UnitedHealth Premium program Designation descriptions and criteria

> ⚠️ Use this document with the UnitedHealth Premium® Methodology document at **UnitedHealthPremium.uhc.com**. Please review all methodology documents to understand the entire Premium program methodology.

Overview

The UnitedHealth Premium program provides physician designations based on quality and cost-efficiency criteria to help members make more informed choices for their medical care. Physicians may also use these designations when referring patients to other physicians. In markets where tiered benefit plans are available, employers may offer employees a tiered benefit plan based on Premium designation with a lower member cost share for using Tier 1 Premium Care Physicians.

Premium designation display

The following physician designations are included in care provider directories and other consumer and provider tools. Premium Care Physicians are listed first, followed by Quality Care Physicians, and so forth.

The physician's cost-efficiency rating may also be used to display more cost-efficient physicians first within each Premium designation. Only the physician's designation is displayed in care provider directories and other tools. Evaluation results, including supporting details and cost-efficiency ratings, are not displayed.

Some provider directories may display quality evaluation results only. In these directories, physicians who have met the Premium program's quality care criteria may be displayed with only the quality component of the designation. For example, a directory may display physicians who have earned either the Premium Care Physician designation or the Quality Care Physician designation as "Quality Care Physician."

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Premium designation display (cont.)

Premium Care Physician
The physician meets the UnitedHealth Premium program quality and cost-efficient care criteria.

Quality Care Physician
The physician meets the UnitedHealth Premium program quality care criteria but does not meet the program's cost-efficient care criteria.

The physician meets the UnitedHealth Premium program quality care criteria but is not evaluated for cost-efficient care.

Not evaluated for Premium care
The physician's specialty is not evaluated in the UnitedHealth Premium program.

The physician does not have enough claims data for UnitedHealth Premium program evaluation, so the physician is not eligible for the Premium Care Physician designation.

The physician's program evaluation is in process.

Does not meet Premium quality criteria
The physician does not meet the UnitedHealth Premium program quality criteria, so the physician is not eligible for a Premium designation.

Current and previous version criteria

The Premium program evaluates physicians annually, using updated quality and cost-efficiency methodologies and data. Physician designations are determined based on a comparison of current version and previous version evaluation results.

The current version evaluation result is used when the physician's:

- Premium specialty changes from the previous version
- Current version quality evaluation result is "Does Not Meet Criteria"
- Current version cost-efficiency performance is statistically higher than the target benchmark
- Current version evaluation result is the same as or improved from the previous version

The previous version evaluation result is used when all of the following apply. The physician's:

- Premium specialty is the same as the previous version
- Current version quality evaluation result is "Meets Criteria" or "Not Evaluated"
- Current version cost-efficiency performance is not statistically higher than the target benchmark
- Current version evaluation result does not improve from the previous version

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Example 1:

Designation is determined using the current version evaluation result because the current version quality evaluation result is "Does Not Meet Criteria."

Previous evaluation result	Previous designation	Current evaluation result	Current designation
Quality: Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Meets criteria	Premium Care Physician ♥♥	**Quality:** Does not meet criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Does not meet criteria	Does not meet Premium quality criteria ♡♡
Quality: Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Meets criteria	Quality Care Physician ♥♡	**Quality:** Does not meet criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Does not meet criteria	Does not meet Premium quality criteria ♡♡

Example 2:

Designation is determined using the current version evaluation result because the physician's current version cost- efficiency performance is statistically higher than the target benchmark.

Previous evaluation result	Previous designation	Current evaluation result	Current designation
Quality: Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Meets criteria	Premium Care Physician ♥♥	**Quality:** Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Does not meet criteria	Quality Care Physician ♥♡

Example 3:

Current designation is determined using the current version evaluation result because it improved from the previous version evaluation result.

Previous evaluation result	Previous designation	Current evaluation result	Current designation
Quality: Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Does not meet criteria	Quality Care Physician ♥♡	**Quality:** Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Meets criteria	Premium Care Physician ♥♥
Quality: Does not meet criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Does not meet criteria	Does not meet Premium quality criteria ♡♡	**Quality:** Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Does not meet criteria	Quality Care Physician ♥♡

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Examples using previous version evaluation result

Designation is determined using the previous version evaluation result.			
Previous evaluation result	**Previous designation**	**Current evaluation result**	**Current designation**
Quality: Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Meets criteria	Premium Care Physician ♥♥	**Quality:** Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Does not meet criteria (statistically not different)	Premium Care Physician ♥♥
Quality: Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Meets criteria	Premium Care Physician ♥♥	**Quality:** Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Not evaluated	Premium Care Physician ♥♥
Quality: Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Meets criteria	Premium Care Physician ♥♥	**Quality:** Not evaluated **Cost Efficiency:** Does not meet criteria (statistically not different)	Premium Care Physician ♥♥
Quality: Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Not evaluated	Quality Care Physician ♥♡	**Quality:** Not evaluated **Cost Efficiency:** Does not meet criteria	Quality Care Physician ♥♡
Quality: Meets criteria **Cost Efficiency:** Does not meet criteria	Quality Care Physician ♥♡	**Quality:** Not evaluated **Cost Efficiency:** Does not meet criteria	Quality Care Physician ♥♡

Cost-efficiency ratings (classified as A-G) are assigned based on the current evaluation result, regardless of whether the current or previous evaluation result is used to determine the designation.

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Important notes about the UnitedHealth Premium program

The information from the UnitedHealth Premium program is not an endorsement of a particular physician or health care professional's suitability for the health care needs of any particular member. UnitedHealthcare does not practice medicine or provide health care services. Physicians are solely responsible for medical judgments and treatments supplied. A "Premium Care Physician" or "Quality Care Physician" designation does not guarantee the quality of health care services members will receive from a physician and does not guarantee the outcome of any health care services members will receive.

Likewise, the fact that a physician has a "Not Evaluated for Premium Care" or a "Does Not Meet Premium Quality Criteria" 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. Regardless of whether a physician has received a "Premium Care Physician" designation, members have access to all physicians in the UnitedHealthcare network, as further described under the member's benefit plan.

The designation of "Not Evaluated for Premium Care" is given when a physician does not practice in a specialty that is evaluated by the Premium program, or when a physician's evaluation is in process. It is also given when a physician does not have enough health plan claims data to be evaluated, but it is not an indicator of the total number of patients treated by the physician, or the number of procedures performed by the physician. Rather, it reflects the statistical requirements of the Premium program, which includes only health plan claims associated with specific Premium program measures and relevant to the physician's specialty. In some cases, there may not be enough data to complete the analytic process from a statistical standpoint.

UnitedHealthcare informs members that designations are intended only as a guide when choosing a physician and should not be the sole factor in selecting a physician. As with all programs that evaluate performance based on analysis of a sample, there is a risk of error. There is a risk of error in the claims data used in the evaluation, the calculations used in the evaluation, and the way the Premium program determined that an individual physician was responsible for the treatment of the patient's condition. **Physicians have the opportunity to review this data and submit a reconsideration request.**

UnitedHealthcare uses statistical testing to compare a physician's results to expected or normative results. There is a risk of error in statistical tests when applied to the data and a result based on statistical testing is not a guarantee of correct inference or classification. We inform members that it is important they consider many factors and information when selecting a physician. **We also inform our members that they may wish to discuss designations with a physician before choosing him or her, or confer with their current physician for advice on selecting other physicians.**

The information contained in this Designation Descriptions and Criteria document is subject to change.

Learn more

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