



Optum Managed Transplant Program: Mitigating Volatility and Controlling Costs

Health care industry transplant trends are troubling, as the number of people in need of a transplant grows and costs escalate. The Optum Managed Transplant Program helps health plans control transplant costs, mitigate risk, and improve member outcomes by providing access to an extensive network of Centers of Excellence and dedicated transplant nurse case managers.



Transplant costs and risk mitigation

High-cost medical procedures, such as transplants, can place health plans at significant financial risk. In 2011, the average billed charges per transplant were \$471,857. In 2012, a health plan covering 100,000 lives was expected to incur \$7.4 million in transplant costs.

One strategy to mitigate the high cost and extreme unpredictability of transplant incidence is to cede transplant risk to a carve-out entity. By ceding risk, health plans can more accurately predict costs and return transplantation to a stable budget item.

The Optum Managed Transplant Program is a transplant carve-out. The program provides first-dollar transplant coverage for virtually all transplant-related costs in exchange for a predictable monthly premium. Members pay no out-of-pocket expenses in the form of deductibles, co-pays or co-insurance. Transplant-related expenses for solid organ, blood and marrow transplants are covered from one day prior to the transplant through 365 days following the transplant. Coverage includes patient evaluation, organ procurement, hospital, physician and home health costs, outpatient treatment, immunosuppressant drugs, travel, lodging and other transplant-related expenses.

With the risk redistributed to Optum, health plans can enjoy reduced capital reserve requirements, allowing them to reinvest capital into other, high-return business priorities.

Centers of excellence promote quality care

The Optum Managed Transplant Program maintains a select network of high-performing transplant providers consisting of 148 transplant Centers of Excellence (COE) and 801 transplant programs. Optum uses an extensive set of qualifying criteria including transplant volume, patient and graft survival statistics, and program structure to select only the best programs that demonstrate excellence in both superior clinical outcomes and financial performance. The benefits to health plans include a 12 percent reduction in overall transplant incidence by avoiding inappropriate transplants, an 18 percent reduction in hospital length of stay, a reduced rate of re-transplantation, and coordinated education and follow-up to foster patient compliance.

Optum COE facilities are located across the United States, offering patients convenience and choice. Approximately 97 percent of the U.S. population resides within 250 miles of an Optum transplant program.

Optum re-evaluates participating centers and re-negotiates rates with participating providers to manage costs. As the country's leading source of transplant referrals, Optum has leverage in negotiating the most competitive contracts possible.

Supplementing our COE network is our transplant nurse case management staff — each of whom has experience in transplant case management. Patients are assigned a dedicated transplant nurse case manager to serve as their advocate throughout the transplant process. Transplant nurse case managers ensure adherence to evidence-based care and end-to-end transplant coordination so that each member receives the best care possible.

Extensive experience gives Optum the upper hand in transplant management

Developing the infrastructure to effectively manage transplant procedures can be challenging. From contracting with the best providers to monitoring patient progress and keeping up with best practices, transplant management is a highly complex and specialized practice.

Since 1986, Optum has developed and fine-tuned industry-leading organ and bone marrow transplant competencies. Optum manages 17 percent of all commercial transplants performed in the country through our COE transplant network, which is second only to the national government in the number of transplants performed annually. Receiving care from an Optum COE improves patient outcomes, delivering higher year-one patient and graft survival rates compared to non-COE, while decreasing costs for health plans and members alike.

For more information on the Optum Managed Transplant Program and how we can help, please contact your Optum account manager.