

Local Care Units (LCUs)

Medical Director

The Medical Director represents the partnership between Harvard Pilgrim and the local practice. The Local Care Unit (LCU) Medical Director works in partnership with Harvard Pilgrim to carry out quality assurance and utilization management functions including, but not limited to:

- Managing/directing medical programs and LCU participating providers
- Overseeing the quality of care delivered by the LCU participating providers
- Overseeing the utilization management process
- Acting as a medical liaison between Harvard Pilgrim and the LCU
- Ensuring confidentiality of information shared between Harvard Pilgrim, the LCU, and its participating providers

Standard Individual Joinder Agreement

Harvard Pilgrim's standard individual joinder agreement, when a contractual requirement, binds an individual physician or non-physician provider ("LCU provider-members") to an LCU group agreement. The LCU may be a physician hospital organization, a physician organization, an independent practice association, or other multiple physician practice.

- Harvard Pilgrim's standard individual joinder agreement in Massachusetts is a three-party document requiring the signatures of the LCU provider-member, the LCU Medical Director or designee, and the Senior Vice President of Commercial Business.
- Harvard Pilgrim's standard individual joinder agreement in New Hampshire is a two-party agreement requiring the signatures of the LCU provider-member and Harvard Pilgrim's Senior Vice President of Regional Markets.
- Standard individual joinder agreements are not applicable to Maine physicians.

Provider-Member

A provider-member is a physician or non-physician who participates with Harvard Pilgrim through an LCU, but who is not an employee of the LCU. Provider-members, when contractually required, execute Harvard Pilgrim's standard individual joinder agreements.

Provider-Employee

A provider-employee is a physician or non-physician who is employed by the LCU in which he/she participates. Provider-employees are not required to execute Harvard Pilgrim's standard individual joinder agreements.

Provision of Covered Services

The LCU is responsible for providing, or arranging, services to Harvard Pilgrim members in accordance with professionally and medically acceptable procedures and consistent with Harvard Pilgrim's policies and procedures and the applicable member agreement. Each LCU provider must arrange to have his/her patients covered by another provider in the LCU (or other Harvard Pilgrim contracted provider) during his/her temporary absence or unavailability.

Member Assignment

Each LCU member selects a single PCP in the LCU who will coordinate the overall health care and refer the member, as appropriate, to LCU physicians and other Harvard Pilgrim–contracted providers. Harvard Pilgrim may assign members to PCPs with open panels. Each month, Harvard Pilgrim notifies LCUs and PCPs of HMO/POS member selection, auto-assignment, or termination from a PCP panel.

Provider panels can be closed to new members immediately upon receipt of the request. However, Massachusetts Managed Care Law (MMCL) requires a 60-day notice for PCPs to terminate their affiliation or close their panel to all members.

Provider Disenrollment

Members must be notified in advance by Harvard Pilgrim, and services continued, when providers voluntarily, or involuntarily, disenroll from an LCU or as a Plan Provider as outlined below.

Continuity of Care upon Contract Termination of a Provider

Unless a contract termination is based on quality-related issues or fraud, a terminated provider must continue to provide in-network care to Harvard Pilgrim members when approved by Harvard Pilgrim as follows:

- **General Right:**
 - For New Hampshire and Maine members, at least 60 days after the provider's termination date.
 - For Massachusetts members, at least 30 days after the primary care provider's termination date.
- **Active Course of Treatment:**
 - All members may be eligible to continue to receive coverage for up to 90 days from the date the member receives notice of disenrollment if the member is undergoing an active course of treatment for an illness, injury or condition. An active course of treatment includes when (1) a member has a "serious and complex condition", (2) is currently undergoing a course of institutional or inpatient care, or (3) has scheduled nonelective surgery including any related postoperative care. The term "serious and complex condition" is an acute illness that is serious enough to require specialized medical treatment to avoid the reasonable possibility of death or permanent harm; or is a chronic illness that is (a) life-threatening, degenerative, potentially disabling, or congenital; and (b) requires specialized medical care over a prolonged period of time.
 - For Rhode Island members: the member is held harmless for covered benefits except for amounts due for co-payments, coinsurance, and deductibles, for the duration of an active course of treatment or up to one year, whichever is earlier, subject to all the terms and conditions of the provider contract, unless the provider is able to safely transition the member to a network provider. For this period of active treatment, the member shall only be responsible for in-network cost shares provided for under the members' coverage documents and not otherwise prohibited by state or federal laws or regulations.
- **Pregnancy:**
 - All female Members who are pregnant may continue to receive coverage for services delivered by the termed provider, for the period up to, and including, 6 weeks of postpartum visits immediately following childbirth.
- **Terminal Illness:**
 - All Members with a terminal illness may continue to receive coverage for services delivered by the termed provider until the Member's death.

If Harvard Pilgrim approves the above continuity of care right, the provider must (1) accept payment from Harvard Pilgrim (as applicable) (and cost-sharing from the member, if applicable) in accordance with the same terms and conditions under the plan had such contract termination not occurred as payment in full for such items and services; and (2) continue to adhere to all Harvard Pilgrim's policies, procedures, and quality standards with respect to such member and such items and services in the same manner as if such contract termination had not occurred.

LCU Requirements

Harvard Pilgrim requires that LCUs:

- Allow Harvard Pilgrim to use practitioner performance data (such as quality, cost, resource use, or utilization information) as is required by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

Reporting

Harvard Pilgrim makes available performance and eligibility reports that help medical directors and their staff effectively manage the care delivered to LCU members and to promote the success of quality programs.

Online Delivery

LCU performance reporting, including eligibility reports, is available through *HPHConnect*. (Go to www.harvardpilgrim.org/providers). *HPHConnect* service requires registration. Call the *HPHConnect* Service Center at 800-676-2769.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

03/01/11	reviewed; no updates
06/15/12	reviewed; minor edits for clarity
06/15/13	added NCQA practitioner performance data requirement information
03/15/14	added CT provider disenrollment information
09/15/16	reviewed; administrative edits for clarity
03/01/18	reviewed; administrative edits for clarity
02/22/21	reviewed; edits to CT termination requirements
05/05/21	reviewed; edits to CT termination requirements
11/01/21	Language added to comply with the Consolidated Appropriations Act (No Surprises Act, Section 113) effective 1/1/22; clarifying language added to comply with existing state-required continued access laws
01/01/23	reviewed; administrative edits
01/01/24	removed references to Connecticut
05/06/24	added language for Rhode Island members to the Continuity of Care upon Contract Termination of a Provider, Active Course of Treatment section