

# PCMA Members Health Equity Progress Report

November 2023



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# Introduction

Pharmacy benefit companies, in collaboration with plan sponsors, clinicians, and government programs, have a long history of working to advance health equity; however, the severity of the health disparities revealed during the COVID-19 pandemic spurred the Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) industry to develop a more unified response. In 2021, PCMA's members came together to formally declare the PBM industry's commitment to health equity and selected four key areas of focus:

1

Address disparities in access, disease burden, and outcomes

2

Promote equitable, affordable pharmacy benefit design

3

Create a culture of equity and person-centered care

4

Invest in meaningful data, evidence, and measurement

In the years since, the industry has continued to deepen its commitment to promoting health equity and reducing health disparities. This report highlights some examples of this work and provides resources for readers to learn more about each company's efforts in this area. Several broad themes are evident within these efforts. First, each company is actively working to deliver on its commitment to health equity and looking for ways to continue dismantling key barriers to achieving it. Second, there is broad recognition that advancing health equity benefits all individuals, not just historically marginalized populations. Finally, a key component to addressing health disparities is ensuring that health care organizations are reflective of the diverse populations they serve and are prepared to provide culturally competent care. We also found a persistent barrier within the industry. Each company is working to overcome data collection challenges, but they all recognize this issue as one that requires collaboration, integration, and standardization across the health care system. Demographic data collection, including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity data, is an area ripe for policymaking.

PCMA members will continue to strengthen health equity within their companies with the goal to:



**Identify** challenges and structural issues within current formulary, benefit design, and pharmacy network processes that may lead to, or exacerbate, health disparities or inequities, as well as opportunities for PBMs to help address or mitigate disparities;



**Share** promising practices, viable solutions, and other examples of PBM industry leadership to promote health equity and reduce disparities in the use of, and access to, prescription drugs and related therapies; and



**Recommend** potential policy solutions or practical interventions to address disparities and inequities in prescription drug access and quality of care.



## KEY TERMS

### Health Disparities

Health disparities are preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged populations. Despite significant progress in research, practice, and policy, [disparities in youth health risk behaviors](#) persist. Populations can be defined by factors such as race or ethnicity, gender, education or income, disability, geographic location (e.g., rural or urban), or sexual orientation. Health disparities are inequitable and are directly related to the historical and current unequal distribution of social, political, economic, and environmental resources.

### Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the nonmedical factors that influence health outcomes. They are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. These forces and systems include economic policies and systems, development agendas, social norms, social policies, racism, climate change, and political systems.

# The Cigna Group

The Cigna Group is a global health company committed to creating a better future built on the vitality of every individual and every community. This commitment is demonstrated in the products and services provided under Cigna Healthcare and Evernorth Health Services (Cigna Group's PBM) divisions. The company works to advance better health for all and to reduce health disparities by addressing social determinants of health (SDOH) that adversely affect underserved communities so everyone can achieve health and well-being regardless of social, economic, or environmental circumstances.

## Supporting Promoting DEI Externally

One way the company is [taking steps to address health disparities](#) is by tackling affordability and improving access with multiple programs to help patients better afford care. The company's efforts with regard to pharmacy benefits management include the following:

- » **Patient Assurance Program:** To address the need for predictability and access to medications for people living with diabetes, this program helps lower out-of-pocket costs for insulin and certain non-insulin medications by ensuring patients pay no more than \$25 for a 30-day supply.
- » **IndependentRx Initiative:** This program increases patients access to care by contracting and leveraging community pharmacies in rural areas through direct-to-patient prescribing, testing services, disease management, and medication administration.
- » **Copay Assurance Plan™:** This ensures consumers pay less out-of-pocket by capping copays on prescription drugs: no more than \$5 for generics, \$25 for preferred brand drugs, and \$45 for preferred specialty brand drugs.

## Embedding Health Equity in Solutions and Practices

Additionally, the company is driving equity through the following efforts to address access and implicit bias and to build trust with customers.

- » **Identifying and mitigating bias in technology.** The Cigna Group established a Model Equity Governance process to ensure its algorithms and predictive model practices are consistent with its commitment to health equity, including a comprehensive procedure for model equity and algorithmic bias identification and mitigation.
- » **Evaluating and enhancing coverage policies.** Recognizing that risk factors for diseases and responses to therapies can vary by race and ethnicity, The Cigna Group applies a health equity lens to [coverage policies](#) and recommends changes when health disparities are observed.
- » **Meeting customers where they are.** In addition to its IndependentRx initiative, The Cigna Group ensures access to care in rural communities through virtual care and digital tools such as MDLIVE®, Cigna Virtual Dental Care, and Confide Behavioral Health Navigator<sup>SM</sup> along with bilingual communications for preventive services.

- » **Making customer information accessible.** The Cigna Group promotes health literacy and accessibility with interpretation and written translation services, including support for deaf, hard of hearing, vision-impaired, and blind customers such as ASL interpretation services (in person and by phone) and translation/formatting services into braille, large print, audio, and other formats.
- » **Piloting innovations in personalized diabetes care.** To pursue reducing health inequities for [customers living with diabetes in underserved communities](#), the Cigna Group is piloting a program that matches diabetic customers in higher-risk SDOH communities with community health workers who understand their cultural nuances and provide personalized support, connecting them to benefits, services, and SDOH resources for better health outcomes.

