



Understanding the health needs of public sector employees in Connecticut

CONNECTICUT 
PARTNERSHIP PLAN

ADMINISTERED BY **Anthem** 



A shared commitment to better health

The State of Connecticut and Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield (Anthem) are deeply committed to supporting our members' physical and emotional well-being. By better understanding who we serve, we can ensure everyone has access to the right programs and resources to improve the overall health of our communities.

Making the most of preventive visits

Primary care providers (PCPs) are able to spend more time with patients before and after visits and expand access to appointments due to an initiative launched in 2023 by Anthem and the State. This provides additional resources to PCPs to expand and enhance their patient services.

Care Coordinators help the State's plan members overcome barriers to care and get personalized answers to their benefits questions. They serve as the first point of contact for members and their families, and members can call, send a secure message from their personal benefits portal, or use the live chat to connect with a Care Coordinator.

They can help our members:

- Find quality healthcare providers.
- Understand their benefits.
- Navigate the healthcare system.
- Receive quality care and incentive benefits from the Providers of Distinction program.
- Resolve billing and claims issues.
- Find affordable prescriptions.

The member experience is simplified with one call to Quantum Health, the administrator of the Health Enhancement Program (HEP) and the State's Care Coordinator/concierge service. Preventive screenings, claims, necessary tests and treatments are coordinated behind-the-scenes with Anthem's Provider Services team. Quantum's team also serves providers, making them truly integrated in the patient care and experience.



Health Equity Study

In 2022, a first-of-its-kind analysis sought to identify and evaluate healthcare disparities within the State Employee Health Plan compared to similar plans across multiple sectors. The report looked at medical and prescription drug claims between 2017 and 2020 from the State Health Plan and a benchmark of nearly 100 other plans, covering approximately two million lives (Medicare retirees were excluded).

The other plans in the study are a mixture of multi-employer plans and public sector plans. About 70% of the people covered are multi-employer, and the rest are public sector. The study evaluated a number of parameters based on the Area Deprivation Index, including:

- Race and ethnicity
- Income
- Job classification
- Age
- Gender
- Socioeconomic disadvantages of neighborhoods

The study looked at six key healthcare areas where clear disparities exist throughout the population. We are presenting those challenges here, along with what we are doing to close those critical gaps in care.

Proactive preventive care

The smartest, most efficient way to address health issues is to keep them from ever happening, making preventive care an important step toward better overall health and well-being.

Whether it's screening tests, health education, or immunizations, we want to make it easier for everyone to stay on top of their health and access the care they need. That's why Connecticut Partnership Plan members have access to comprehensive preventive care programs and added support with personalized access to Care Coordinators and digital resources through Quantum Health's online HEP and Benefits portal or MyQHealth app.

The Health Enhancement Program (HEP) is a nationally renowned program that offers preventive care initiatives that incentivize members to receive recommended age-based screenings. Because of the incentives, the state plan significantly outperforms benchmarks for breast, prostate, colorectal, and cervical cancer screenings.



Personal Benefits and HEP Portal

One portal holds all your State of Connecticut benefit information. From CareCompass.ct.gov, create an account. You can visit from your computer, cell phone browser, or download the MyQHealth app for a seamless benefit experience.

One login: Connect to your personal healthcare accounts, including HEP, medical, pharmacy, and dental coverage.¹

Dependent access: Any 18+ dependent on your plan can create their own account to view their benefits and get support when needed.

Benefits checker: Confirm the costs of your plan, look up medical providers in your selected plan, and discover the health benefits available to you.

Provider Finder: Locate nearby providers that are in your plan listed with quality ratings, specialties, and more.

Care Coordinators: When you have a benefit question, get assistance from our portal by scheduling a call, using the live chat feature, or sending a secure message.



¹ Dental coverage included in single login if member is enrolled in Cigna partnership dental coverage.



Preventive cancer screenings

When it comes to preventive care, cancer screenings should be at the top of everyone's list. Regular screenings offer the best chance of finding an issue early, when it's treatable and hasn't spread.

