



Arkansas  
BlueCross BlueShield  
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### **Arkansas insurers join with state, federal services to test unique investment in coordinated medical care**

Little Rock, Ark. (June 25, 2012) In a strong show of support for more effective, more affordable, higher quality health care, Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, QualChoice, Humana and the State Medicaid program in Arkansas recently pledged to work with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to give more Americans access to quality health care at lower cost.

Under the Comprehensive Primary Care initiative, CMS will pay primary care practices a care management fee, initially set at an average of \$20 per beneficiary per month, to support enhanced, coordinated services. Simultaneously, participating commercial, state, and other federal insurance plans are also offering an enhanced payment to primary care practices that provide high-quality primary care. Together, these investments in primary care practices will allow doctors to spend more time with their patients, stay open on weekends and evenings, provide additional services such as nutrition or smoking-cessation counseling, and coordinate care for their patients.

"We know that when we support primary care, we get healthier patients and lower costs," said Acting CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner, "This initiative shows that the public and private sectors can come together to meet the critical need for these services."

Insurers in Arkansas signed agreements with CMS to participate in this initiative. The Arkansas market was selected from a diverse pool of applicants from commercial health plans, state Medicaid agencies, and self-insured businesses that hoped to work alongside Medicare to support comprehensive primary care.



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In order to receive the new care management fee from CMS and insurers, primary care practices must agree to provide enhanced services for their patients, including offering longer and more flexible hours, using electronic health records; delivering preventive care; coordinating care with patients' other health care providers; engaging patients and caregivers in managing their own care, and providing individualized, enhanced care for patients living with multiple chronic diseases and higher needs.

Approximately 75 primary care practices will be selected to participate in the Comprehensive Primary Care initiative in Arkansas. Interested primary care practices in each of the markets should complete the application pre-screen tool online at the Innovation Center's Web site. This is the first step in applying for the program. Practices will not be allowed to submit an application without a completed application pre-screen tool.

The Comprehensive Primary Care initiative is a four-year initiative administered by the Innovation Center. Applications will be accepted until July 20.

For more information, including the list of participating insurers, please go to:

<http://www.innovations.cms.gov/initiatives/Comprehensive-Primary-Care-Initiative/index.html>

To access the application pre-screen tool, please go to:

<https://cmsgov.secure.force.com/cpci/cpciscreening>

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