



## Transplant Centers of Excellence Network designated program changes PROVIDER - Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. How is HealthPartners Transplant Centers of Excellence (COE) Network changing?

Please be aware that, starting October 1, 2016, the transplant programs listed below at the University of Minnesota Medical Center (UMMC) will no longer be designated to participate in our COE Network:

- Adult Kidney program (including a combined organ transplant involving kidney.)
- Adult Liver program (including a combined organ transplant involving kidney.)
- Adult Autologous Blood or Marrow program (also referred to as stem cell)
- Adult Allogeneic Blood or Marrow program (also referred to as stem cell)

*Note: See further detail on combined organ transplant with adult kidney and liver under Question #11)*

### 2. What does “designated” mean?

To be part of the COE Network, each transplant program within a transplant center is evaluated for exceptional quality, satisfaction and affordability. These programs follow best practices of care and report high patient satisfaction and outcomes. Programs that meet these standards are designated to participate in the COE Network. Programs are re-evaluated on an annual basis.

### 3. How will this change affect me?

Primary and specialty care clinicians will need to refer their adult patients to transplant programs that are considered a designated COE.

### 4. How will this change affect my patients?

If one of the conditions below does not apply to your patient, you and your patient will need to choose a designated adult liver, adult kidney or adult blood or marrow (stem cell) transplant program available in our [Regional Transplant COE Network \(Effective 10.1.2016\)](#).

#### Conditions

Your patient may continue to be seen at UMMC’s adult liver, adult kidney or adult blood or marrow (stem cell) transplant program ...

If they have:

- Had a liver, kidney or blood or marrow (stem cell) transplant at any time in the past
- An appointment for a liver, kidney, or blood or marrow (stem cell) transplant evaluation visit that was scheduled prior to October 1, 2016

If they are:

- In the evaluation period to determine if they are a “potential” transplant candidate.

If they have been “deemed” a liver, kidney or blood or marrow (stem cell) transplant candidate by UMMC and they:

- Have been placed on the national transplant waiting list for a liver or kidney
- Will be receiving a living donor liver or kidney transplant
- Have a scheduled date to start the blood or marrow (stem cell) treatment



- Have started their blood or marrow (stem cell) treatment

**5. How does HealthPartners define the evaluation period?**

Evaluation is the first step in the process for your patient as a “potential” transplant candidate. The transplant program will schedule visits for the biosychosocial assessments based on their protocols. Evaluation periods vary from a few days to a few weeks depending on the type of transplant and the condition of your patient. Blood or marrow (stem cell) transplant evaluations are usually short.

**6. How does HealthPartners define a “deemed” transplant candidate?**

Once the evaluation is completed, the transplant team will discuss if a transplant is the best treatment choice for your patient. If approved by the team, your patient is “deemed” a transplant candidate. The program will place your patient either on the national waiting list or will initiate their blood or marrow (stem cell) transplant protocol.

**7. Are designated transplant programs available in Minnesota that I may refer my patients to?**

Yes.

- *For Adult Kidney Transplants:* Abbott Northwestern Hospital, Hennepin County Medical Center, Mayo Clinic
- *For Adult Liver or Blood or Marrow (Stem Cell) Transplants:* Mayo Clinic

**8. Are UMMC’s other transplant programs still considered designated within the Transplant COE Network?**

Yes. We evaluate each program within a transplant center. Our decision does not affect other UMMC transplant programs currently designated to participate in our Transplant COE Network. This includes UMMC pediatric transplant programs and UMMC adult heart, lung and pancreas transplant programs. Combined organ transplants will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**9. How do I find a complete Designated Transplant COE Network list?**

You may find all designated Transplant COE Network programs available to you by clicking on [Regional Transplant COE Network \(Effective 10.1.2016\)](#). You also may call member services at 952-883-5000 or 1-800-883-2177 to assist you in finding a designated transplant program.

**10. Are transplant programs for liver, kidney, and blood and marrow available to my patient (adult or pediatric) in our regional area outside of Minnesota where their in-network benefits apply?**

Yes. The following programs have been and will continue to be designated Transplant COEs:

State	Facility	Liver	Liver /	Kidney	Kidney /	Liver /	Kidney /	Blood
			Kidney		Pancreas	Kidney	Pancreas	
MINNESOTA	Abbott Northwestern Hospital - <b>Minneapolis</b>			Adult				
	Hennepin County Medical Center, <b>Minneapolis</b>			Adult				
	Mayo Clinic Hospital - <b>Rochester</b>	Both						
	University of Minnesota Medical Center, Fairview, and University of Minnesota Amplatz Children's Hospital, <b>Minneapolis</b>	Pediatric						
IOWA	University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics, <b>Iowa City</b>	Both		Both	Adult		Adult	Both
Illinois	Loyola University Medical Center, <b>Chicago</b>	Adult		Adult				Adult
	Northwestern Memorial Hospital, <b>Chicago</b>	Adult						
	Rush University Medical Center, <b>Chicago</b>			Adult				Adult
	University of <b>Chicago</b> Medical Center and Comer Children's Hospital at the University of <b>Chicago</b>	Both		Both	Adult			Both
	University of Illinois, <b>Chicago</b>						Adult	Adult
NEBRASKA	The Nebraska Medical Center, <b>Omaha</b>	Both	Both	Both	Adult	Both	Adult	Both
WISCONSIN	Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center, <b>Milwaukee</b>	Adult						
	Froedert Memorial Lutheran Hospital, <b>Milwaukee</b>	Adult						
	University of Wisconsin, <b>Madison</b>	Both	Both	Both	Adult	Both	Adult	Both

**11. What if my patient may need a combined organ transplant that includes a kidney? Is UMMC a participating program for combined organ transplants such as Simultaneous Pancreas Kidney (SPK) or Pancreas after Kidney (PAK) transplant?**

- All Adult combined organ transplants involving a kidney should be referred to a participating/designated kidney transplant program in the HealthPartners' Center of Excellence network.
- Based on the October 2016 transplant program COE changes, UMMC is not considered a participating COE program for adult kidney nor combined organ transplantation involving a Kidney. (eg. SPK or PAK)
- In the case where there is a possibility or known plan for a combined organ transplant involving a kidney, patients should be referred to transplant programs within our COE where their kidney, pancreas and liver programs are participating.