According to the American Cancer Society, four leading cancers are on the decline in the United States, thanks to early prevention:²

- **Breast cancer:** Overall, female breast cancer death rates have been declining since 1989 in the U.S., in large part due to early detection by mammography screening and improvements in treatment.
- **Cervical cancer:** Both incidence and mortality rates have decreased by more than 50% over the past three decades, with most of the reduction attributed to screening with the Pap test, which can detect cervical cancer at an early stage and precancerous lesions.
- **Colorectal cancer (CRC):** As the second-leading cause of cancer-related deaths, there's been an accelerated decline in CRC incidence rates during the past decade. This decrease in cases is thought primarily to reflect the increased uptake of screening and removal of precancerous lesions.
- **Prostate cancer:** In the U.S., cancer of the prostate is the most common type of cancer among men (other than skin cancer) and the third-leading cause of cancer deaths. Mortality rates for prostate cancer have been declining, in part due to improvements in treatment, management of recurrent disease, and early detection with the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test.

Cancer screenings can reduce the burden of cancer, but they aren't effective if there's no way to assure:

- People get the tests they need.
- The tests are performed accurately.
- Testing is not conducted often enough.
- Results are followed up in a timely and appropriate manner.



Telehealth

During the pandemic, telehealth was a valuable tool that kept us connected to our healthcare. Today, it's a convenient way to access the care we need when we need it most. For members whose provider offers this service, the same in-office copay applies.

To make certain that telehealth is an option for all our members, we offer additional options:

Virtual doctor visits

For a \$5 copay, members have the added convenience of visiting with a board-certified doctor using a smartphone, computer, or tablet. If they need care right away and it's not an emergency, they can connect with a doctor 24/7 through video or chat with no appointment needed.³ Doctors are available virtually to assess symptoms, provide a treatment plan, and prescribe or refill a prescription.⁴

Mental health video visits⁵

For help with mental health concerns, our members can connect to a licensed therapist,⁶ board-certified psychologist, or psychiatrist³ through video with a \$5 copay. Appointments can be scheduled in four days or less with a therapist or psychologist and within two weeks with a psychiatrist.

Condition management

Dealing with pain and discomfort from an injury like a broken bone or a burst appendix is challenging, but at least there's an end in sight. That's not the case for people with high blood pressure, heart failure, diabetes, arthritis, osteoporosis, or other chronic conditions. With no known cures on the horizon, these conditions usually last a lifetime.

It's important to help people with chronic conditions live more comfortably by managing their symptoms.

As with preventive screenings, the HEP can also assist our covered population with no-cost chronic disease management education and counseling. This includes expert assistance for people living with:

- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Coronary artery disease
- Heart failure
- Hyperlipidemia
- Hypertension

Virtual well-being seminars

Virtual well-being seminars help keep members and their dependents engaged in their health with education. Every month, live, interactive seminars on topics ranging from the seven chronic conditions listed above to sleep, stress, smoking, and nutrition are offered.

HEP is helping our members outperform expectations for managing seven chronic conditions, and combating persistent racial and ethnic disparities. That's why HEP is included as part of the Partnership Plan.

³ Psychiatrists on LiveHealth Online will not offer counseling or talk therapy. Appointments subject to availability.

⁴ Prescription availability is defined by physician judgment.

⁵ Online counseling is not appropriate for all kinds of issues. If you are in crisis or have suicidal thoughts, it's important that you seek help immediately. Please call 988 (Suicide and Crisis Lifeline) or 911 and ask for help.

⁶ If your issue is an emergency, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room. LiveHealth Online does not offer emergency services. Appointments subject to the availability of a therapist.

⁶ Prescriptions determined to be a "controlled substance" (as defined by the Controlled Substances Act under federal law) cannot be prescribed using LiveHealth Online.

