

ProgenyHealth and UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of PA Care Coordination for Premature and Medically Complex Newborns (from NICU to the First Birthday)

DESCRIPTION: ProgenyHealth® delivers care management solutions to insurers and employer groups, managing the health care services provided to premature and medically complex newborns admitted to neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) after birth. ProgenyHealth's clinically driven program promotes appropriate NICU utilization, improves access to care, educates family members and reduces costs while maintaining the highest quality of care.

ProgenyHealth's partnership with UHC of Pennsylvania provided their membership with enhanced family education and access to a nurse case manager 24/7. Additionally, the collaboration resulted in significant cost savings to UHC through reductions in both ALOS and Readmission Rates.

United wanted to support and strengthen the maternal infant bond which is often jeopardized when the infant spends an extensive period of time in the NICU, away from his/her mother. Ensuring that timely care is provided to the infant ensures an appropriate discharge date and allows the maternal infant bond to be nurtured.

Additionally, United Healthcare observed that their costs associated with NICU stays in Pennsylvania were among the highest in their patient mix. They recognized that their ALOS was trending upward over time, and that they needed a more focused program to oversee the health care services being provided to these members. Given that NICU care is highly specialized, United sought out an organization with expertise in coordinating and delivering care to their most fragile pediatric members.



KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Promote maternal infant bond
- Control or reduce the per capita cost of care or increase efficiency
- Enhance the patient experience of care (including quality, access and reliability)

ACTIONS TAKEN: The ProgenyHealth program lowers the cost of care, enhances patient experience, and improves overall health outcomes by focusing on a collaborative approach to care management consisting of two key elements; utilization review during the hospital stay and case management throughout the first year of life. To reduce costs, each NICU case is managed by Progeny's team of highly specialized physicians and nurses who review and oversee the health care services being provided from the moment an infant is admitted to the NICU. Progeny's team of neonatologists, pediatricians, and NICU /pediatric nurses works with hospitals and providers, and supports and educates families, to ensure care is being provided efficiently and effectively. Progeny has built a highly successful model by utilizing a proactive and timely approach to medical management that is collaborative not focused on denials.

Evidence-based best practices are followed to promote safe and timely discharge. The Progeny Nurse Case Managers coordinate care for the UHC members from admission through their first year of life. Ongoing family education, appointment and vaccination reminders, and the availability of care management nurses to families by phone 24/7 all work to keep these young UHC members healthy and out of the hospital.

OUTCOMES:**Improve Maternal Infant Bond (*Objective 1*)**

The importance of early maternal infant bonding cannot be understated as it is crucial to optimal child development. In partnering with ProgenyHealth, UHC families are provided with a dedicated ProgenyHealth case manager who reaches out to them shortly after their infant's birth. Case managers educate and support families so they can be active participants in the health care decision making process for their infants. The result of this in the hospital setting is with more informed parents, care plans progress more efficiently. This results in more timely NICU discharge and allows maternal infant bonding to continue and strengthen in the home setting.

Cost Savings (*Objective 2*)

In the most recent contract year (2012), Progeny delivered significant cost savings to the UHC Plan in two key areas: (1) ALOS reductions; and (2) Readmission reductions. Progeny's oversight saved United 2.6 hospital days per case for 378 members. Specifically, this is a savings of 983 NICU days. In the readmission category, Progeny's First Year of Life program resulted in UHC maintaining a low readmission rate of 12% and a 30 day readmission rate of 1%.

These results underscore the value of the Progeny program which improves health outcomes and lowers costs through collaboration and the promotion of best practices in NICU management.

Enhance Patient Experience and Access (*Objective 3*)

Members' access to care improves through member education, nurse availability by phone, and case manager's coordination of care. All of this is demonstrated through readmission reductions and positive satisfaction scores from members. Overall, member satisfaction is extremely high, with nearly every respondent answering either "Strongly Agree" or "Somewhat Agree" to every satisfaction attribute. Nearly three-quarters of UHC members (69%) report having at least five contacts with a ProgenyHealth case manager over the course of 2012. There was an increase of 10% in the number of families having 10 or more contacts between 2011 and 2012. ProgenyHealth's overall member satisfaction rate remains strong at 83%.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION: The ProgenyHealth Program began coordinating care for the NICU population of United Healthcare in Southeastern PA in 2009. Since that time, United has expanded its partnership with Progeny by rolling out the program in all regions of Pennsylvania in which it does business.

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