## Supporting Marginalized Communities

The Cigna Group also has specific initiatives focused on assisting marginalized communities.

- » **Maternal health.** The Cigna Group's maternal health pilot program promotes healthy birth outcomes and maternal care for African American/Black and Hispanic/Latina women by collaborating with providers for earlier identification to provide risk screenings, free prenatal vitamins and aspirin to prevent preeclampsia, behavioral screenings, oral health, and nutrition education/support.
- » **Meals for seniors.** Medicare Advantage offers the [Cigna Healthy Food Card](#) as well as a meal program in some of its plans to help seniors get access to healthy foods following a hospital admission.
- » **My Personal Champion®.** Cigna Healthcare is working to [address disparities and close gaps in care for the LGBTQ+ population](#) by expanding in-network access to transgender care, updating provider directories to identify those experienced in caring for LGBTQ+ patients, and providing one-to-one guidance and case management support for customers seeking gender-affirming care through the My Personal Champion® program.



## Partnering with Local Communities and Providers

The Cigna Group emphasizes the need for collaboration with communities and providers to positively impact the health of people affected by SDOH and reduce health disparities. In addition to the above initiatives, The Cigna Group is making powerful and meaningful connections by:

- » **Expanding and accelerating diversity support** with The Cigna Group's five-year Building Equity and Equality Program that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion for communities of color.
- » **Investing in nonprofits to improve SDOH in local communities,** with \$50 million in charitable giving efforts, to help create more vibrant, healthier, and more equitable communities. In 2022, The Cigna Group Foundation funded more than 152 grants, 90% of which supported efforts to address SDOH. Combined charitable giving is inclusive of The Cigna Group Foundation, corporate giving through nonprofit sponsorship, and employee giving through individual donations and volunteerism.
- » **Building economic growth within diverse communities** through [\\$1 billion](#) in annual spend commitment with diverse suppliers by 2025, representing nearly 20% of its \$5 billion annual spend in the U.S.
- » **Connecting customers with community resources** like FindHelp.org to help them access transportation, food assistance, and more.
- » **Building cultural competency** among its employees and providers by increasing awareness, outreach, and training in areas of inequity.
- » **Embedding health equity metrics** into [value-based care relationships](#) with network providers through financial rewards for providers who proactively screen for SDOH and create programs or initiatives to address health disparities.
- » **Encouraging employees to participate in their communities** through their "Use Your 8" program, which allots eight hours of paid time off per year for employees to volunteer at an organization of their choice.



## Supporting Promoting DEI Internally

At The Cigna Group, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is a business priority. It believes DEI and a culture of belonging must be embraced, embedded, and championed in order to be effective across the company—and in doing so, it grows stronger in its ability to positively impact the people and communities it serves.

*The Cigna Group has zero tolerance for racism of any kind by anyone and toward anyone.*

..

*Investing in the health of its communities is critical to its mission.*

..

*It believes in finding common ground to help create a better world.*

- » The Cigna Group has an Enterprise [DEI Council](#), which oversees the DEI strategy of the company and strengthens its internal and external efforts. The Council, chaired by Chairman and CEO, David Cordani, includes senior leaders across the enterprise and reflects the company's diverse workforce.
- » The company publishes an annual [Diversity Scorecard](#) report to enhance transparency and accountability. This report reflects the company's approach and targeted actions to make a meaningful impact in three key areas—culture and co-workers, clients and customers, and communities.

- » In 2023, The Cigna Group ranked #14 on Fair360's Top 50 Companies for Diversity list. This list ranks employers based on data transparency, equitable human capital, and the effectiveness of fairness, strategy, policies, and practices. The Cigna Group's 2023 #14 is up 10 spots from 2022.

The Cigna Group achieved a 100% rating in the Human Rights Campaign Health Equity Index survey for the 10th year in a row. The Cigna Group attributes its success in part to the culture of belonging fostered in the organization, which has allowed LGBTQ+ members of its clinical leadership team to leverage not only their clinical expertise but also their own lived experiences to better support patients. Cigna believes that having [diverse leadership in the organization](#) positively impacts DEI internally and externally. Another way diversity, equity, and inclusion are realized at The Cigna Group is through Enterprise Resource Groups (ERGs). ERGs provide a positive place for support, development, and cross-cultural understanding for employees worldwide. They also help educate the business on the unique skills that the diverse communities have to offer.

# CVS Health

CVS Health is committed to advancing health equity and believes inequity can be overcome with intentionality and focus. The company asserts that health equity is not about taking resources away from one group and giving it to another, but instead working to make sure everyone has what they need to be healthy. It is not a zero-sum game. And when you help people who have been historically marginalized be healthier, everyone's health improves.

Our health equity definition:

**Everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.**

We must remember that achieving health equity means understanding the root causes of inequities.

## Health Equity Day-to-Day

CVS Health's approach to advancing health equity spans the entirety of its enterprise and focuses on three key areas:

- » **Empowering people:** CVS Health is educating colleagues about the causes of inequities and empowering them to partner on solutions. CVS Health believes health equity is a learning journey for everyone in the company and encourages colleagues to develop a deeper understanding of equity.
- » **Measurement:** CVS Health believes that increasing and standardizing data collection will understand health disparities and help identify opportunities to make care more equitable.
- » **Taking bold actions:** CVS Health is taking bold actions to improve the trajectory of health outcomes across America. Its approach is focused on providing culturally responsive patient education and management programs, empowering providers, and addressing social barriers, all with a data-informed approach.

