Provider Alert

Urgent Provider News

Dear Provider,

This week, we are sharing the following provider updates — see below to learn more.

- Reminder: Eligibility and Benefits Are Now Live in Availity Essentials
- Register for the Provider Quality Learning Collaborative
- OncoHealth - New Oncology Vendor Partnership
- Avalon Services Expand to Genetic Testing Management
- Healthcare Financial Inc. Begins Outreach to Medicare Members
- Authorization Updates Effective December 1
- Accessing the Prior Authorization Look-up Tool

Reminder: Eligibility and Benefits Are Now Live in Availity Essentials

You can now submit eligibility and benefits inquiries in Availity Essentials to Sentara Health Plans. This is part of a phased migration of transactions and more features will be released soon to streamline your workflow.

Stay up-to-date on the availability of features here. If you are not registered, visit availity.com and click 'New to Availity?' to get started. You may also view a variety of training materials on their website.

Register for the Provider Quality Learning Collaborative

Our next installment of the Provider Quality Care Learning Collaborative will focus on critical areas for the year-end blitz as well as highlight helpful resources to support your care gap closure efforts. We encourage your designated quality subject matter expert(s), key clinical representative(s), and other staff members to join us virtually to learn how you can identify and address care gaps effectively.

Register for upcoming meetings:

- [October 9](#)
- [October 23](#)

OncoHealth - New Oncology Vendor Partnership

Effective January 1, 2025, OncoHealth will administer Sentara Health Plans Oncology Benefits Management Program. The program includes support for care and prior authorization management of all Sentara Health Plans commercial, Medicaid, and Medicare lines of business for members with a cancer diagnosis that requires chemotherapeutic drugs (oral and infusion), symptom management drugs, supportive agents, radiation therapy drugs, and molecular genetic testing.

OncoHealth provides an evidence-based, technology-driven approach to medical oncology management by facilitating the continuous access to current, evidence-based, disease-specific analytics on all cancer types, stages, and treatment options, backed by board-certified oncologists/hematologists, radiation oncologists, pharmacists, and nurses. Learn more about OncoHealth at oncohealth.us.

What you need to know today:

- Effective January 1, 2025, providers will need to submit requests for authorization for oncology services to OncoHealth.

- To request a review, you must provide OncoHealth with all clinical information requested, which may include but is not limited to pathology reports, initial consultation, laboratory studies, clinical notes, and records.

- Authorizations issued before the new program implementation date will remain effective through the expiration date.

- New authorization requests must be submitted to OncoHealth on or after January 1, 2025 dates of service.

- Additional program details and training dates will be shared soon.

- Identify the key clinical and administrative decision makers who should participate in this training as soon as possible.

Avalon Services Expand to Genetic Testing Management

Sentara Health Plans will continue its collaboration with Avalon Healthcare Solutions (Avalon) to implement the **Genetic Testing Management (GTM)** services program starting with select commercial plans beginning on December 1*. More details will follow in the next few weeks.

Please note that we plan to implement this program for our Medicaid members during the first quarter of 2025.

The Avalon program emphasizes peer-to-peer education to promote appropriate testing and reduce potential for service denials. Preservice Authorization System (PAS) is used to apply Sentara Health Plans' policies, codes that require preservice review, and provide self-service access to request authorizations.

The GTM program includes important changes, such as new and revised medical policies supported by Avalon's experts in lab and genetic testing, a new authorization request process, guidelines, and consistent preservice reviews for certain genetic testing services that will be applicable to both ordering and rendering provider partners. Additional details are forthcoming, but until then please note:

- Effective December 1, providers will need to submit requests for authorization for specific genetic tests for select commercial plans using PAS.

- Authorizations previously issued before the implementation date will be effective until the expiration date.

- New authorization requests must be submitted for select commercial plans to Avalon on or after December 1 dates of service.

- Avalon adds clinical and quality components, which will be outlined during our training sessions designed for your clinical and administrative decision makers. The training dates will be announced soon.

*Implementation will be based on individual program contract renewal dates. More information to come regarding specific go-live dates by product.

Healthcare Financial Inc. Begins Outreach to Medicare Members

Sentara Health Plans has partnered with Healthcare Financial Inc. (HFI) to assist our members, your patients, in obtaining end-stage renal disease (ESRD) Medicare benefits. Your patients may become entitled to Medicare benefits based on their ESRD diagnosis and other pre-qualifying conditions.

HFI is an advocacy group who will be contacting Sentara Health Plans members to help facilitate their ESRD Medicare application process and ensure that all necessary forms and documents are completed. HFI will reach out to your clinic staff to assist in obtaining a complete End Stage Renal Disease Medical Evidence Report (2728 form). If a 2728 form has not been completed, HFI will engage with your team to have the form completed for the member. The 2728 form is needed for the ESRD Medicare application process and a physician is required to sign it.

Sentara Health Plans has a business associate agreement with HFI to assist our members in obtaining the Medicare benefits for which they are qualified. We appreciate your assistance and collaboration in this effort to ensure that your patients receive the necessary benefits to improve their access to care.

Authorization Updates Effective December 1

Sentara Health Plans has a new medical policy weblink available to access all current behavioral health, durable medical equipment, imaging, medical, obstetrics, pharmacy, and surgical policies. You can access this at sentarahealthplans.com/providers/clinical-reference/medical-policies.

Visit our website to view the most recent authorization updates.

Accessing the Prior Authorization Look-up Tool (PAL)

The PAL tool is now available on the Authorizations page on sentarahealthplans.com.

Sincerely,
Your Sentara Health Plans Team

Register for upcoming provider webinars
View current policy and operations changes