



UniCare's Change to Group Tiering for Specialty Care Physicians Effective July 1, 2019

Frequently Asked Questions

How is UniCare changing the way it tiers specialists?

The UniCare State Indemnity Plan, one of the plans offered by the Group Insurance Commission (GIC), has been tiering specialists in Massachusetts since July 1, 2006 for the purpose of setting copays for our members. Our tiering approach has been to assign tiers individually to physicians. For the plan year starting July 1, 2019, UniCare will move from individual to group tiering for specialists. This means all specialists within a practice will receive the same tier placement. This includes doctors, nurse practitioners and physician assistants who practice specialty care.

Why is UniCare changing from individual to group tiering?

We are making this change in response to feedback from both physician groups and members to facilitate the administration of copays within practices, and to align our tiering approach with the approaches used by other GIC health plans to tier specialists.

How will the tier for each group be determined?

The tier placement for each group will be based on the group's contractual and/or evident relationship with a hospital. To determine the tier placement for each group practice, we are using the hospital's designation provided by the Massachusetts Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA).

What are the CHIA designations?

As part of its evaluation of total medical expenses, CHIA has developed a classification system for all hospitals in Massachusetts. Each hospital is designated as being in one of four categories:

- Community
- Teaching
- Specialty
- Academic Medical Center

Why are you using the CHIA designations?

The GIC and other state entities such as the Health Policy Commission have pointed to CHIA's findings that the average total medical expenses (TMEs) for individuals in a practice group vary greatly across the state depending on the group's association with a hospital. Those groups operating as part of an Academic Medical Center have the highest TMEs; those related to Community hospitals have the lowest TMEs. Our tiering approach acknowledges the importance of these findings.

What are the tier placements?

The tier placements are shown in the table below.

Tier 1	Practices and specialty groups related to hospitals in CHIA's <i>Community</i> category
Tier 2	Practices and specialty groups not in Tier 1 or Tier 3 (including those related to hospitals in CHIA's <i>Teaching</i> and <i>Specialty</i> categories)
Tier 3	Practices and specialty groups related to hospitals in CHIA's <i>Academic Medical Center</i> category

You can find our listing of hospitals and their tiers at unicarestateplan.com.

What if I work for more than one group?

Copays for members will be determined by the tier placement of the group. Providers submitting claims from different and distinct groups will be subject to the copays associated with the tier of each of those groups. For example, a specialist may work in a group related to a Community hospital and also in a group operated by an Academic Medical Center. The copay for a visit will depend on which of those two physician groups billed for the services. For specialists who work for more than one group, the group with the highest tier will determine the tier shown in our *Find a doctor* lookup tool.

Note: The tier designations in Our *Find a doctor* tool will not be updated until July 1, 2019.

To see how the tier is displayed for a specialist in our Specialist Tier Listing for 2019-2010 prior to July 1, 2019, go to unicarestateplan.com and choose *Specialist Tiering* on the Providers menu.

Will there be any changes to UniCare's office visit copays with specialists?

The copays for specialty office visits associated with each tier for the coming plan year are shown in the table below. The only copay change will be the reduction of the Tier 3 copay for Basic members from \$75 to \$60.

	Specialist office visit copays effective July 1, 2019		
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Basic	\$30	\$60	\$60
PLUS	\$30	\$60	\$75
Community Choice	\$30	\$60	\$75

What if my practice has not received a tier placement?

The default tier placement is Tier 2.

Will UniCare be assigning tiers to primary care physicians as well?

Primary care physicians (PCPs) will not be subject to the group tiering process, as described in this document, for the new plan year. As shown below, members in the PLUS and Community Choice options will continue to have differing primary care copays depending on whether they see PCPs in our Patient-Centered Primary Care program.

- **Basic** members will continue to have a \$20 copay for all non-preventive office visits with PCPs.
- **PLUS and Community Choice** members will continue to have a \$15 copay for non-preventive office visits with PCPs who participate in UniCare's Patient-Centered Primary Care program, and a \$20 copay for non-preventive visits with all other PCPs.

What if I have questions about UniCare's new group tiering policy?

You can contact us by email at UniCareProviderRelations@anthem.com or by phone at 800-480-7587.

Claims are administered by UniCare Life & Health Insurance Company.