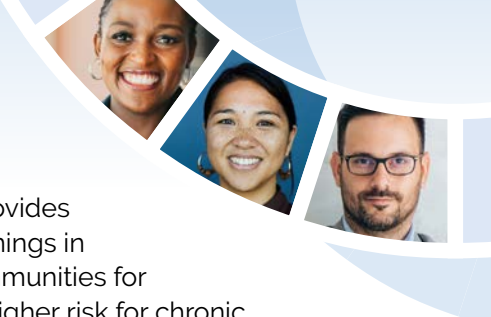
## Supporting and Promoting Health Equity Externally

CVS Health is committed to helping change how people access, receive, pay for, and experience care.

### Increase access to affordable health care

- » CVS Health's Project Health program has provided no-cost health screenings and health care resources to historically marginalized communities for nearly 20 years. In 2022, Project Health provided \$5.5 million in free medical services in underserved communities nationwide.
- » CVS Health's COVID-19 vaccine strategy focused on equitable distribution. The company worked with its network of community-based leaders and nonprofit organizations to provide vaccine access and education in vulnerable communities, focusing on Black and Hispanic populations.





### Incentivize culturally responsive health care and delivery

- » CVS Health is committed to making patients feel safe, understood, and accepted by their health care providers. Colleagues are working to build culturally responsive health care delivery systems, and the company recently launched the CVS Health Community Equity Alliance to expand the community health worker workforce and enhance connections between health care institutions and communities to address heart and mental health disparities.

### Address the social barriers to health care

- » CVS Health is committed to combating social factors within the community through community-centered investments, such as its Health Zones initiative. This initiative aims to shape a more equitable and healthy future in communities, meeting residents' needs across workforce training, nutrition, transportation, and health care.

### Community Outreach

- » CVS Health encourages employees to support underserved communities through service projects that include:
  - Backpacks for school kids;
  - Food boxes;
  - Outdoor gardening, painting, and clean up for nonprofits; and
  - **Dollars for Doers**—a program that provides employees with grants for a nonprofit they supported through the CVS Health volunteer challenge.
- » CVS Health's philanthropic efforts also support its health equity strategy. The company offers grants that are centered around equity and support underserved populations.

- Project Health provides free health screenings in underserved communities for residents with a higher risk for chronic disease.
- CVS Health works with the American Heart Association to advocate for research and education, increase health care access, and decrease disparities.
- CVS Health partners with mental health organizations, including the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and Mental Health America, to help provide equitable, quality access to mental health resources.
- CVS Health works to address maternal health disparities through collaborations with Every Mother Counts, America's Essential Hospitals, and the National Association of Free & Charitable Clinics, providing Black women with educational resources and health services.

### Future Goals

*CVS Health wants to see a health care system where equity is front and center and disparity gaps are closed.*

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*CVS Health achieved a 100% rating in the Human Rights Campaign Health Equity Index survey.*

.....

*CVS Health is affiliated with NCQA's Health Equity accreditation program.*

# Elevance Health

Elevance Health is taking deliberate steps to advance health equity by embedding the concept into its business operations and the core of the company. Elevance Health's "health equity by design" approach is its personalized and intentional approach to ensure that all people, regardless of race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and geographic or financial access can receive individualized care. The company believes that "Advancing health equity—when everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible—is not only a moral and social imperative at Elevance Health. It's also a business imperative. It's everyone's business, and everyone's job."

## Supporting and Promoting Health Equity

Elevance Health is working to advance health equity by focusing on five areas:

1. Expanding and standardizing the collection, analysis, and reporting of member data in order to develop programs and policies that mitigate health disparities.
2. Enhancing provider capacity, incentives, and accountability to deliver on health equity.
3. Identifying and scaling best practices to improve health outcomes and advance health equity for members.
4. Cultivating and sustaining a company culture of promoting health equity by training associates across the organization on related topics.
5. Addressing members' Health Related Social Needs (HRSN) in support of whole person health.

## Supporting and Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

- » Elevance Health commitment to DEI is vital to improving health and makes a stronger organization, an employer of choice, and a trusted community partner. It continues to make year-over-year progress on improving the representation of associates through clear goals, integrated talent strategies, and leadership accountability. It receives internal and external recognition for having an inclusive environment that is reinforced by its nine associate-led Business Resource Groups (BRGs), engaging associates in Leading and Listening sessions, and DEI champions. Elevance Health is advancing talent systems to increase the visibility, readiness, and retention of diverse talent by launching DEI-focused development programs, promoting mentorship, and supporting career development experiences.
- » Elevance Health fosters an inclusive and diverse workplace that respects and responds to the unique needs of associates, members, and communities. It offers DEI talent development programs to underrepresented groups and promote sponsorship and mentoring programs to build talent pipelines.

- » Elevance Health associates' diverse backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and valuable cultural insights propel them in creating innovative, sustainable, and equitable solutions that advance health equity and improve the whole health of members and communities. Its BRGs focus on engaging the workforce, providing developmental opportunities, driving community initiatives, and serving as allies to promote inclusion and collaboration.
- » In addition to voluntary initiatives, all associates are required to take annual DEI training.

