

New in 2025: Changes to Follow-up Care after Hospitalization

Helping patients get care within 7 days of discharge

Effective January 1, 2025

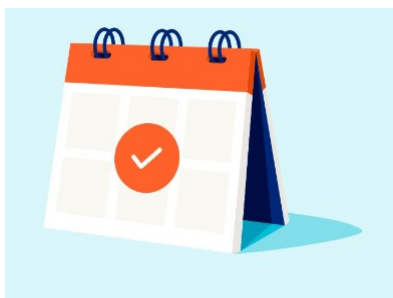
The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) has made changes to the Follow-up after Hospitalization (FUH) measure that includes new options for post-discharge mental health appointments:

- Follow-up appointment focus is now on mental health services rather than on the specialty of the provider delivering the service
- In addition to licensed mental health care providers, medical health care providers and other non-licensed mental health providers can now close the gap with post-discharge mental health services using qualified billing and diagnostic codes
- Peer support and residential treatment services are now options for gap closure

Why are post discharge appointments important?

Timely post discharge appointments after inpatient stays for mental health are vital to patient success increasing community tenure and reducing readmissions.

FUH measures post-discharge appointment attendance for a qualified mental health service **within 7 days of discharge**.



How you can help

- Prior to discharge, schedule an appointment for a mental health service to occur within 7 days of discharge
 - If the patient is unable to be seen within 7 days, schedule an appointment within 30 days of discharge
 - Appointments by virtual visit/telemental health qualify for FUH
 - The appointment will not count if it occurs on the day of discharge
- Review the discharge plan and appointment details with the patient
- Report the appointment details to Optum upon discharge so we can help support appointment adherence
- The patient must attend the appointment in order to meet the requirements of the measure

Day 1 is the **day after discharge**:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
13	14 Discharged	15 Day 1	16 Day 2	17 Day 3	18 Day 4	19 Day 5
20 Day 6	21 Day 7	22 Day 8	23 Day 9	24 Day 10	25 Day 11	26 Day 12

Appointment adherence resources

The [Optum Provider Directory](#) includes the **Express Access Network**, a network of Optum-credentialed providers (individuals and group practices) who offer Optum patients a routine appointment within 5 business days of a request. Providers enrolled in Express Access will have a notation next to their name in the directory.



[Search the directory](#)

Follow-up care best practices

- Engage the patient and their supports in the discharge planning, ensuring they understand and commit to their follow-up appointment to increase the likelihood of their attendance
- Address any barriers related to attending their follow-up appointment
- Suggest they set up a reminder in their phone/calendar and/or provide an appointment card
- Schedule a 3-day FUH visit to allow for rescheduling/missed appointments
- Suggest virtual appointments, if appropriate to meet the patient's needs
- Request that patients sign a release of information
- Send discharge paperwork and inform Optum of the appointment details to the appropriate outpatient provider within 24 hours of discharge
- Develop a crisis plan with the patient to prevent readmissions

UnitedHealthcare of Louisiana Medicaid

Quick Reference Guide: Facility Discharge Planning



How We Can Help You

Care Coordination Program

Through collaboration, we can improve patient health, access to care, and transitions back to the community by developing robust relationships with our facility care teams and our outpatient providers. Our teams consist of clinical support and licensed professional clinicians, who reside within the state of Louisiana and are well-versed in their knowledge of community resources to assist patients moving along in their care continuum. The benefits of Care Coordination include the following:

- Provide outreach and patient support post-discharge, including scheduling appointments for mental health and substance use treatment
- Help overcome barriers to treatment including transportation to appointments
- Review plan benefits and facilitate connections with community resources
- Facilitate relapse prevention plans for patients with behavioral health conditions by encouraging wellness and recovery planning

For information regarding the Care Coordination program or if you need assistance with a patient, please call member services at 1- 866-675-1607.

Discharge Team

The Discharge Team was created to collaborate to ensure patients transition safely and effectively from Health care facilities to their next care setting. The Discharge Team can support locating INN provider 7-day follow up appointments and other post discharge services. Our team conducts outreach to facilities upon member admission to obtain FUH details and assist with removing barriers to obtaining and keeping follow up appointments. For information regarding the Discharge Team, please email la_facility_fuh_assistance@optum.com.

STAR Portal training available

If assistance is needed on how to use the STAR portal to include how to request an authorization or a concurrent review, please click here: [STAR portal Training](#). For first time users, select “first-time user” to create log-in. For training on how to include discharge details to the portal, please click here: [Discharge portal training](#).

Why Are Post Discharge Appointments Important?

The attendance of timely post discharge appointments for a mental health service is vital to patient success and outcomes by increasing community tenure and reducing readmissions. One specific HEDIS® measure, Follow-Up After Hospitalization for Mental Illness, is used to measure attendance to a qualified post discharge appointment within 7 days of discharge for members 6 years of age or older.



Follow-Up After Hospitalization for Mental Illness (FUH):

Effective Jan 1, 2025, NCQA has made changes to the FUH measure that include new options for mental health follow-up services:

- In addition to licensed mental health care providers, medical health care providers and other non-licensed mental health professionals/paraprofessionals can perform the mental health follow-up services using qualified billing and diagnostic codes
- Peer support and residential treatment services were added to the options for gap closure

Which providers and services qualify as a post-discharge appointment?

