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**Employer News**

Lung Cancer Awareness Month and the Great American Smokeout[®]

Throughout the month of November, Optima Health observed Lung Cancer Awareness Month and supported the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout. Stopping smoking and tobacco use is one of the most important actions people can take to improve their health, regardless of how long they have been using it or their age.

The American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout is a day dedicated to encouraging people to make a plan to quit. Optima Health is here to help with engaging educational materials and resources for those who want to quit or are considering quitting.



Visit optimahealth.com and start your tobacco-free journey today. This resource is free to any member of the community.



Employer News

New Service Area Update for POS and POSA Plans

Effective November 1, 2023, members with a Point of Service (POS) or Patient Optional Point of Service (POSA) plan gained access to the national network of PHCS/MultiPlan providers at the in-network level for both emergent and non-emergent services.¹ This means that employees covered by an Optima Health plan now have access to more than one million healthcare providers across the nation.²

Members can find a PHCS/MultiPlan provider by signing in to **optimahealth.com/members** or the mobile app. In the Filters section, members can select PHCS/MultiPlan providers under Recognition. Please advise members to view the benefit documents available in the member portal to confirm benefit cost shares or to find service area details.

The annual Out-of-Area (OOA) Dependent Program form is no longer needed for members on a POS/POSA plan because they will already have access to PHCS/Multiplan providers at the in-network cost share. As a reminder, the OOA Dependent Program allows eligible dependent children to access PHCS/MultiPlan providers at the in-network level when they reside outside the Optima Health service area. This program will officially be retired for POS/POSA plans on their groups' renewal date. For members with an HMO plan, there are no changes to the OOA Dependent Program requirements, which includes submitting the annual form.



As you may already know, Optima Health is becoming Sentara Health Plans on January 1, 2024. Because of this, we will be reissuing member ID cards in December. These will include the new Sentara Health Plans branding as well as the PHCS/Multiplan logo, which will be on the front of the card to identify members as a PHCS/MultiPlan recipient. If you have additional questions, please contact your Optima Health representative.

We will continue to post updates via email and in our quarterly newsletters as we get closer to our official launch in January 2024. Please contact your Optima Health representative for more information.

¹ Select self-funded Large Groups have opted-out of this update.

² According to multiplan.us/phcs-network-brings-stability-and-flexibility-to-an-evolving-market



Member News

Optima Health
is becoming
Sentara Health Plans.

New name.
Same trusted health plan.



Sentara Health Plans

As you may have heard, Optima Health will become Sentara Health Plans, effective January 1, 2024. While the health plans have been a part of Sentara for over 35 years, under this new name—Sentara Health Plans—we will be able to further integrate under a single, unified brand. As a result of this transition, you are receiving a new member ID card with the new branding. You will experience no disruption in services, and there will also be no changes to your current network, benefits, copayments, or cost-share amounts as a result of this brand change.





Member News

Keep Moving Through the Holidays

Staying committed to regular movement can sometimes feel overwhelming, but when you add in a long holiday to-do list, it's even easier to push movement to the back burner. However, staying active will help you maintain energy, stave off stress, and balance out some of the extra calories during the holiday season. Aim for 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity each week and allow the holiday season to help you mix it up.

- Bundle up and head outside for a look at holiday lights.
- Create a new movement-based tradition like ice skating, hiking, or a jingle run.
- Exercise during festive movie commercial breaks.
- Crank up the seasonal tunes and dance your way through chores or decorating.
- When the weather gets dreary, go for a walk in a new indoor venue like the museum.
- Work the room at holiday gatherings to avoid long periods of sitting.
- Gift physical activity to those you love with trackers, headphones, equipment, or subscriptions.



Head to optimahealth.com today to learn more about movement and explore free fitness videos like Yoga and Tai Chi.



Also, as an Optima Health member, you have access to exclusive health and wellness discounts through Husk Wellness:

- Get discounts on big box gyms, specialty studios, and virtual fitness programs.
- Enjoy exclusive rates on nutrition, weight loss, and healthy eating programs.
- Stay motivated with other tools and resources, including monthly promotions for more savings.

For access to Husk Wellness, visit optimahealth.com/members.

Source: Family Fitness During the Holidays | Homeland Security. 8 Dec. 2020 dhs.gov/employee-resources/blog/2020/12/08/family-fitness-during-holidays



Member News

Preventing Seasonal Flu: Get Vaccinated

Optima Health would like to remind our members to get an annual flu shot. The best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated every year. The seasonal flu virus may be different each year, so it is important to get a flu shot annually.

