

Targeted care. Lower cost.

How one state achieved both in delivering home health services



At-home care is an invaluable service. It lets people stay in their homes rather than enter inpatient settings. That can restore a level of independence to their lives. But precision is critical. Providing and reimbursing the most appropriate level of care helps allocate finite resources to those who will benefit from them the most.

A state partnered with Optum to assess the home-based nursing care it was covering and found opportunities for improvement.

As third-party administrator for the state's long-term care services, Optum helps ensure the integrity of a program that is both costly and complex. Optum brought to the table a knowledge of the local market and educational campaigns and forums aimed at changing the behaviors of the provider network.

Together, Optum and the state discovered instances where inappropriate levels of care were being delivered. For example, skilled nursing visits took place when less costly medical administration visits were what was needed. Or at-home care was provided when another form of care would have better served the individual.

The state worked closely with Optum to enhance their online prior authorization portal. They also educated home health providers to help them better understand the difference between codes.

The coding change, along with additional quality and program integrity actions, contributed to the state's annual savings.

When the state acted on those opportunities, it realized \$80 million in annual savings with minimal to no disruption for constituents.

A key to achieving these new efficiencies was integrating the state's long-term care operations. Historically, teams and functions like provider enrollment, prior authorizations and program integrity operated independently. In some cases, they were spread across different organizations within the state or outsourced to vendor partners. Each focused on its own role with little insight into how that work impacted or was impacted by the work of other teams. These silos made overseeing program operations complex and inefficient.

Through its partnership with Optum, the state was able to bring all functions under one roof, creating a single point of accountability. Today, the state's long-term care service operations all work together – communicating and collaborating across workstreams. And the progress continues, with Optum managing day-to-day operations, working closely with the state to identify opportunities for improvement.

By teaming with Optum, the state has achieved improved efficiency and major cost savings. It's freed up state staff to focus on member needs. With the newly increased collaboration and big-picture oversight, it's better positioned to identify and implement solutions in the future.



Today, the number of nursing visits is down 37% while the number of medication administration visits is up 15%.

The result? No change in care for the constituents and less cost for the taxpayers.



To learn more about how Optum can partner with your state to improve your long-term care services, contact us at optum.com/stategovcontact.

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