountable care organizations, or ACOs. The new arrangement will benefit people who have a health plan that is insured or administered by Cigna starting January 1, 2017 and who receive primary care from a UNC Health Alliance provider.

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.

“Cigna’s collaborative care approach provides a platform for physician collaboration and access to additional information from Cigna that allows our providers to deliver more efficient and effective care,” said Seth Glickman, M.D., UNC Health Alliance president. “This program is closely aligned with the UNC Health Alliance’s goal of providing patient-centered, coordinated, high-quality health care for residents of North Carolina.”

“A customer-centered health care delivery system that emphasizes prevention and primary care, that rewards physicians for the quality of care and improved health outcomes will ultimately lead to a healthier population and lower medical costs,” said Edward Hunsinger, M.D., Cigna’s senior medical director for the Carolinas.

Under the program, UNC Health Alliance providers 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 UNC Health Alliance 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 UNC Health Alliance, 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 health plan.

Cigna will compensate UNC Health Alliance for the medical and care coordination services it provides. The financial structure is centered around paying for the value of care, which includes quality and efficiency.

Cigna has been at the forefront of the accountable care organization movement since 2008 and now has 160 Cigna Collaborative Care arrangements with large physician groups. They span 29 states, reach more than 1.8 million commercial customers and encompass more than 82,000 doctors, including nearly 38,000 primary care physicians and more than 44,000 specialists.

About UNC Health Alliance

UNC Health Alliance is a physician-led network of more than 3,600 UNC Health Care employed providers and community physician partners, working together to provide evidence-based, patient-centered, affordable health care to patients at more than 400 locations throughout 36 counties across North Carolina. UNC Health Alliance is a Clinically Integrated Network – an organization of providers who collaborate across the health care continuum to improve quality, control health care costs, and work in partnership to provide coordinated care to better the patient and provider experience.

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