

FAQs

Smart Choice

What is Smart Choice?

Smart Choice is a health care matching experience designed to empower members with information and insights personalized to their needs and preferences. Combining our experience in evaluating effective and efficient quality care with their selected preferences, Smart Choice presents personalized care options for consideration.

How does Smart Choice benefit members?

Smart Choice helps support members in finding quality care where and when they need it. It provides options matched to specific needs and preferences to help members better manage their health.

How do members set their Smart Choice preferences?

To set preferences, members sign into the secure portal, select **Settings**, then choose from the options. Once preferences are set, members can search for providers and Smart Choice will share personalized care options for consideration.

Can preferences be changed?

Yes, preferences can be changed at any time. Simply select **Settings** to make updates.

Can Smart Choice be used to help find providers for covered family members?

Yes, care preferences set by members are automatically applied to covered family members.

If covered family members have different preferences, they may update them by selecting **Settings** before searching for care. Covered family members age 18+ can set individual preferences and search for their own personalized care options.

What types of health care providers can be found with Smart Choice?

Smart Choice supports searches for primary care and specialty care providers.

What factors does Smart Choice include when presenting care options?

Smart Choice considers 4 key factors when matching care to member needs and preferences:

- Quality care
- Health plan benefits
- Convenience
- Personal fit

Quality care

What is quality care?

UnitedHealthcare requires providers to meet credentialing criteria and has developed programs like UnitedHealth Premium®, which evaluates physicians for effective and efficient quality care.

Effective quality care evaluates how well physicians follow nationally recognized quality standards including patient safety, clinical guideline concordance

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and health outcomes measures. Efficient quality care evaluates resource use (quantity of services), level of care (intensity of services) and site of service location.

What is a Premium Care Physician?

Premium Care Physicians meet the UnitedHealth Premium® criteria for effective and efficient quality care. They are displayed in our medical care directories with a 2-blue heart icon and “Premium Care Physician.” Learn more about **UnitedHealth Premium**.

The fact that a physician does not have a Premium Care Physician designation does not mean that 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.

Why does quality care matter?

Receiving quality care may reduce complications, additional care needs, unnecessary hospitalizations and inaccurate diagnosis.

How can members make sure they select quality care that matches their needs?

With many available care options, knowing where to get quality care can be a challenge. Members and their covered family members need 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, they are empowered with information and insights to help select quality care options that meet their 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.

Health plan benefits

How does Smart Choice integrate with health plan benefits?

Smart Choice integrates a member’s health plan medical benefits, including Tier 1 designations, Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) and Premium Care Physicians (if applicable to their plan), to help them find and select in-network, quality care options that may maximize their benefits. As always, members should refer to plan document(s) to ensure plan benefits cover the selected care.

What are the benefits for members?

Members should check their plan’s benefits coverage in the Benefits section of the UnitedHealthcare app or at **myuhc.com**. For questions, members should call the number on their health plan ID card. They should always verify health plan coverage before seeking care.

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How can members make sure they are selecting in-network care that makes the most of their benefits?

Smart Choice only displays in-network providers and compares care options based on a member's health plan's medical benefits. That way, they can select care that best meets their needs. As always, refer to plan documents to ensure plan benefits cover the care selected.

Are all Smart Choice care options in-network for a member's plan?

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

Convenience

What factors does Smart Choice include for care convenience?

Smart Choice considers convenience preferences for access to care, including 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. Members should always confirm with the provider's office before scheduling an appointment to ensure they are accepting new patients.

Can a provider be selected by location?

Yes, Smart Choice takes into account how far a provider is from a member's preferred location and offers map views and directions for convenience.

Can a provider be searched by hospital system?

No, not at this time. However, after performing a search, Smart Choice can filter care options by hospital affiliation.

Personal fit

What factors does Smart Choice include for personal fit?

Smart Choice considers personal fit preferences like languages spoken, provider gender, and consumer ratings and reviews.

Where does UnitedHealthcare obtain consumer ratings and reviews for providers?

The UnitedHealthcare 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, visit [healthgrades.com](https://www.healthgrades.com).