## Provider Education and Resources

Elevance Health also supports health care providers, who are critical in advancing health equity, by assisting with Continuing Medical Education (CME) and offering an eLearning platform that does not require network participation. The [My Diverse Patients](#) website provides free CME credit courses on topics promoting safe, timely, efficient, culturally relevant, and equitable care. As of August 2023, there have been 41,000 users of the site since its launch in 2017. The My Diverse Patient website also offers clinical program training content including videos for providers and office staff.

Examples include:

- » **Medication adherence:** Helps providers identify contributing factors to medication adherence disparities for diverse populations and learn techniques to improve patient-centered communication to support the needs of diverse patients.
- » **Improving the patient experience:** Improves communication skills, building patient trust and commitment while expanding the provider's knowledge of the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) survey.
- » **Moving toward equity in asthma care:** Helps providers understand issues diverse patients often experience with asthma and develop strategies for communicating to enhance patient understanding.

- » **Breast cancer screening:** Learn about the importance of getting mammograms for African American women.
- » **Promoting birth equity:** Helps providers learn what they can do to improve birth equity in their medical practice.
- » **Caring for children with ADHD:** Promotes understanding of and adherence to diagnosis and treatment guidelines.

## Removing Barriers to Equitable Care

- » Elevance Health is committed to providing greater and more equitable access to care. To improve medication adherence, its Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM), CarelonRx, helps remove financial, transportation, and access barriers, proactively reaching out to people who have not picked up prescriptions or those taking multiple medications to provide assistance.
- » Elevance Health has implemented a program called MyNEXUS Social Drivers, which provides in-home risk assessments for HRSN and resource connectivity to help remove barriers and improve care coordination and delivery.
- » Elevance Health has a Spanish-language line to provide text and chat services for Spanish speakers. Its staff is available 24/7 to provide culturally competent crisis services to Spanish speakers.

## Elevance Health Foundation

- » Elevance Health strives to improve the health of humanity by addressing health inequalities and strengthening the community through its philanthropic arm: the Elevance Health Foundation. The Foundation focuses on partnerships and programs that advance the health of communities with a focus on: Maternal Health, Food As Medicine, Substance Use Disorder, and Community Resiliency, and Disaster Relief.

- » Since its establishment over 20 years ago, the Foundation has awarded \$300 million in grants to local and national organizations.
- » Elevance Health's associates are also committed to helping the community by contributing their time and resources to the communities where they live and work. The Elevance Health Foundation offers multiple opportunities for these associates:
  - Dollars for Dollars program: Elevance Health matches 100% of associate contributions to select health-related nonprofit organizations. In 2022, the program raised more than \$7 million.
  - Dollars for Doers program: Elevance Health offers rewards that associates can direct to charities of their choosing. In 2022, Elevance Health's associates directed more than \$1 million to community nonprofits through this program.
  - Elevance Health Volunteer Days
    - Every fall, Elevance Health's associates participate in A Season of Service. This program has over 12,000 volunteers, who have donated 32,000 service hours since 2015.
    - Elevance Health also offers each associate time off to volunteer at an organization of their choice.

- » Elevance Health's Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) committee includes a diverse group of physicians and pharmacists with strong clinical foundation in evidence-based medicine. Their evidence assessment considers the generalizability of efficacy and safety based on populations studied compared to their diverse membership. They do not discriminate based on disease in assessing the clinical evidence of efficacy, safety, and attributes of drugs, and their evidence-based clinical criteria for utilization management are consistent across all lines of business, ensuring equity in formulary decisions and across their diverse membership.

### National Committee for Quality Assurance's (NCQA's) Health Equity Accreditation

Elevance Health partnered with NCQA to assess the structure and processes of its health equity work. Simply Healthcare Plans, Inc., an Elevance Health company in Florida, was [one of nine organizations](#) that participated in NCQA's Health Equity Accreditation Plus pilot program last summer, and it obtained a nearly perfect score. Twenty-two other Elevance Health plans (representing 93% of its Medicaid membership) also [achieved](#) NCQA accreditation in fall 2022.

### Formulary Considerations

- » CarelonRx's (Elevance Health's PBM) formularies promote drugs and therapies with clinical evidence to improve members' health while keeping health care affordable.

#### CarelonRx

CarelonRx believes health equity means treating everyone fairly and equally when it comes to health care, managing all disease states in a consistent manner. It purposefully does not discriminate when creating formulary criteria in order to be consistent, equitable, and fair to all members. When it reviews evidence-based medicine for formulary reasons, it looks at clinical trial data, not just results, including how people were enrolled in the study and how it was conducted. CarelonRx believes these trials should include individuals that are representative of their diverse membership and the U.S. population to promote health equity. CarelonRx is actively working to ensure all individuals benefit equally from its formularies and clinical policies.

# Humana

Humana is committed to enabling an equitable health care ecosystem so that every person has a fair opportunity to reach their full health potential. Humana is using data analytics to identify health disparities to create solutions to these challenges.

