Fact Sheet

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Community Care

Community Care Network (CCN) —Regions 1-4

For Veterans

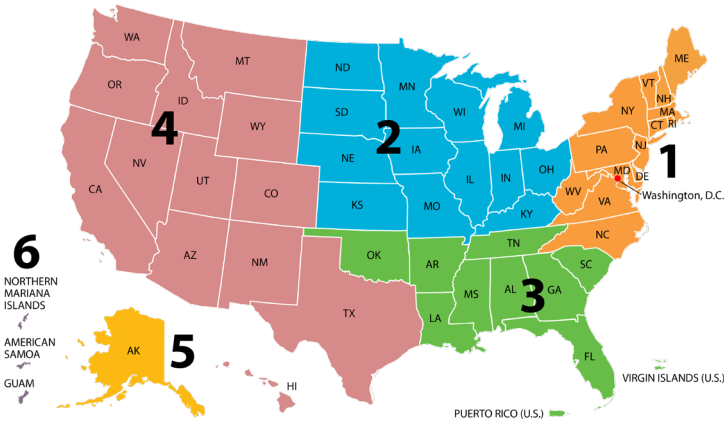
The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to providing Veterans with the right care at the right time from the right provider. To that end, VA is consolidating multiple community care programs to streamline services, ensure robust care coordination, and improve Veterans' access to the health care they have earned through their service.

An important part of having one method for Veterans to receive care from community providers is the Community Care Network (CCN). CCN is a network of highly-qualified, credentialed community health care providers that work with VA providers to ensure Veterans receive the health care services they need when they are unable to receive care at a VA medical facility.

On Dec. 28, 2018, VA announced a new partnership with Optum Public Sector Solutions, Inc. (Optum), part of UnitedHealth Group, Inc., as the third-party administrator (TPA) to manage CCN Regions 1, 2, and 3.

On Aug. 8, 2019, VA announced a new partnership with TriWest Healthcare Alliance (TriWest) to manage CCN Region 4.

Optum and TriWest bring years of experience successfully delivering services to beneficiaries associated with federal and state agencies.



Overview

Q1. How will CCN affect Veterans?

CCN is a robust network of community providers allowing Veterans greater choice and accessibility to care outside of VA facilities. VA will directly schedule community care appointments for Veterans through the local facility, with support, as needed, from VA's contracted CCN TPA for Regions 1, 2 and 3, Optum or for Region 4, TriWest. Veterans will also be able to schedule their own appointments with support from local VA staff, if desired. The CCN contracts were developed with a focus on transparency, accountability, quality, and increased communications between VA and Veterans.

Healthcare Services

Q2. Which health care services will CCN include?

Health care services provided as part of CCN include medical, surgical, complementary and integrative health services (CIHS), and dental services for Veterans who are unable to receive care at a local VA medical facility. Durable medical equipment (DME) and prescription medications (up to a 14-day supply) will be provided for immediate needs.

CCN expands coverage for additional services, to include dialysis, comprehensive rehabilitation, residential care, home health care, hospice care, dental, immunizations, and long-term acute care. Under CCN, VA will also cover CIHS benefits in the areas of biofeedback, hypnotherapy, massage therapy, Native American healing, relaxation techniques, and tai chi.

Q3. Will CCN cover prescription medications referred by community providers?

Immediately needed medications can be prescribed up to a 14-day supply and filled at a participating CCN pharmacy for Veterans who were referred care through CCN with an approved referral. Veterans must provide prescription benefit information to participating CCN pharmacy.

If Veterans do not have an authorization for care through the CCN contractor or utilize a non-CCN participating pharmacy, they will have to pay out of pocket and seek reimbursement through local VAMC.

For prescriptions of more than a 14-day supply or if the prescribed medication is not needed immediately, then the community provider should send the prescription to the local VAMC pharmacy for fulfillment.

Q4. Will CCN cover durable medical equipment (DME), orthotics, and prosthetics?

Immediately needed as part of the appointment, DME, orthotics, and prosthetic items are covered under CCN. If a provider identifies an immediate need for DME the provider can provide the DME and submit a bill to Optum or TriWest, depending what region you receive care in.

Routine DME, orthotics, and prosthetic items require a consult and can be obtained via the Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Service (PSAS) at the local VAMC.

Q5. What happens if I want to receive additional services from my community provider beyond what was requested on my original referral?

Under CCN, community providers must submit a referral request to VA when a Veteran requires care beyond what is included on the original referral.

Eligibility

Q6. Will CCN have eligibility requirements similar to the Veterans Choice Program?

CCN is not a program and does not have eligibility requirements like the Veterans Choice Program. CCN is the contract vehicle VA uses to buy community care for Veterans. Eligibility for community care is determined before a Veteran can be referred to a CCN community provider. Additional information on eligibility for community care can be found here: https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/programs/veterans/General_Care.asp.

Referrals

Q7. Do I require a referral from VA to visit a CCN provider?

Yes. Before a Veteran receives care or services from a CCN-participating provider, VA must refer the Veteran to a specific community provider. Veterans within Regions 1 - 3 are able to verify the status of their referral through Optum's portal at www.vacommunitycare.com. Veterans in CCN Region 4 can visit TriWest's portal at www.triwest.com.

Scheduling Appointments

Q8. Who will schedule appointments with community providers?

Under CCN, VA staff will refer Veterans directly to community providers and schedule community care appointments for Veterans through the local VA medical facility. In some instances, VA medical facilities may elect to receive scheduling support from Optum for Regions 1 - 3, or TriWest for Region 4. Veterans can also choose to schedule their own appointment with support from local VA staff.

Participating Providers

Q9. How will I know which providers are participating in CCN?

Veterans can identify VA and participating community providers through VA's facility locator at www.va.gov/find-locations/. Additionally, Optum's website, www.vacommunitycare.com, or TriWest's website, www.triwest.com, includes a link to the VA master provider directory.

Q10. I am receiving community care right now, and I like the clinician who is taking care of me. With these changes, will I still be able to see my clinician?

Eligibility for community care will continue to be dependent upon your individual health care needs, what care is available at a VA medical facility, and other factors. VA staff will work with you to determine if you can continue to see your current community provider and confirm his or her participation in Optum's CCN provider network for Regions 1 - 3, or TriWest's provider network for Region 4. Some providers may not be able to or want to join the Optum or TriWest network. In those cases, VA will work with you to find another contracted provider.

Customer Service

Q11. Who handles customer service for Veterans participating in CCN?

VA staff will directly manage Veteran touchpoints for customer service while Optum or TriWest, depending which network you are in, will support community provider and VA inquiries.

Additional Information

Q12. Where can I find more information about CCN?

Additional information is available through VA, Optum or TriWest.

VA developed a Community Care Contact Center that provides you, your beneficiaries, and representatives with a singular point of contact to assist with questions related to VA community care. To reach the Community Care Contact Center, you can call (844) 839-6120. Additionally, information on community care can be found by visiting https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/.

Optum developed a patient portal that provides a view all of your explanation of benefits, access to the VA Master Provider directory (via link to the VA website), eligibility and enrollment, referrals, claims, and information on the appeals and grievance processes. This portal is available by visiting www.vacommunitycare.com.

TriWest developed a patient portal that provides a view of all your explanation of benefits, access to the VA Master Provider directory (via link to the VA portal), eligiblity and enrollment, referrals, claims and information on the appeals and grievance processes. This portal is available by visiting www.triwest.com.