



A UnitedHealthcare Company

Addressing Social Determinants of Health

Support for Your Peoples Health Patients Through Meals After an Inpatient Hospital Stay, Respite Care, and Over-the-Counter Health and Wellness Items

It is widely acknowledged that social determinants of health (SDoH) drive medical utilization, health care costs and health outcomes. In fact, research attributes as much as 55% of health outcomes in the U.S. to social factors.*

Impact for Health Care Systems

SDoH can supplement clinical data and offer greater insight into an individual's risk level, as well as support accurate health care risk prediction and care plan development. SDoH include socioeconomic factors such as physical environment, economic stability, community and social contexts, education, nutrition, and health care accessibility. When available, review these as part of patient evaluation and care coordination.

Social factors also impact several HEDIS and CMS star program measures, including:

- Health Outcomes Survey responses
- Social need screening and intervention
- Controlling high blood pressure
- Plan all-cause readmissions
- Hospitalization for potentially preventable complications
- Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems survey responses

Local Challenges

In a 2025 United Health Foundation report ranking states by the health of their senior population, Louisiana ranked 49th[†] with high rates of food insecurity, senior poverty, and frequent mental distress in adults ages 65 and older. These social stressors can result in increased risk of chronic conditions, longer hospital stays, higher readmission rates, greater utilization of long-term care and rehabilitation services, and increased mortality.

Peoples Health aims to address these challenges by offering the following benefits:

Meals after an inpatient hospital stay

Post-discharge meals are covered at \$0 for all Peoples Health plan members discharged to their home or another household in Louisiana following a stay at an inpatient hospital, inpatient rehabilitation facility or long-term acute care facility. Up to 28 meals over 14 days are covered. Meals are **not** covered for discharges to another health care location or from an inpatient mental health stay, a skilled nursing facility stay or an observation stay.

Respite care

Respite care sessions are available to most Peoples Health members, depending on their plan. To be eligible, members must be diagnosed with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, and must meet plan rules for documenting the condition, such as in the form of claim information. When evaluating your Peoples Health patients, please code to the highest level of specificity, complexity and accuracy possible, as well as document and code active diagnoses annually. Peoples Health may contact you to request additional information to confirm a diagnosis.

Up to 12 respite care sessions, up to 8 hours each, are covered per year. Each session is provided in the home or another household in Louisiana. Respite care is available between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

*ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10459353

†americashealthrankings.org/learn/reports/2025-senior-report/state-summaries-louisiana

Respite care services vary depending on need and may include:

- Companionship and safety
- Light housekeeping
- Assistance with meal preparation
- Bathing assistance
- Mobility and transfer assistance
- Assistance with grooming, dressing and toileting needs
- Incontinence care
- Medication reminders
- Stand-by assistance for personal services

Prior to the initial respite care visit, Peoples Health staff determines eligibility, and the respite care provider conducts a pre-session home visit to identify the level of care needed and accepts or denies the member for services. If accepted, the member or the member's caregiver contacts the provider directly to schedule or cancel appointments. If the member is not accepted, the provider notifies the member, as well as Peoples Health medical management, which then finds an alternate provider to administer services.

OTC health and wellness items

An over-the-counter (OTC) items benefit is available to most Peoples Health members, depending on their plan. Covered items include brand and generic OTC products, like vitamins, pain relievers, toothpaste and first aid products. Home and bath safety devices, like bathmats, grab bars and shower chairs, are also covered. Members receive a monthly or quarterly credit, depending on their plan, to shop online or in-store at participating retailers. The credit cannot be used to buy tobacco or alcohol. Covered items may change during the year, and credit amounts vary by plan.

Some Peoples Health plans offer an enhanced benefit. Members in a chronic condition special needs plan can use the credit to purchase approved food items. Members in a dual-eligible special needs plan may be able to spend credits on approved food items and utilities, but members must qualify for these additional options through verification of an eligible chronic condition.

To Refer Patients

The Peoples Health care team can help members identify and access community and social resources, as well as support providers in coordinating patient services. To refer your Peoples Health patients for care team intervention, submit an order through the [UnitedHealthcare Provider Portal](#), or submit a [Peoples Health Medical Necessity Form](#) to the appropriate fax number on the form. Write "social worker referral" or "case management referral" in the Service(s) Requested field.

If you have questions about intervention activities, contact your Peoples Health representative. For general support, call Provider Services at 1-877-842-3210. For information about other Peoples Health clinical programs, visit peopleshealth.com/provider-plan-documents.