



Accessing quality care: UnitedHealthcare Smart Choice frequently asked questions

UnitedHealthcare Smart Choice program

Smart Choice overview

What is Smart Choice?

Part of the UnitedHealthcare digital provider search experience, Smart Choice is designed to empower you to more easily find and connect with quality care, personalized to your care needs. Now when you search for a provider in the UnitedHealthcare® app or myuhc.com®, you will see prioritized Smart Choice results based on 4 evaluation factors:

- 1. Quality** – Providers who meet credentialing qualifications and physicians who meet UnitedHealth Premium® effective and efficient quality care criteria.
- 2. Benefits** – Providers who are in the network based on your benefit coverage.
- 3. Convenience** – Providers who meet your personal preferences related to accessing care, including distance to travel, appointment availability, evening/ weekend appointments and care setting (in office or virtual).
- 4. Personal fit** – Providers who meet your personal preferences regarding language, gender, board certification status and consumer ratings and reviews.

Note: Personal preferences and convenience options can be set by you within the experience.

Where will Smart Choice be used?

You and your covered family members can explore Smart Choice providers by going to the Find Care experience within the UnitedHealthcare app and myuhc.com. As you start to search for primary care and specialty physicians, you will see your Smart Choice results, which are based on 4 evaluation factors: quality, benefits, convenience and personal fit.

How do Smart Choice and Premium work together?

Smart Choice is part of the enhanced, comprehensive provider search experience for all UnitedHealthcare members. UnitedHealth Premium will continue to serve as a foundational component to how we evaluate physician quality. Smart Choice will focus on quality first, supported by UnitedHealth Premium.

How may Smart Choice benefit me?

UnitedHealthcare is here to help support you in navigating the complexities of finding quality, personalized care, where and when you need it. Our goal is to provide you with health care options matched to your specific needs and preferences that may help you stay healthy, get well or manage a long-lasting illness.

How does Smart Choice work?

How do I set my preferences?	To set your preferences, select the settings icon in the top right corner, where you can choose preferences most important to you. Once your preferences are set, search for providers and Smart Choice will present you with personalized care options for your consideration.
How does Smart Choice work?	When you search for care, Smart Choice will present you with personalized care options for your consideration. With each care option, Smart Choice indicates how your needs and preferences match across 4 key factors: quality care, health plan benefits, convenience and personal fit.
Can I change my preferences?	Yes, you can change your preferences at any time. Simply select the settings icon in the top right corner and update your preferences.
Can I use Smart Choice to help find providers for my covered family members?	Yes, care preferences you set for yourself are automatically applied to your covered family members. If a covered family member has different preferences, you may update them by selecting the settings icon before searching for their care. Covered family members age 18 and older can set individual preferences and search for their own personalized care options.
What types of health care providers can I find with Smart Choice?	At this time, Smart Choice supports searching for primary care and specialty care providers.
How are the results of my search organized?	Smart Choice presents results based on the following evaluation factors: quality care, employee and covered family member's benefits, convenience and personal fit.

Quality

What is quality health care?	<p>According to the National Academy of Medicine, quality health care is care that is safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient and equitable.</p> <p>UnitedHealthcare requires providers to meet credentialing criteria and has developed programs like UnitedHealth Premium, which evaluates physicians for effective quality care and efficient quality care.</p> <p>Effective quality care evaluates how well physicians follow nationally recognized quality standards, including patient safety, clinical guideline concordance and health outcomes measures. Efficient quality care evaluates resource use (quantity of services), level of care (intensity of services) and site of service (service location).</p> <p>Physicians who meet the UnitedHealth Premium quality care criteria are designated as a Premium Care Physician. The fact that a physician does not have a Premium Care Physician designation does not mean a physician does not provide quality health care services.</p>
Why does quality health care matter?	Receiving quality care may reduce complications, unnecessary hospitalizations and inaccurate diagnoses.

Quality (continued)

How do I make sure I'm selecting quality care matched to my needs?

With many available care options, knowing where to get quality care can be a challenge. You and your covered family members want an easy way to help locate providers, choose physicians (including specialists) and make more informed health care decisions. By using tools and information provided by UnitedHealthcare, like Smart Choice and UnitedHealth Premium, you are empowered with information and insights to help select quality care options that meet your individual needs and preferences.

What is credentialing?

UnitedHealthcare uses a credentialing process to help make sure providers in our network have the credentials we require to safely care for members. Credentialing assesses qualifications, relevant training, education, licensure, certification and/or registration to practice for each health care professional who participates in the UnitedHealthcare Network.