Diabetes management

Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S.⁷ Nearly 11.3% of the U.S. population (37.3 million Americans) have diabetes.⁷ Of those 37.3 million, nearly 8.5 million are undiagnosed.⁷

In Connecticut (as in the U.S.), the prevalence of diabetes is high, particularly among Black, Hispanic, and Asian members of our community.

We provide access to three innovative programs to help at-risk members with diabetes live healthier lives:

- **Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP)** — 12-month virtual program that helps plan members and their dependents age 18 and over reduce the risk of developing diabetes through behavioral lifestyle changes. Our program includes health coaching, online activity and nutrition-based challenges, and other tools.
- **Diabetes Management Program** — Virta Health empowers employees who have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes to stay connected and supported with access to a diabetes health coach, free testing supplies and alerts to help manage their A1c.
- **Diabetes Reversal program for Type 2 diabetics** — Virta Health's virtual clinic has helped members lose weight, lower blood sugar and reduce medications. Participants can learn to eat their way to better health with personalized nutrition plans and support from medical providers, professional diabetes coaches and digital health tools.

Lower back and joint pain

The people of Connecticut work hard. And with hard work comes aches and pains. The two most common types of work-related pain in our population are lower back and joint pain.

Most pain in the lower back is caused by muscle strains. But joint problems can cause lower back pain, too. Arthritis is a common type of joint pain that can cause inflammation and joint damage to the lower back.

Nationally, 39% of adults experience lower back pain.⁸ Back and joint pain are more prevalent in:

- Adults age 65 and over
- Non-Hispanic White adults
- Women
- Those with income below 100% of the federal poverty level (FPL)

Members can connect with a certified coach who will review their symptoms, provide therapeutic exercises, or refer them to a physical therapist or specialist in their health plan's network, as needed.

Members of the State of Connecticut health plan have access to Upswing Health, a no-cost virtual tool for at-home diagnosis and treatment of muscle or joint pain and other orthopedic issues. Upswing Health has orthopedic injury experts who leverage online tools and technology to help diagnose, manage, and treat pain of the back, neck, shoulder, elbow, hand, hip, knee, or ankle.

Comprehensive Spine Program

Uses an in-person medical team approach to alleviate neck and back pain — while avoiding unnecessary surgery or prescriptions. Care includes an initial medical evaluation to determine a conservative course of treatment (i.e., physical therapy, acupuncture occupational therapy, etc.), then completes with a provider follow-up. This is part of the State's Provider of Distinction program, where members receive incentives for choosing providers that have met high standards for care and a proven record of low-risk outcomes. For more information on conditions and associate incentives, visit [Providers of Distinction](#).

New in 2024!

Upswing offers an 8-week Spine Health Program to reduce the incidence and severity of lower back problems. This virtual platform uses AI technology to detect a person's range of motion/movement from assessment, through prescribed exercise routine, to the post-program evaluation. Athletic trainers will check on progress, offer modifications as needed, and support participants through this online exercise therapy program.

⁷ American Diabetes Association: *Statistics About Diabetes* (accessed November 2022); [diabetes.org](#).

⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *Back, Lower Limb, and Upper Limb Pain Among U.S. Adults* (accessed November 2022); [cdc.gov](#).



Conclusion

The Connecticut Partnership Plan has a deep understanding of the needs of our members, and we've used research to develop a robust offering of benefits, services, and programs to proactively address healthcare needs in our communities and close care gaps within our state and beyond.

We want members to see the value in what our plan offers, and that we are here to support them throughout their healthcare journey. That's why we are working closely with Anthem to reimagine what is possible for every moment of health to provide access to the right care at the right time for everyone.



Sydney Health is offered through an arrangement with Cereon Digital Platforms, a separate company offering mobile application services on behalf of your health plan. The Virtual Primary Care experience is offered through an arrangement with Hydrogen Health.

In addition to using a telehealth service, you can receive in-person or virtual care from your own doctor or another healthcare professional in your plan's network. If you receive care from a doctor or healthcare professional not in your plan's network, your share of the costs may be higher. You may also receive a bill for any charges not covered by your health plan.

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