

Value Connection

Arkansas Health Network's Newsletter



A Message of Success

The first quarter for AHN is always an exciting and busy time as we simultaneously compile reporting from last year while implementing new policies and processes designed to continue our success as we focus on the current reporting cycle. AHN is proud that we continue to exceed expectations across our key contracts. Our board recently approved distributing \$2 million to the physicians partnering with us in the Medicare Shared Savings Program (MSSP). We will deliver those checks this summer. In addition to our ACO savings, preliminary data suggest we achieved nearly \$2 million in cost savings for a central Arkansas group health plan in 2021. Final reconciliation and quality improvement metrics for this will be completed in May.

As many of you know, the Pathways to Success – Enhanced Track is in “full swing.” MSSP providers should have received the necessary overview and compliance training. Please contact us if you have any questions regarding these important trainings or have yet to receive them. As we move forward, AHN will begin posting information, trainings and forms for providers in the AHN Connect app. Please look on page two of this newsletter for details.

Finally, we want to sincerely thank all the providers and their staff as they combated the most recent Omicron variant which swept through the U.S. in winter. Your efforts with vaccine education, social distancing precautions and adoption of new technologies such as telehealth continue to make a difference for our fellow Arkansans. Thank you for your continued dedication to delivering quality care.

Daniel Felton, MD, Board Chairperson
Bob Sarkar, MBA, FACHE, President & CEO

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CMO Note: Behavioral Health in Arkansas

The need for behavioral health services continues to rise in Arkansas and nationally as the percentage of adults with mental illness who report an unmet need for treatment has increased each year since 2011. Psychologists report an increase in demand for treatment since the outset of COVID-19 and past research on public health crises suggests the impact on behavioral health will outlast the emergency period.



Patients and referring providers may find it challenging to get timely access to behavioral health providers. This also impacts the patients' ability to partner in their own care for other medical conditions such as management of diabetes or high blood pressure. It can also lead to increased hospitalizations for behavioral health. Given the current situation, the behavioral health inpatient capacity is also limited. A 2021 study of ED visits in the US found that visit rates for mental health conditions rose during the pandemic, underscoring the importance of mental health, substance use, and violence risk screenings and prevention needs.

Arkansas Health Network (AHN) has been partnering with payers to provide actionable reporting to primary care providers, to help identify members with behavioral health needs as well as provide care management for high risk members. Additionally, AHN continues to strive to improve access to high quality behavioral health services, and has been expanding its portfolio of behavioral health specialists and facilities. Included in AHN's network of behavioral health facilities is CHI St. Vincent Infirmiry, which offers a full range of inpatient behavioral health services as well as an addiction recovery program. For more information on behavioral health providers and facilities please visit the [AHN website](#).

For questions or comments, please contact Lubna Maruf, CMO (lubna.maruf@commonspirit.org)

Download the AHN Connect App

In an effort to provide you with important updates, relevant resources and to streamline communication with our over 3,000 participating physicians – Arkansas Health Network is placing all required training into the AHN Connect app.

What this means for you:

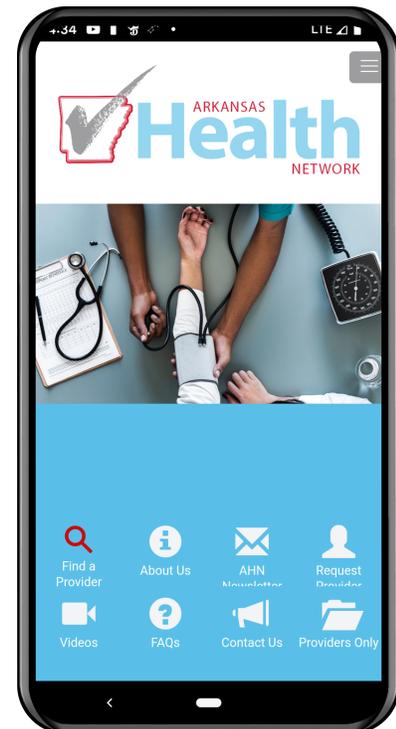
- Access to helpful resources like evidence-based guidelines, pharmacy information and updates on quality-based care.
- Ability to look up other facilities, clinicians and specialists in the network.
- All required AHN forms and training materials will be available via the providers-only section of our application.

How do I download the app?

Search "AHN Connect" in the Google Play or App Store.

Why is AHN requiring providers to download and access the app?

You are busy! However, our continued success is dependent on participating practices understanding key information, updates and changes to our programs. Using notifications and forms allows providers to access important information without the need to email or call your office. Our goal is to maximize your time commitments to your practice.