## Supporting and Promoting Health Equity

Humana is focused on [three critical areas](#) with demonstrable impact on health disparities and influence on health outcomes and patient experiences:

1. **Improving access to care** by expanding utilization of primary care and preventive care services and minimizing issues that are associated with receiving care due to social determinants of health (SDOH) barriers, which are life circumstances and environments that negatively impact a person's health and well-being.
2. **Improving quality of care** through steps such as developing a culturally empathetic communication approach, electronic health record integration, and clinician resources to provide preventive and chronic disease care.
3. **Addressing non-medical barriers to healthy living** such as health-related social needs (HRSNs), health literacy, and the broader social, physical, and economic environments where patients live and access care.

Humana is taking an analytic approach to identifying health disparities and prioritizing this work with the belief that it is critical to a holistic understanding of patient needs. Recently, Humana disaggregated a broad set of utilization, disease, and event

prevalence, and clinical quality measures by race and ethnicity to identify disparities. It then used that information to identify meaningful differences and conducted root cause analyses to determine potential harms or protective factors.

## Community Outreach

Humana is committed to creating solutions to address disparities and advance health equity in the community. Humana partners with community-based organizations, health systems, health care providers, and other stakeholders to develop innovative solutions. These collaborations move it toward eliminating social and structural barriers to health to achieve health equity.

- » **Proactive response to food insecurity:** Humana leveraged its Medicare Advantage Value-Based Insurance Design (VBID) Model in 2020 to offer the Healthy Foods Card Benefit to members on select Dual Eligible Special Needs Plans (D-SNP) in several states. The benefit comes as a card loaded every month and is used to buy groceries.
- » **Addressing housing needs:** Through Special Supplement Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI), Humana is able to assist members with housing needs through its Flexible Care Assistance benefit. This benefit allows the care team to help with housing quality issues (e.g., window AC unit, pest control, minor repairs).

- » **Tools for delivering culturally competent care:** Humana launched a pilot program in August 2022 to provide cultural humility and implicit bias training for clinicians at Conviva, Humana's network of primary care providers in South Florida. It partnered with Just Health Collective, a division of the Chartis Group, a leading health care advisory and analytics firm, to furnish the training program. If successful, Humana will expand the use of the training model to other areas.
- » **Supporting physicians to help patients achieve their best health:** Humana supports value-based providers by sharing social risk data and providing resources to help them address the needs of its patients. These include access to [Humana Community Navigator®](#), toolkits, and guides for identifying HRSNs.

## Grant Programs

In August 2023, Humana announced that 16 community-based organizations across the nation will receive grants totaling over \$121,500. Recipients were selected from applicants within Humana national partner communities and chosen based on alignment with Humana's three core health equity strategy areas, health equity-related programming, and ability to demonstrate a commitment to long-term solutions.

The philanthropic arm of Humana, the [Humana Foundation](#), works to ensure seniors, veterans, and school-aged children live healthier lives by removing unnecessary barriers in health care.

- » In 2022, the Humana Foundation donated more than \$22.5 million toward building healthier communities.
- » Within the Foundation, Humana has a [Health Equity Innovation Fund](#) that provides seed funding for organizations working to eliminate barriers in health care. The fund offers recipients an opportunity to test interventions and solutions designed to address preventable, chronic diseases for populations facing inequity. Since its launch in 2022, the fund has invested \$7.5 million to address health equity.

## Future Goals

Humana recognizes that there is still work to be done to create a more equitable health care system. The company has identified several priorities to pursue to help advance equity:

- » Identifying additional populations experiencing disparities in health outcomes and experiences and developing evidence-based solutions to eliminate these disparities.
- » Promoting self-identification of personal information and structural drivers of health to deepen its understanding of the needs and barriers members face.
- » Assessing its progress toward more equitable health experiences and outcomes.
- » Committing to continuing to work with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), state Medicaid agencies, and others in the health care industry to share insights and best practices and collaborate to eliminate structural barriers to health equity.

# Optum Rx

Optum Rx's health equity vision is to create an absence of disparity in health and health care among the patients it serves by embedding health equity into its ecosystem.

## Advancing Health Equity

Optum Rx embeds health equity into its organization by focusing on three pillars:

### » Thought leadership

- Optum Rx provides thought leadership and solutions in health equity through partnerships with pharmaceutical manufacturers, client initiatives, and enterprise collaborations.

### » Drive affordability

- Optum Rx drives affordability by advancing health equity through data collection, analytics, and new solutions that help address the disparities in access to medication due to affordability by:
  - Expanding on its 2022 health equity initiatives (e.g., assisting the [Genoa Health Equity Flu Vaccines](#) initiative as it expands to 10 additional communities.)
  - Running several [pilots](#) utilizing a social services platform to identify barriers to medication access and adherence due to the social determinants of health (SDOH).

### » Integrate health equity

- Optum Rx is strengthening health equity within its company by:
  - Encouraging employees to complete health equity training.
  - Advancing capabilities to capture race, ethnicity, language, and social determinants of health data for all Optum Rx members.

