

## Substance use disorders

Connecting members to evidence-based care



Over 20 million Americans live with a substance use disorder (SUD) — and millions more misuse alcohol, prescription medications or illicit drugs each year, putting them at risk for addiction.<sup>1</sup> In the U.S., excessive alcohol use is a leading cause of preventable death<sup>2</sup> — and opioid overdose deaths have reached an all-time high.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, substance use is rising. During the pandemic, 13% of Americans started or increased alcohol and substance use in response to uncertainty and stress.<sup>4</sup>

Across the substance use and addiction spectrum, the vast majority of individuals — including over 87% living with SUDs — do not get the quality care they need.<sup>5</sup> Many are fearful to pursue care, due to potential stigmatization from family, friends, colleagues or even themselves. Others are unable to find or access treatment that meets their needs. And those who seek help are sometimes lured into costly out-of-network facilities that emphasize amenities rather than quality of care, and offer no proven clinical advantages.

It does not have to be this way. Clinically proven help is available. Optum® Behavioral Health offers evidence-based resources and support to meet the unique needs of members and their families. With access to the right level of care and support, individuals can achieve stabilization, build resiliency and sustain recovery.

Over **20 million** Americans ages 12 and over have a substance use disorder.<sup>6</sup>

**95,000** people die from alcohol-related causes annually.<sup>7</sup>

Opioid overdose deaths reached an all-time high with over **90,000** in 2020.<sup>8</sup>

### Support for long-term recovery

Getting evidence-based treatment from in-network providers improves the likelihood that patients will have the support systems, community resources and regular touch points that are vital to sustaining recovery.

Our approach combines a compassionate team of care advocates and peer support specialists, innovative analytics and programs that build relationships with members, providers and their communities. By identifying those at risk and improving access, Optum helps connect members to the level of care they need, while contributing to better overall outcomes and a lower total cost of care.

We provide an evidence-based SUD strategy across the continuum of care that:

**Identifies** — We apply analytics for early intervention. This includes providing screening and intervention tools to clinicians, and self-assessment tools and other resources through our employee assistance programs (EAP) and [liveandworkwell.com](https://www.liveandworkwell.com).

**Engages** — We connect members to evidence-based care, treatment referrals, educational tools and support resources.

**Guides** — We promote recovery with ongoing support, including digital tools and recovery plans, utilizing peer-led support when indicated, to help build resiliency and address barriers and social determinants of health.



## The right care at the right time

Optum Behavioral Health brings clinical expertise to connect members to personalized, evidence-based treatment for SUD and co-occurring mental health issues. Expert advocates guide members and families to the most appropriate care for their situation at a pace that works for them.



**Substance Use Disorder Helpline** — Members and their families can get immediate locally based provider referrals and other confidential assistance 24/7 by phone at no additional cost.



**Facility Benefit Inquiry Program** — Members are better able to sustain long-term recovery with an established support system close to home. Optum care advocates guide individuals to local, in-network, evidence-based options for SUD care.



**Medication-assisted treatment (MAT)** — MAT is an evidence-based treatment that combines FDA-approved medications with counseling, behavioral therapy and recovery support. It can diminish the risk of overdose, relieve cravings and promote healing. Members are connected to local high-quality services nearby. Optum bundles member rates and streamlines invoicing to make it easier for members to engage in and access care.



**RecoveryGo** — Delivered virtually, Hazelden Betty Ford's RecoveryGo® solution provides outpatient addiction and mental health care, recovery support resources, family services and community solutions directly to members, on demand.



**Care across a range of needs** — From members looking to find new ways to cope with anxiety and stress to those seeking treatment for an SUD, we offer a full suite of solutions ranging from evidence-based self-help tools and virtual coaching to in-network providers delivering inpatient and outpatient care.



**90%** of individuals who identify themselves when calling the Substance Use Disorder Helpline use in-network treatment, leading to **better outcomes and a lowered total cost of care.**<sup>9</sup>

Readmission rates for people treated at out of state, **out-of-network residential treatment centers are 130%–200% higher.**<sup>10</sup>

Treatment costs are more than **170% higher for 90-day episode of care.**<sup>11</sup>

**95%** of our members are **within 20 miles of an in-network MAT provider.**<sup>12</sup>

Utilizing our Platinum facilities for high acuity care results in an average **savings of \$2,587 per inpatient episode.**<sup>13</sup>

## Learn more

For more information, visit [optum.com/behavioralhealth](https://optum.com/behavioralhealth) or contact your Optum representative.

### Sources

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11. Comparison of average 90-day episode-of-care cost for out-of-network residential treatment (\$43,388) to that for in-network residential treatment (\$16,058); episode of care is defined as claims between three days before admission through 90 days after discharge (2020 discharges); Bolstrom, Behavioral Value and Benefits Management, April 2021.
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