

PROVIDER NEWSLETTER • SUMMER 2024

Centene Vision Services is a leader in exceptional, tailored vision benefits and services for Medicaid, Medicare, and Marketplace member products. Every quarter we share key news that you can use to best serve your patients.

Local Market Reminders

Below are important upcoming changes:

- **Arizona Medicaid** – Arizona Complete Health population has expanded to include Long-Term Care members (ALTCS). The expansion go-live date is October 1, 2024.
- **Florida Medicaid** – A new plan will be added to cover vision benefits for Sunshine Health members that have HIV/AIDS. This will go live January 1, 2025.
- **New Mexico Medicaid** – Medicaid product of New Mexico Western Sky Community Care terminated June 30, 2024.
- **North Carolina Medicaid** – The vision benefits for Trillium and Partners Tailored Plans went live July 1, 2024.
- **Oregon Medicaid** – The population for eligibility for Oregon Health Plan Medicaid members expanded July 1, 2024. The expansion increases income limits for members 19+.
- **Texas Medicaid** – Community First Health, Community Health Choice, and El Paso Health Plans will be adding STAR+PLUS as a line of business. This is effective September 1, 2024.
- **Washington Medicaid** – The population for eligibility for Apple Health Medicaid members expanded July 1, 2024. The expansion increases income limits for members 19+.

Provider Directory Validation Calls

We are validating our provider directory to make it easier for members to contact your offices. Your office may receive a brief phone call from us to verify information about your location. Please work with the customer service representative to update anything that is out of date. We appreciate your cooperation.

Have a few minutes? Don't wait for our call. Verify your office locations and contact information by giving us a call or looking up your office location on the [Find A Provider](#) tool. If any information needs to be updated, please complete the [Provider Update Form](#).

Reminder: Submit the Provider Update Form as soon as any information changes to ensure your information is always accurate.

Medicaid Redetermination Reminders

As Medicaid enrollment continues to change and members are gaining/losing coverage, please remember:

- An ID card does not guarantee coverage.
- Always check benefits before providing services.
- You may see an influx of new Ambetter members.

Reach out to Customer Service if you have any questions.

Eye Health Manager Makes Working with Us Easy

Providers contracted with Centene Vision Services have access to online resources to make working with us more convenient.

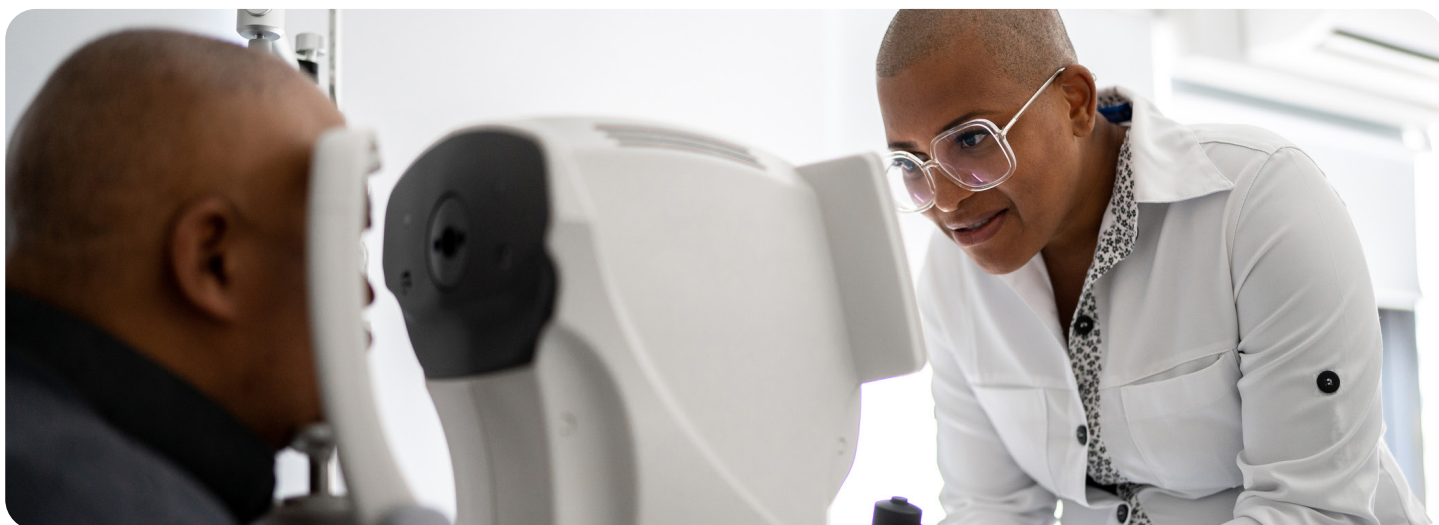
Our [Eye Health Manager](#) (EHM) provider portal gives you the online ability to:

- Verify member eligibility and benefits
- File claims
- Review claim status
- Download, research, and reprint Explanation of Benefits (EOB)/Explanation of Payments (EOP)
- Request/submit secure, HIPAA-compliant pre-authorizations

You also have access to the Provider Manual, Plan Specifics and our Policies and Procedures.