Optum Rx's efforts to drive health equity focus on [three key areas](#):

- 1. Increasing affordability.** Because pharmacy is a critical component of health care, Optum Rx has taken actions to make prescription drugs more affordable to those in need.
  - **Optum Rx Critical Drug Affordability Program** works to lower prices for five key classes of medications, including insulins, anticoagulants, and HIV treatments. Optum Rx chose the lowest-cost drug option available for each class and build it into a convenient plan. Health plan sponsors can choose to set patient cost-sharing as low as \$0 for applicable drugs.
  - **MyScript Finder** is a digital tool on Optum Rx's member website and a mobile app that enables users to compare medications and look up prices anytime. It calculates a patient's coinsurance or copay and suggests cost-saving alternative drugs when clinically appropriate.
  - **Optum Rx Perks Prescription Relief Program** is a discount card program designed to provide discounts for people during a loss of insurance or prescription coverage. The free program works automatically for members who have lapsed coverage.
- 2. Improving access.** Optum Rx believes that ensuring affordable access to medication is vital to reducing disparities in care and outcomes. Its home medication delivery is lower cost,



convenient, and can boost medication adherence, contributing to improved health outcomes.

- Optum Rx's Genoa Healthcare runs more than 700 pharmacies within community health clinics nationwide, which help individuals living with behavioral health and other health issues.
- Optum Rx is also improving access at the state and local levels.
  - In Arizona, Optum Rx is leveraging expertise in specialty pharmacy to administer the Drug Assistance Program, designed to help vulnerable populations with unmet non-clinical needs, specifically those living with HIV/AIDS.
  - In Kansas, Optum Rx is providing pro bono access to medication through its [Kansas Drug Donation Program](#) in partnership with the state. In 2020, Optum Rx donated \$30 million in unused drugs (drugs donated by a health care entity, e.g., adult care home or medical care facility).

**3. Advocating for better practices.** Optum Rx's product teams use health equity criteria to better serve all populations as part of the standard product development process.

- Optum Rx incorporates information about known health disparities into drug reviews and performs audits on existing solutions.
- Optum Rx works with third-party pharmaceutical and therapeutics committees to ensure equity is considered at every stage of the product development process and evaluate standard industry practices for biases.
- Optum Rx is also leveraging its expertise in data and analytics to address disparities in care. This includes evaluating its clinical services for signals of health inequity to drive improvements.

## Community Outreach

Optum Rx is committed to helping people live healthier lives through support of community-based programs and events. As part of its ongoing efforts to support patients, it is fostering new and strengthening existing relationships with community-based organizations, including:

- » **Diaper Connection** provides diapers to an average of 3,392 babies in need every month.
- » **Dream Streets** is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to protect and empower distressed individuals. Its programs serve under-resourced families in West and North Nashville.
- » **United Healthcare Children's Foundation (UHCCF)** supports Americans impacted by pediatric health care costs exceeding their financial ability.
- » **Pharmacy & Provider Desert Program:** Optum Rx is launching a new program this fall that will address health care deserts across the country. Optum Rx is working with its community pharmacy partners to address this barrier to care because lack of access to care contributes to poor health outcomes.
  - This initiative will support pharmacists in connecting their patients to services that address basic needs such as food, nutrition, transportation, housing, and baby supplies. It will focus on three critical areas:
    1. Connecting underserved patients to community resources, starting with pregnant women and patients with diabetes;
    2. Improving maternal and fetal health through increased preventive prenatal vitamin use, access to community diaper bank resources, and baby supplies; and
    3. Providing increased access to health care resources through community pharmacies in health care deserts.



## Grant Programs

Optum Rx's affiliated foundation sponsors the United Health Foundation Diverse Scholars Initiative, which works to create a more relevant health workforce, particularly in underserved communities, by increasing the number of primary care health providers ready to deliver personalized, culturally competent care.

- » Since the program was launched in 2007, the United Health Foundation has provided more than \$23 million in assistance and funded nearly 3,000 scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students.
- » Optum Rx has created a new Health Equity Scholarship fund, the Optum Rx Health Equity Scholarship, to support up to 15 students at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), a historically Black university, in the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical/Institute of Public Health.

## Supporting and Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Internally

Optum Rx creates an inclusive culture that celebrates its employees, ideas, and experiences. Its team reflects the diverse communities it serves and the company's commitment to DEI.

- » Optum Rx is hiring the best talent with diverse and innovative perspectives and creating a culture of belonging and inclusion; the company is growing its business to better serve its customers' needs.
- » In 2022, it focused on three strategic objectives to advance DEI in its leadership, systems, and culture:
  1. Increasing the diversity of the organization's workforce, especially among the senior levels of the organization.
  2. Understanding the lived experiences of employees, mainly where there are differences, so the company can learn how to better support employees' work and experiences.
  3. Equipping and educating leaders and employees with tools to create and contribute to a more inclusive environment.

## Future Goals

Optum Rx is advancing its capabilities to capture race, ethnicity, language, and other data associated with the social determinants of health (SDOH) for all individuals it serves. Optum Rx is also committed to offering consumer-centric products and services that reduce health care costs, improve quality, advance health equity, and improve transparency.

*Optum Rx is affiliated with NCQA's Health Equity accreditation program.*

*Optum Rx achieved a 100% rating in the Human Rights Campaign Health Equity Index survey.*

**"Health inequity is a risk as great as any, but we have the tools, the partnerships and the will to address it together."**

*~ Chief Health Equity Officer of UnitedHealth Group, Michael Currie*

# PerformRx

PerformRx is committed to fostering an environment that values understanding, inclusiveness, and respect for all individuals. The company embraces, accepts, and supports its associates' differences in race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, gender identity or expression, veteran status, and other characteristics that make its associates unique. PerformRx seeks to advance diversity and inclusion through policies and practices, including but not limited to employee recruitment and selection; compensation and benefits; professional development and training; promotions, transfers, and other employment actions; and the ongoing development of a work environment built on the premise of gender and diversity equity that encourages and enforces the principles of inclusion.