Optima Health covers the flu vaccine for members with medical and/or pharmacy benefits. For the 2023–2024 flu season, Optima Health will cover the Trivalent, Quadrivalent, and Adjuvant (for members 65 and older) influenza vaccines at 100% under the preventive care benefit.

Seasonal flu and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses with similar symptoms, but they are caused by different viruses. Optima Health recommends that you protect yourself from these viruses. It is safe for you to be given the flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine at the same time. The COVID-19 vaccine is also covered by Optima Health.

Members can visit the following locations to get a flu shot:

- your physician's office
- your local pharmacy



Visit optimahealth.com/flu or contact member services at the number listed on the back of your member ID card if you have any questions.

Source: Frequently asked flu questions: 2023–2024.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
cdc.gov/flu/season/faq-flu-season-2023-2024.htm



Take Action To Stay Healthy

The flu is a highly contagious respiratory illness spread from person to person through sneezing, coughing, and touching contaminated surfaces. If you catch the flu, you can help keep it from spreading by following these precautions:

- Wash your hands frequently. Cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough.
- Throw used tissues away immediately.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Stay away from others.
- If you work, stay in touch with your employer's occupational health department or your doctor and follow guidelines for returning to work.



Member News



What To Do if You or a Family Member Gets Sick

Understand flu symptoms, which include fever, cough, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, chills, fatigue, body aches, headache, vomiting, and diarrhea. Try these treatment options:

- As directed by a doctor, manage fever with medicines like Tylenol or Motrin.
- Drink plenty of fluids: water, or juice.
- Get extra rest/stay home when you are sick.
- Avoid smoking and second-hand smoke.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.

If you are at high risk of flu complications, seek care at the first signs of flu symptoms. Groups at high risk of flu complications include: children younger than five, pregnant women, people 65 and older, and those with blood disorders (including sickle cell disease); chronic lung disease, such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; diabetes; heart disease; liver, kidney, neurological and neuromuscular disorders; or weakened immune systems.



- Make a personal plan with your doctor now.
- Know where to go for care—your doctors' offices and/or area urgent care centers are a first step to medical care.
- Know warning signs for urgent medical care. If flu symptoms last longer than five days, contact your doctor. If you or your child has any of the following potentially life-threatening symptoms, seek medical care immediately: difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, severe or persistent vomiting, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen, sudden dizziness, confusion, or flu symptoms that improve and return with fever or cough.

For more information about seasonal flu, visit [cdc.gov/flu](https://www.cdc.gov/flu).



Member News



RSV and New Vaccine Recommendations

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. However, it can be dangerous for babies, toddlers, and older adults.

Each year in the United States, RSV causes approximately:

- one million visits to healthcare providers (nonhospitalization) among children younger than five years
- 58,000–80,000 hospitalizations among children younger than five years
- 100–300 deaths in children younger than five years
- 60,000–160,000 hospitalizations among adults 65 years and older
- 6,000–10,000 deaths among adults 65 years and older

This year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended three new immunizations to protect those most at risk of severe RSV. With these immunizations against RSV, we have an amazing opportunity to save lives and keep babies, toddlers, and older adults out of hospitals—but only if they are used.

As we head into the winter and respiratory viruses start to spread, take steps now to protect yourself and others.



Parents and expecting parents, talk to your doctor about the different types of RSV immunizations to determine which option might be best for you and your baby.



Adults ages 60 or over, talk to your doctor to see if the RSV vaccine is right for you.

Source: Update on RSV and New Vaccine Recommendation | CDC. 22 Sept. 2023, [cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/whats-new/rsv-update-2023-09-22.html](https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/whats-new/rsv-update-2023-09-22.html)



Member News

Pneumonia: Risk Factors and Prevention

Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs that can cause mild to severe illness in people of all ages. Immunizations can prevent some types of pneumonia. You can also help prevent pneumonia and other respiratory infections by following good hygiene practices. You are more likely to get pneumonia if you smoke or have underlying medical conditions, like diabetes or heart disease. However, you can lower your chances by taking good care of your medical problems and quitting smoking.