Provider Rights and Responsibilities

As a valued provider in our network, you should know what your rights and responsibilities are to better protect yourself and your patients. Please refer to our Vision Provider Manual located on the secure [EHM](#) for more information on important provisions regarding network participation, claims processing, dispute resolution and more.



Fraud, Waste and Abuse

Centene Vision Services conducts regular audits and uses systems to analyze claims to identify possible Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA). If any FWA is detected, the Centene Vision Special Investigation Unit will conduct a review that may result in actions against those who are found to have committed FWA. Actions may include:

- Provider education
- More rigorous Utilization Review requirements
- Recovery of monies previously paid
- Extrapolated overpayment calculation
- Reporting to appropriate payor and/or regulatory agencies (OIG)
- Termination from the Centene Vision Network

The most common submissions of FWA:

- Unbundling of codes
- Upcoding
- Misrepresentation of services
- Claims for services not rendered

If you suspect another provider is inappropriately billing Centene Vision Services or if a member is receiving unnecessary services, please contact Centene Vision Services Fraud, Waste and Abuse hotline as indicated. We take all reports of potential FWA seriously and investigate all reported issues.



Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline

- Centene Vision Special Investigation Unit Email: EBOSIU@Centene.com
- Centene Vision FWA Hotline: **866-685-8664**

Provider Satisfaction Survey

Centene Vision Services sends a Provider Satisfaction Survey yearly to receive input on how we are doing and how we can better serve you. Providers are encouraged to give feedback regarding credentialing, customer service, utilization management, claims, coordination and quality of care, and general experience.

Surveys were sent to providers in May via the email we have on file for the offices. Please check your spam/junk folders as the email will be sent from an external source (Qualtrics). We look forward to hearing from you!



Improve the Health of Diabetic Members

Help your patients with diabetes and reduce administrative burdens. Centene Vision Services offers a dedicated [HEDIS Training and Tips](#) website to determine CPT II and other supplemental codes to use for diabetic retinal exams. Routine retinal evaluation is recommended to reduce the risk of diabetes-related blindness.

REMINDER: You may be eligible for a \$10 CPT II reporting incentive. Please bill a dollar amount greater than or equal to the reimbursement rate to receive payment. Please review your fee schedule and remember to submit the appropriate CPT II codes referenced at [HEDIS Training and Tips](#).

Eye Health, Climate Change, and El Niño: Increasing Risks

El Niño, characterized by the warming of Pacific Ocean temperatures, has returned after seven years, leading to extreme global weather patterns like heatwaves, floods, and droughts. Climate change is increasing the frequency and severity of these events.

While El Niño's effects on ecosystems and weather are well-documented, new research shows significant impacts on human health. Rising temperatures heighten cardiovascular risks, and wildfire smoke and dust exacerbate respiratory issues. Additionally, El Niño poses threats to eye health.

Vector-borne Diseases

Warmer temperatures and increased rainfall create favorable conditions for mosquitoes, extending disease transmission seasons and intensifying mosquito activity. Diseases like dengue, West Nile virus, and malaria, carried by mosquitoes, can cause severe eye conditions. Eye care providers in newly affected regions may be unprepared, leading to delayed treatments and worsened visual outcomes.



Drought

El Niño-induced droughts in regions like Central America and Australia lead to dehydration, which harms eyes due to their high-water content. Dehydration is linked to dry eye syndrome, retinal vascular disease, refractive changes, and cataracts.

Increased Precipitation

Excessive rainfall causes flash floods and water contamination, especially in developing countries. Contaminated water can harbor pathogens causing retinochoroiditis and keratitis.





Ultraviolet Radiation

El Niño can increase ultraviolet (UV) radiation levels due to changes in atmospheric conditions, leading to eye conditions like pterygium, photokeratitis, and eyelid malignancies. UV exposure is also linked to cataracts and choroidal folds.

Elevated Temperatures

Elevated temperatures may cause retinal pathology, with studies showing higher rates of retinal detachments during heat waves.