## Supporting and Promoting DEI Internally

- » PerformRx is sponsoring multiple associate resource groups for all associates across several states, including training and programs focused on promoting allyship in the workplace and community volunteerism.
- » As part of its onboarding program, PerformRx requires Health Equity Core Training and CLAS (Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services), Health Equity and Cultural Responsiveness, and Recognizing and Reducing Bias training.
  - PerformRx also requires annual diversity, equity, and inclusion training for all company leaders and makes the training available for all associates.
  - It also offers additional training, including Behavioral Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Training, as well as specific role-based training for members and provider-facing associates.

## Volunteer Work

- » PerformRx prioritizes community service by incorporating it into the company's corporate goals. Each associate is allotted up to 16 paid hours per year to volunteer at an organization of their choice.
- » PerformRx associates also engage in Philadelphia's local community, where its corporate parent company, AmeriHealth Caritas, is based.
  - It has an ongoing volunteer engagement in support of many organizations, including ones that provide meals for underserved populations, senior citizens, and school children. Items include fresh fruit and produce, and canned and boxed dry goods, which are provided to schools, religious organizations, community pantries, and individuals across three states. PerformRx associates in other areas volunteer in similar organizations. This food distribution program is committed to ending hunger.
- » PerformRx pharmacists support efforts to enhance health literacy and education by serving at local community and senior fairs to speak with members of the community about relevant health topics. They have also set up "Ask the Pharmacist" tables where attendees can get information on drug adherence, drug-to-drug interactions, and safe drug disposal.

## Clinical Programs

- » PerformRx strives to advance health equity by ensuring it is addressed in all of its Drug Therapy Management (DTM) programs. PerformRx's DTM programs are member-centric pharmacist outreach programs designed to optimize therapeutic member outcomes for multiple disease states. A core component of these programs is addressing any identified social determinants of health barriers (SDOH) that may impact a member's health status.
- » PerformRx considers the populations served relative to the study designs when evaluating drugs.
- » It also supports its parent organization and client health plans with its social determinants of health needs and programs. These programs focus on but are not limited to controlling blood pressure, maternity care, chronic disease states such as diabetes, etc.

## Future Goals

PerformRx encourages a companywide health equity lens permeating all areas of pharmacy benefit management. The company wants every associate to keep health equity at the forefront of their work.

*PerformRx believes that advancing health equity is the cornerstone to supporting its client's members in achieving their health care goals.*

# Prime Therapeutics LLC

Prime Therapeutics LLC's DEI mission is to "Champion diversity and inclusion (D&I) awareness, initiatives, communication, outreach and events at Prime Therapeutics LLC to foster strong employee engagement and business success and reflect the communities in which we live and serve." Prime Therapeutics LLC's commitment to DEI is rooted in its company values, purpose, and dedication to serving others. Prime Therapeutics LLC is dedicated to inclusion and allowing people to be their authentic selves and achieve their highest potential by creating "radical welcomeness."

## RADICAL WELCOMENESS

The D&I Council's aim is to create a culture of inclusion by embracing radical welcomeness. What is radical welcomeness? Let's break down the words:

**RADICAL: At all costs, prominent, life changing**

**WELCOMENESS: To receive others gladly into one's presence**

Embracing radical welcomeness means gladly, completely, and earnestly receiving colleagues of all backgrounds, races, ethnicities, abilities, gender identities, sexual orientations, and religions.

## Supporting and Promoting DEI Internally and Externally

Prime Therapeutics LLC incorporates health equity into its daily operations.

- » Prime Therapeutics LLC requires cultural competency training for all customer-facing roles.
- » To prioritize DEI initiatives throughout the organization, Prime Therapeutics LLC has internal resource groups that work toward inclusion. Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are run by employees for employees and focus on specific demographics. These groups have had success within the organization throughout the years, including hosting educational series, founding a Women in Leadership panel, and hosting/launching other internal resources.
- » Prime Therapeutics LLC is dedicated to ensuring everyone is understood, no matter the language they speak. Prime Therapeutics LLC has invested

in practices and training to assist non-English speaking members and has multilingual member communication and contact center support. Prime Therapeutics LLC also has a dedicated team to serve Spanish-speaking members, including a Spanish-member website.

- » Prime Therapeutics LLC has also added preferred pronouns and sexual orientation options to its internal human resources systems.

## Formulary Considerations

- » Prime Therapeutics LLC has developed specific utilization management to facilitate and bring access and coverage for patients who need gender-affirming therapies.
- » Prime Therapeutics LLC has also removed the [financial cap](#) for gender reassignment surgery under its health care benefits.

## DEI Annual Transparency Report

Prime Therapeutics LLC has created an annual DEI transparency report describing its organizational makeup, hiring practices, training and education, and key DEI milestones that are complete or in progress.

