

UnitedHealthcare Extends Physician Appeal Deadline

As a result of AMA requests, UnitedHealthcare (UHC) has agreed to extend the January 27, 2009, physician appeal deadline for its UnitedHealth Premium physician designation program (PDP) to February 11, 2009. All properly filed appeals received by this date will be adjudicated by UHC prior to UHC's use or release of these new ratings. This additional review period provides approximately 220,000 UHC-contracted physicians in 20 specialties in parts of 37 states with an extended opportunity to review their data and analysis and, if necessary, request reconsideration of their designation. Physicians who are unable to meet this new deadline may still appeal their rating at any time, and UHC will update any changes in physician ratings on a weekly basis.

The AMA and members of the Federation have been meeting and working jointly with representatives of UHC to improve UHC-physician communications and the transparency of the PDP.

Below are instructions on how physicians can request their ID and password to access their PDP data if they do not have the December 23, 2008, PDP letter, which contains this information. There also are instructions to help physicians determine whether they are covered by this program. Please read these instructions before contacting UHC for assistance:

What is the UnitedHealthcare Premium Designation program?

The UHC Premium Designation program is a physician-profiling program. Through the PDP, UHC measures physicians on their compliance with quality and cost efficiency standards and designated physicians across 20 specialties. Physicians can receive either a quality (one-star) or a quality and efficiency (two-star) designation. UHC publicly posts these physician ratings on its Website, www.uhc.com (<http://www.uhc.com>). The program has been in operation for several years.

Do you meet the criteria for participation in the UnitedHealthcare Premium Designation program?

The following are criteria for participation in the Premium Designation program:
The physician has a contract with UHC.

The physician practices in one of the following states where the PDP operates: AL, AR, AZ, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, IA, ID, IL, KS, KY, LA, MD, MI, MS, NC, NE, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WI, and WV. (Please note: the program may not be available in all parts of each state)

The physician practices in one of the specialties evaluated by PDP:

Allergy, Cardio-Thoracic Surgery, Electrophysiology, Endocrinology, Family Medicine, Infectious Disease, Internal Medicine, Interventional Cardiology, Nephrology, Neurology, Neurosurgery, Non-Interventional Cardiology, OB/GYN, Orthopaedic Surgery, Pediatrics, Pulmonology, Rheumatology, Spine Surgery, Sports Medicine, Total Joint Replacement

If you meet all the criteria, you may be participating in UHC's Premium Designation program.

Did you receive your Premium Designation letter?

On December 23, 2008, UHC mailed letters to PDP-participating physicians. If you are a PDP-participating physician and did not receive your letter, you should use the following resources to obtain a copy of your Premium Designation letter:

Toll-free Phone: (866) 270-5588

E-mail: unitedpremium@uhc.com

Why do you need your Premium Designation letter?

The letter contained your ID and password, the Web address to review your report and instructions for requesting reconsideration of your rating.

Do you want to request reconsideration of your Premium Designation rating?

UHC handles all reconsideration requests in accordance with the process described in the Reconsideration Process-Frequently Asked Questions document, which is available at <https://ereports.uhc.com/ReportCard> (<https://ereports.uhc.com/ReportCard>) . Your ID and password provide you access to this document. Note: All reconsideration requests must include any additional information you want considered as well as your signed attestation.

If you have questions, please contact the UnitedHealth Premium physician designation program staff toll-free at (866) 270-5588 or by email at unitedpremium@uhc.com.