Qualified Appointments
Individual outpatient mental health services (therapy, case management, peer support)
Group/family outpatient mental health services
Appointment with a primary care or other medical provider that addresses the patient's mental health
Telehealth visits for mental health
Intensive outpatient program for mental health
Partial hospitalization with a mental health diagnosis
Psychiatric residential treatment
Outpatient electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)
Home health services for mental health
Mental health services at Community Mental Health Center, Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics and Federal Qualified Health Centers

Non-Qualified Appointments
Appointment only for substance use treatment (no mental health diagnosis or service)
Appointment for medical treatment only (no mental health diagnosis or service)
Pastoral counseling
School counseling
Other healthcare services with no mental health diagnosis or service

Appointments by telemental health qualify for FUH.

The day of discharge is day zero. **This day does not count as a qualified appointment date.** To count towards the FUH measure, the aftercare follow-up visit must occur between Days 1 and 7.



Resources to Assist with Appointment Adherence

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan Member Service Line

- Healthy Louisiana Plan: 1-866-675-1607

UnitedHealthcare Provider Directory- some providers may not have availability within 7 days.

myUHC.com/communityplan > Select plan the patient has > include location you want to find a provider (example Baton Rouge, LA)> Select People> Select "Provider Type" option> Select More Filters> Select under "Availability" Express Access Network Providers (should have aftercare appointments within 7 days).

Transportation

Patients/providers are encouraged to reserve non-emergency transportation (NEMT) through ModivCare, a transportation vendor. Patients can utilize the transportation benefit for discharges from a hospital, clinic appointments, or pharmacy medication pick-up when there is no other means to reach the healthcare appointment. When possible, transportation to the pharmacy is encouraged to be scheduled the same day as outpatient appointments. ModivCare requires transportation be scheduled at least 2 business days before the appointment. Staff are available 24/7; however, if a facility knows in advance, call between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm when possible. Website link: [Medical Transportation | Louisiana Department of Health](#) or [Louisiana | Modivcare](#)



How to schedule non-emergency medical transportation appointments

You or your patients can arrange NEMT services by calling 1-866-726-1472 or You may contact ModivCare on behalf of your patients, regardless of the patient's plan at 1-877-564-9835. Check the status of the scheduled ride by calling Where's My Ride at 1-866-726-1473.

Best Practices

We would like to collaborate and partner with you to provide optimal patient care.

Please consider the following:

- Discuss the importance of attending mental health follow-up appointments and suggest they set up a reminder in their phone/calendar
- Schedule a 3-day FUH visit to allow for rescheduling/missed appointments
- Request that patients sign a release of information
- Send discharge paperwork to the outpatient provider within 24 hours of discharge
- Suggest virtual appointments, if applicable
- Develop a crisis plan with the patient to prevent readmissions

Follow-Up After Hospitalization (FUH)

Options to schedule an outpatient behavioral health patient appointment

Providers who offer virtual and/or in-person services for both children and adults within 7 days of discharge.		
Resource/Parish	Referral/Scheduling Method	Additional Information
Magnolia Family Services Virtual Statewide	By Phone: 985-449-4055	Website: www.magnoliafamilyservices.com
Post Trauma Institute (PTI) Virtual Statewide	Online: www.mypsychnetwork.com/make-an-appointment By phone: 225-751-5412	Website: www.mypsychnetwork.com Email: intake@mypsychnetwork.com
Cognitive Development Center 16 Locations Statewide	Lafayette: 318-714-8670 Lake Charles: 318-714-8670 Ferriday: 318-225-8007 Jena: 318-714-8670 Alexandria: 318-225-8007 Shreveport: 318-670-3170 Leesville: 337-404-7731 Bastrop: 318-239-3890 Columbia: 318-649-6399 Farmerville: 318-368-2300 Lake Providence: 318-559-0551 Monroe: 318-712-3381 Tallulah: 318-574-1232	Website: www.louisianabehavioralhealthservices.com/contact for all locations.
Metropolitan HSD Region 1	By phone: 504-568-3130	Website: www.mhsdla.org 24-Hour Crisis Line: 504-826-2675 Central City, Charters-Pontchartrain, Algiers, New Orleans East, and St. Bernard
Capital Area HSD Region 2	By phone: 225-925-1906	Website: www.cahsd.org 24-Hour Crisis Line: 844-452-2133
Life Changing Solutions Region 4 & 6	Online: www.lifechangingsolutionsllc.com Lafayette: 337-205-6073 Alexandria: 318-542-4642	Website: www.lifechangingsolutionsllc.com Office and Community Based near Alexandria and Lafayette
Northwest Louisiana HSD Region 7	Many: 225-925-1906 Minden: 318-371-3001 Natchitoches: 318-357-3122 Shreveport: 318-676-5111	Website: www.nlhsd.org 24-Hour Crisis Line: 866-416-5370
Florida Parishes HAS Region 9	Bogalusa: 985-732-6610 Denham Springs: 225-665-0473 Mandeville: 985-624-4450 Rosenblum: 985-646-6402 Slidell: 985-646-6402	Website: www.fphsa.org 24-Hour Crisis Line: 504-269-2673
UnitedHealthcare Provider Directory – Some providers may not have availability within 7 days		
Find a Provider	Search: www.myuhc.com/communityplan Contact the provider to schedule.	The directory can be searched for both in- person and virtual appointments.
Reminder: Appointments on same day as discharge do not count towards FUH compliance		