Certain people are more likely to get pneumonia:

- adults 65 years or older
- children younger than five years old
- people who have ongoing medical conditions
- people who smoke cigarettes

Protect your health with these healthy living practices. Avoid people who are sick. If you are sick, stay away from others as much as possible to keep from getting them sick.

You can also help prevent respiratory infections by:

- washing your hands regularly
- cleaning and disinfecting surfaces that are touched often
- coughing or sneezing into a tissue or into your elbow or sleeve
- limiting contact with cigarette smoke or quitting smoking
- taking good care of medical conditions (like asthma, diabetes, or heart disease)



Pneumococcal disease is common in young children, but older adults are at the greatest risk of serious illness and death.

The CDC recommends pneumococcal vaccination for:

- all children younger than five years old
- people five through 64 years old who are at increased risk for pneumococcal disease
- all adults 65 years or older

Visit **optimahealth.com** or contact member services at the number listed on the back of your member ID card if you have any questions.

Source: Source: Pneumonia | CDC.
cdc.gov/pneumonia/index.html



Pharmacy News

Pharmacy Changes Effective January 1, 2024

For groups with pharmacy benefits administered by Optima Health, the pharmacy changes are available online.

Download a printable listing of pharmacy changes effective January 1, 2024.



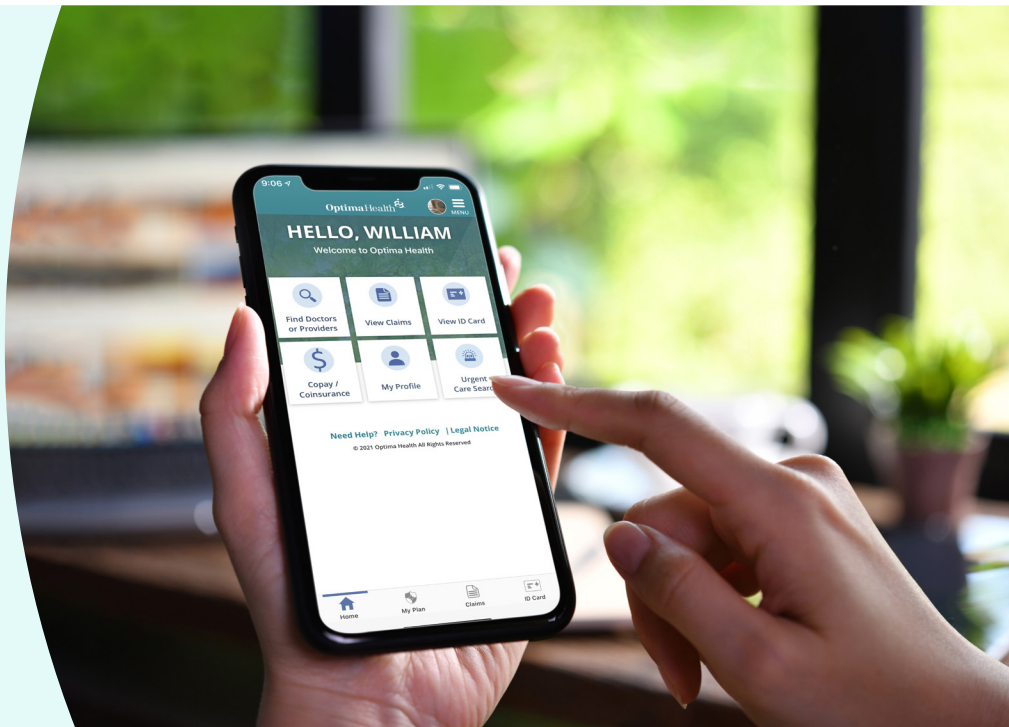
Healthcare at Your Fingertips

Download the **Optima Health Mobile App** today for instant access to your important plan information and questions, including:

- commonly asked questions and answers
- common forms and documents
- contact information
- tools to find doctors and facilities
- claims and authorizations
- wellness tools
- member ID card
- virtual consult scheduling
- cost calculation for treatments and services
- account access for your HSA or HRA¹
- important preventive care notifications

Whether you're accessing your plan information from the mobile app, a computer, or a tablet, Optima Health digital solutions provide a cohesive experience across all platforms.

Look for the Optima Health Mobile App



To learn more about the Optima Health Mobile App, visit optimahealth.com/members/features/get-the-optima-health-mobile-app

¹ Applies to members with Health Savings Account (HSA) or Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) plans