Credentialing standards are set by the **National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)**, as well as specific state and federal regulations for participation in the Medicaid and Medicare programs. The UnitedHealthcare credentialing process complies with these standards. Some states may have extra requirements as part of the credentialing and recredentialing process.

What is a Premium Care Physician?

Premium Care Physicians meet the UnitedHealth Premium criteria for effective quality care and efficient quality care. They are displayed in our medical care directories with 2 blue hearts and the words "Premium Care Physician." **Learn more about UnitedHealth Premium**

The fact that a physician does not have a Premium Care Physician designation does not mean the physician does not provide quality health care services. All physicians in the UnitedHealthcare Network have met certain minimum credentialing requirements (separate from UnitedHealth Premium).

If a physician practices in a specialty that is not evaluated by UnitedHealth Premium or does not have enough health plan claims data to be evaluated by UnitedHealth Premium, then no designation is given.

Benefits

How does Smart Choice consider my health plan benefits?

Smart Choice integrates your health plan's medical benefits, including Tier 1 designations and Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) (if applicable to your plan), to help you find and select in-network, quality care options that may maximize your benefits. As always, refer to your plan document(s) to ensure your plan benefits cover the care you select.

What are my benefits?

Check your plan's benefits coverage in the Benefits section of the UnitedHealthcare app or at myuhc.com. If you still have questions, please call the member number on your health plan ID card. Always verify your health plan coverage before seeking care.

How do I make sure I'm selecting in-network care that makes the most of my benefits?

Smart Choice only displays in-network providers and compares care options based on your health plan's medical benefits, so you can select care that best meets your needs. As always, refer to your plan document(s) to ensure your plan benefits cover the care you select.

Are all Smart Choice care options in-network for my plan?

Yes, only in-network providers will appear in Smart Choice.

Convenience

What factors does Smart Choice include for care convenience?	Smart Choice considers your convenience preferences for access to care, including things like appointment availability, online scheduling, distance to travel and preferred care setting (in office or virtual).
Are all providers accepting new patients?	Smart Choice checks if a provider is accepting new patients based on available information. However, providers may change new patient availability due to shifts in practice capacity. Always confirm with the provider's office before scheduling your appointment to ensure they are accepting new patients.
Can I select a provider by location?	Yes, Smart Choice takes into account how far a provider is from your preferred location and offers map views and directions for your convenience.
Can I search for a provider by hospital system?	No, not at this time. However, after performing your search, you can filter Smart Choice care options by hospital affiliation.

Personal fit

What factors does Smart Choice include for personal fit?	Smart Choice considers your personal fit preferences like languages spoken, provider gender, and consumer ratings and reviews from people like you.
Where does UnitedHealthcare obtain consumer ratings and reviews for providers?	UnitedHealthcare's consumer ratings and reviews are powered by Healthgrades.
What is Healthgrades?	Healthgrades is an independent company that gathers information about health care providers, like patient feedback. Healthgrades allows patients to rate their satisfaction with providers after their appointment and makes this data available to the public. For more information about Healthgrades, please visit healthgrades.com .
Does Smart Choice regularly check for updated provider information?	Yes, Smart Choice displays the most recent available provider information. Before receiving care, please contact your provider to confirm they are in network. A provider's network status may change without notice.

Find care

To find a Premium Care Physician, go to the **UnitedHealthcare app > Find Care** or **myuhc.com > Find Care & Costs**

**United
Healthcare**

UnitedHealth Premium® is proprietary to UnitedHealthcare. UnitedHealth Premium evaluates physicians based on safe, timely, effective and efficient quality care criteria to help members make more informed choices for their health care. **It's intended only as a guide and should not be the sole factor considered when selecting a physician. Designations have a risk of error and members should discuss designations with a physician before choosing one. If a member already has a physician, they should also consult with them for advice on selecting other physicians.** The fact that a physician does not have a Premium Care Physician designation does not mean that the physician does not provide quality health care services. All physicians in the UnitedHealthcare network have met certain minimum credentialing requirements (separate from the UnitedHealth Premium criteria). Please visit the medical care directory specific to the member's benefit plan for physician designations and detailed information about UnitedHealth Premium and the evaluation methodology.

The UnitedHealthcare® app is available for download for iPhone® or Android®. iPhone is a registered trademark of Apple, Inc. Android is a registered trademark of Google LLC.

Administrative services provided by United HealthCare Services, Inc. or their affiliates, and UnitedHealthcare Service LLC in NY. Stop-loss insurance is underwritten by UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or their affiliates, including UnitedHealthcare Life Insurance Company in NJ, and UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company of New York in NY. Insurance coverage provided by or through UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or its affiliates. Administrative services provided by United HealthCare Services, Inc. or their affiliates.