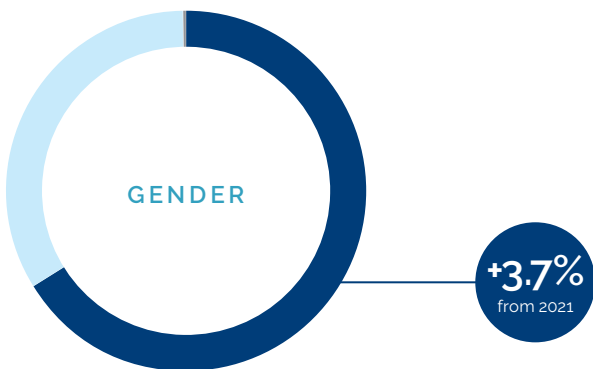
» **Hiring practices:** Prime Therapeutics LLC's Talent Acquisition Team created a Diversity Action Guide that provides detailed information on how Talent Acquisition weaves DEI into daily recruitment interactions.

» **Organizational makeup:**



Prime & Magellan Rx representation  
% of population (6,420 employees)

0.9%	American Indian or Alaska Native
13.3%	Asian
12.5%	Black or African American
6.8%	Hispanic or Latino
0.4%	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
3.0%	Two or More Races
57.9%	White
5.1%	Other



Prime & Magellan Rx representation  
% of population (6,420 employees)

66.2%	Female
33.5%	Male
0.3%	Other

- » **Training and education:** Prime Therapeutics LLC has partnered with [MindGym](#) and has launched a training program called Ignite Inclusion. Ignite Inclusion is a 60-minute virtual training facilitated by one of Prime Therapeutics LLC's MindGym certified trainers.
- In training, participants learn about similarity, bystander, and stereotype biases; explore the impact of these biases and how they show up in day-to-day decision-making discover conscious techniques to remove these biases from their decisions; and learn how to contribute to a culture of inclusion.
  - Seventy-five percent of the organization has completed the Ignite Inclusion training.

## Prime Therapeutics LLC Together Foundation

- » Prime Therapeutics LLC is passionate about community outreach and helping local organizations combat inequalities. Prime Therapeutics LLC Together Foundation is a nonprofit organization created in 2020 that works with the community to address inequality and injustice in all forms, particularly racism, poverty, health, and hunger.
- » The foundation distributed \$320,000 in grants to 15 nonprofit organizations in 2021 and 2022 through the donations of employees and other stakeholders.
- » Prime Therapeutics LLC's employees also volunteer with these local organizations. Each employee is allotted 16 paid hours per year to volunteer at an organization of their choice.

## Member Outreach

Prime Therapeutics LLC focuses on two key areas each with a team to do outreach to the community. Both teams directly reach out to patients to educate them on their drug therapies and other areas using zip codes to target specific groups.

1. The Clinical Team helps patients with other social determinates of health (SDOH) concerns that they may have. It arms patients with resources and refers them to other nonprofits for additional help.
  - Prime Therapeutics LLC has multiple programs focused on affordability and access, doing proactive outreach to members who may have issues affording their current medications.
2. The Concierge Team educates patients on their health care benefit and identifies members who may have challenges getting their medication due to limited access or geographical factors.

## Data

- » Prime Therapeutics LLC collects data from clients on an ad hoc basis and uses that information to pinpoint disparities to create a baseline for outreach.
- » Teams have begun looking across social risk factors to isolate ones that most correlate with lower adherence and other outcome challenges.
- » [Z-codes](#) (a set of codes used by clinicians to report social, economic, and environmental determinants known to affect health) have been evaluated to include in risk scoring and provide insights to teams doing outreach to members.

## Future Goals

Prime Therapeutics LLC is working with health plans toward NCQA's Health Equity accreditation. The company is also seeking to create new programs and reassess old ones to ensure they are viewed through a health equity lens. Prime Therapeutics LLC aspires to do more advocacy work on this topic and to have a cohesive health equity strategy for customers.

**Diversity and inclusion efforts are seen, heard and felt. These positive outward actions become part of our DNA as an organization.**

# Conclusion

This report has demonstrated PCMA's members intense focus on advancing health equity and being accountable for mitigating health disparities within areas of health care under pharmacy benefit companies' control. PCMA's member companies are actively working to eliminate health disparities and fully intend to continue doing their part to achieve this goal. Members are also expecting improvements in clinical trial diversity and data stratification to use to increase personalized care and enhance formulary design. To further improve the ability to track, measure, and focus progress and ensure that care gaps are being closed, pharmacy benefit companies continue to work with policymakers and other stakeholders to improve demographic data collection. And finally, members are working alongside health plan sponsors to meet accreditation standards designed to address health disparities and advance health equity. We also recognize the efforts of stakeholders across the health care system and continue to look for opportunities for partnership with these entities as we work collectively to advance health equity.

## How PCMA Is Embracing DEI Internally

PCMA believes that organizational and employee success require a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce and a culture that embraces and encourages different perspectives. We recognize the inherent value in employing a workforce with a range of experiences and it is our commitment to embrace every person's uniqueness and to provide a professional work environment where everyone is welcome and treated with dignity and respect.

PCMA has created an internal task force comprising staff from across the association focused on advancing diversity and inclusion initiatives both within the organization and to inform our external work. The task force is focused on four key pillars:

1

Education and awareness

2

Culture of openness and trust

3

Programs and policies

4

Accountability and discipline

PCMA has also organized a Health Equity Workgroup comprising PBM industry leaders to advance public policies that address disparities in health care.



**PCMA**

[www.pcmanet.org](http://www.pcmanet.org)