For questions or comments, please contact Pam Burgoyne (pamela.burgoyne@commonspirit.org)



Connect with AHN on LinkedIn for the latest news and updates on value based care in Arkansas

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/arkansas-health-network>



Pharmacy Corner

Interleukins for Treatment of Psoriasis

Interleukins for treatment of psoriasis are very effective medications. These agents are costly to all of Arkansas Health Network's patients and contracts. These interleukins include Taltz, Cosentyx, Stelara, Skyrizi, and Tremfya. These medications account for \$2,613,576 spent annually. Because of this significant cost burden, Arkansas Health Network is focusing on using the most cost effective agent when choosing one of these medications.

Cosentyx is the most cost effective therapy with equal efficacy for the treatment of psoriasis (if Cosentyx isn't on the formulary, Taltz is encouraged). Cosentyx and Taltz are the older of the interleukins on the market, therefore have more data on safety and long-term effects. To avoid an increased financial burden to a patient's health plan which will result in increased premiums to the patient, choosing the most cost effective therapy is ideal. Below are listed interleukins used for the treatment of psoriasis and their corresponding total cost¹. This information is not intended to dictate or substitute your professional judgment in a particular patient.

Interleukins Used for Psoriasis	Avg. Cost per 30 days of Therapy ²
Cosentyx	\$5,199
Taltz	\$6,414
Skyrizi	\$7,324
Tremfya	\$7,759
Stelara	\$8,290

For questions or comments, please contact Claire Barlow, PharmD, MBA, BCPS (Claire.Barlow@commonspirit.org)

1. total cost for 30 day supply includes both the cost to the patient and the payer/plan.

2. costs were standardized for 30 days of therapy regardless of dosing frequency for equal cost comparison.

Arkansas Business: AHN Saved Members \$16.8M in 2020

On March 28, AHN CEO and President Bob Sarkar discussed another successful year of savings and what the future looks like with arkansasbusiness.com. In 2020, AHN saved the Medicare program \$14.3 million, resulting in \$8.4 million in earned shared savings.

Beyond Medicare, AHN saved employers and payers about \$2.5 million through commercial employer contracts in 2020 with initial figures for 2021 looking even stronger. AHN is looking forward to working with additional Arkansas employers as we expand our efforts.

"For decades now, we've been discussing the certain need for value-based health care models in the United States, but few have managed to successfully build programs that deliver on those promises while also maintaining a high quality of care," said Dr. Brooks Lawrence, a primary care physician and AHN board member.

Lawrence said AHN has succeeded, and it is "consistently improving and growing year after year."

[Read the Full Article](#)

Medication Adherence

AHN continues our medication adherence focus with the 90 day supply campaign on maintenance medications. Having a 90 day supply of maintenance medications will ensure patients have their essential medications on hand, decrease time and money spent on obtaining prescriptions, and improve quality ratings and disease outcomes. AHN is using different layers of communication to patients, pharmacies, and providers to increase the use of 90-day prescriptions.

New Network Participants

Arkansas Health Network welcomes the following practices to its roster of participants. All new participants are reviewed and approved by the AHN Board of Directors.

Elizabeth Barnett, LPC
Behavioral Health
Hot Springs, (501) 881-8174

Cornerstone Specialty Hospitals (CHI St. Vincent)
Specialty Acute Care
Little Rock, (501) 265-0600

John Downes, MD
Psychiatrist
Hot Springs, (501) 622-3520

Elevation Physical Therapy
Physical Therapy
Hot Springs, 501-424-4612

F & S Physical Therapy
Physical Therapy
Multiple Locations, wellnesstpcare.com

Levi Hospital
Behavioral Health
Hot Springs, levihospital.com

Napa Valley Counseling Center
Behavioral Health
Little Rock, 501-224-0318

Ouachita Behavioral Health and Wellness
Behavioral Health
Multiple Locations, obhaw.org

Restored Life Counseling
Behavioral Health
Conway, 501-499-8699

Serenity Psychiatric Services
Behavioral Health
Hot Springs, 501-625-2443

WiseMind Counseling & Wellness LLC
Behavioral Health
Conway, 501-358-7377

*For questions, please contact: Tiffani Butler
(TButler@stvincenthealth.com) or
Hayden Finley (HLFinley@stvincenthealth.com)*

Board of Directors Update

Welcome, Dr. David Tamas

We are pleased to announce Dr. David E. Tamas, MD, as the latest addition to the AHN Board of Directors. Dr. Tamas is a diagnostic radiologist in Little Rock. He graduated from Medical College of Georgia and has over 40 years of experience. Welcome Dr. Tamas!

Thank you, Dr. John Meadors

AHN and the Board of Directors extend our sincerest gratitude to Dr. John N. Meadors, MD, for his service as an AHN board member. As a founding member, Dr. Meadors has been instrumental in the growth and success of AHN since our inception. Thank you for your contributions and support of quality care in Arkansas.

The Value Connection newsletter is designed and written by the Arkansas Health Network. Like our new look? Please email Pam Burgoyne, pamela.burgoyne@commonspirit.org with feedback, future story ideas or requests to be added to the distribution list.