- Pancreas after Kidney transplants for patients that have had a recent Kidney transplant will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

### **Other case-specific questions**

#### **12. What do I tell my patient who already has a scheduled evaluation visit in October with UMMC?**

Please let your patient know that he/she will be able to move forward at UMMC. Adult patients who had an evaluation scheduled prior to or on September 30, 2016 at UMMC are unaffected by this change. These patients should go ahead with their scheduled visit. If the result of the evaluation is that your patient is a transplant candidate, they may continue their transplant care and services at UMMC.

#### **13. What if I referred my patient to UMMC for an evaluation prior to October 1, 2016, but they have not scheduled appointment for the evaluation visit?**

If your patient has not scheduled an appointment for the evaluation visit prior to or on September 30, 2016, UMMC will not be a designated transplant program for adult liver, kidney or blood or marrow (stem cell) program. They will need to call our member services at 952-883-5000 or 1-800-883-2177 to help them find a designated COE program. You and your patient may also choose one of the designated liver, kidney or blood or bone marrow (stem cell) programs on the [Regional Transplant COE Network \(Effective 10.1.2016\)](#) list.

#### **14. What if my patient has already had their kidney, liver or stem cell transplant at UMMC?**

Please tell your patient that post-transplant services provided at UMMC after October 1, 2016, will continue to be covered. These patients should go ahead with their visits and continue their care at UMMC.

#### **15. What if UMMC has evaluated my patient in the past and determined they were not a transplant candidate at that time but wanted them to come back in a year to be re-evaluated or if their condition worsened?**

Since your patient was not deemed a kidney, liver, or stem cell transplant candidate at that time, UMMC will no longer be "designated" as a COE as of October 1, 2016. To be re-evaluated as a potential transplant candidate, they will need to use a designated COE program.

We are happy to speak with your patient further to answer specific questions related to coverage. Please have them call Member Services at 952-883-5000 or 1-800-883-2177.

#### **16. Would my patient be able to go to UMMC's kidney, liver or stem cell transplant program after October 1, 2016, if a designated program determines they do not have the protocol to treat their particular condition after their evaluation?**



The designated transplant program would need to prior notify the health plan before scheduling an evaluation at a non-designated program. They would need to provide information on which designated transplant programs specialize in treating their condition.

**17. If prior to October 1, 2016, my patient chose to be placed on the kidney or liver transplant waiting list at several designated programs including UMMC; If UMMC has an available donor first, will UMMC be considered a designated COE program?**

Yes, UMMC would be considered a designated COE for your patient since they were on UMMC's waiting list prior to October 1, 2016.

**Other Questions you might have**

**18. How have you communicated this to specialist and primary care clinicians?**

A special edition Fast Facts has been sent to all nephrologists, gastroenterologists and oncologists in our network. You may find a copy of the [Regional Transplant COE Network \(Effective 10.1.2016\)](#) network program changes on our transplant page on the provider portal.

**19. What health plan products does this change apply to?**

This change applies to all HealthPartners plan products – including Commercial, Medicare, and Medicaid – where HealthPartners is primary or secondary coverage. (Please note: There are certain exceptions for Medicare products due to CMS requirements.)

**20. What benefits and services are available to my patients and their family if they have to travel for their transplant care?**

Together, HealthPartners and the designated transplant program have experience in working closely with your patients to understand what benefits are already in place and what financial resources, support and assistance is offered by the designated transplant program

Our member services representative will be able to help your patient understand what their specific benefit plan might already have in place:

- Transplant medical care and services. (e.g., deductibles, coinsurance, copayments, etc.)
- Pharmacy coverage for current medication as well as medication your patient may need after their transplant (e.g., immunosuppressant)
- Discounts on transportation, lodging and other expenses during your patient's transplant care

The dedicated transplant case manager and social worker at our designated transplant program will help your patient understand what resources are available for other expenses that may not be available in their benefit plan:

- Tour of the transplant center
- Discounts on transportation, lodging and other expenses during their transplant stay
- Parking voucher and overnight accommodations for follow-up medical appointments
- Long-term medications programs,



- Caregiver expenses

**21. My patients are not going to be happy when I explain that they will have to travel to Mayo Clinic or further to receive transplant care. What am I supposed to tell them?**

Adult kidney transplants can still be performed in-network in the Twin Cities metro area. This includes [Abbott Northwestern Hospital](#) and [Hennepin County Medical Center](#). For other transplant types, please direct your patients to contact Member Services at 952-883-5000 or 1-800-883-2177.

**22. Has the transplant prior notification process for the transplant evaluation period and the transplant listing or treatment period changed?**

No. Our Medical Policy department applies either a prior notification or prior authorization requirement (depending on the transplant type) at the time of initial consultation and at the time the member is placed on the transplant waiting list. Prior notification requirements are on our Transplant Centers of Excellence website under the [Resources and COE Network](#) tab.

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