

News Brief

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UnitedHealthcare Eliminates Out-of-Pocket Costs on Insulin and Other Drugs

UnitedHealthcare recently announced it will eliminate out-of-pocket health care costs for insulin and other emergency use drugs for fully insured group health plan members. Pending regulatory approval, members could access certain prescription drugs for free as early as Jan. 1, 2023.

In addition to insulin, the following medications will be included in the new offering and also have a \$0 cost share:

- Epinephrine for severe allergic reactions
- Glucagon for hypoglycemia
- Naloxone for opioid overdose
- Albuterol for acute asthma attacks

UnitedHealthcare and the pharmacy benefits manager OptumRx, both part of parent company UnitedHealth Group Inc., had previously offered point-of-sale discounts for select drugs.

“We are doing what we can to shield people from the prices set by pharmaceutical companies and hope all stakeholders also will act to make prescription drugs more affordable.”

- Brian Thompson, CEO of UnitedHealthcare

What's Next?

This offering builds on past UnitedHealth initiatives to address drug affordability and access. Eliminating out-of-pocket costs for prescription medications is intended to increase access to essential drugs and promote medication adherence, which can mitigate the risk of complications and hospitalizations.

UnitedHealthcare's move could add momentum to the trend of payers acting to reduce prescription drug costs for members. We'll keep you apprised of any further notable updates.

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