El Niño's resurgence not only disrupts weather but also poses serious health risks, particularly to eye health, underscoring the need for increased awareness and preparedness among healthcare providers. The complex relationship between El Niño and eye health requires further research to inform public health measures and mitigate climate-related ocular risks.



Source: [nih.gov](https://www.nih.gov) - [El Niño and eye health: ophthalmic manifestations of changes in climate](#)

Centene Recognized as Top Company for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

As Walé Soluade, Head of DEI Integration, has stated, “DEI is in our DNA.”

Centene, parent company of Centene Vision Services and Envolve Vision, has been named one of the Top 50 Companies for Diversity by Fair360 (formerly DiversityInc) for the fifth year in a row, ranking No. 26, up from No. 37. The list evaluates large employers on diversity and inclusion metrics in areas such as leadership accountability and talent programs.



Centene's CEO, Sarah M. London, expressed pride in this recognition: “We know that we best serve our diverse customers when our workforce reflects and is part of the communities we serve. I'm so proud that Centene is once again one of Fair360's Top 50 Companies for Diversity, because it shows our continued dedication to cultivating an employee population that deeply understands the needs and experiences of our members.”

Additionally, Centene ranked No. 7 for Top Companies for Talent Acquisition for Women of Color, No. 9 for Top Companies for Executive Women, and No. 18 for Top Companies for People with Disabilities in Fair360's specialty lists.

Centene's Sustainability & DEI Report: Healthy Futures, Diverse Horizons, details the company's ongoing efforts to integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to better serve its over 28 million members nationwide. The company has also received recent accolades from Forbes and Newsweek for diversity and inclusion, been listed on the 2023 Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index, and named one of Fortune's World's Most Admired Companies for 2024. For more details on Centene's awards, visit www.centene.com/who-we-are/accreditations-awards.html.

Centene Vision Quality Improvement Activities and Outcomes – 2023 Annual Summary

Our Quality Improvement (QI) Department maintains a written QI Program that describes the QI processes as they relate to the coordination, safe delivery, and evaluation of the high quality and cost-effective routine and medical vision care required by payors for their covered members. The functions of the QI Program will serve to assure the timely identification, assessment, and resolution of known or suspected deficiencies in the quality of care or services received by members and to prevent their reoccurrence by continuous monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of the routine and medical eye care services provided.

The QI Department prepares the Quality Program Description and Quality Program Evaluation annually. In addition, the QI Work Plan is prepared annually and updated quarterly. These documents and the documentation of all QI committees or sub-committees, once approved and finalized by the appropriate committee(s), serve as a record of the activities and results of the QI Program.

In 2023, the QI Work Plan highlighted interventions to address the Quality Program Structure, Safety of Clinical Care, Quality of Clinical Care, and Member and Provider Satisfaction. The QI Work Plan was utilized to monitor these activities and progress. This work plan was approved by the Quality Improvement Committee (QIC) and reported to the respective health plans with updates quarterly following the approval from the QIC meetings.

Goals of the QI Program:

- Provide and build quality into all aspects of the Centene Vision Services organizational structure and processes
- Provide a formal process for the continuous and systematic monitoring, evaluation, intervention for improvement, and reassessment of the adequacy and appropriateness of clinical and administrative services provided by Centene Vision Services to members, practitioners, and other internal and external customers
- Develop appropriate quality guidelines and standards for implementation by the QI Committee and subcommittees, departments, and personnel involved in quality issues, including providers and their staff
- Plan services will meet industry-accepted standards of performance
- Fragmentation and/or duplications of services will be minimized through integration of quality improvement activities across the organization's functional areas
- Continuous assessment of the overall effectiveness of the guidelines and standards in all levels of service and care with appropriate measurements (see QI Work Plan for measured guidelines and QI Committee Minutes for assessments)
- Take corrective action when quality guidelines and standards are not followed or met
- Make best efforts to adapt and modify guidelines and standards, at least annually, in accordance with the most recent state and federal regulations [including Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)] and the most up-to-date clinical/medical studies and practice guidelines
- Continuously strive for improvement in the delivery of care and patient safety to all members

Goals of the Centene Vision Services QI program were met in 2023.

Scope of the Quality Program

Centene Vision Services systematically monitors and evaluates the Quality Program throughout the year by analyzing and reporting key indicators of clinical and non-clinical outcomes. These indicators include:

- Claims Statistics
- Call Statistics
- Utilization Management
- Access/Availability of Network and Staff
- Clinical Practice Guideline Adherence
- Member and Provider Satisfaction
- Credentialing and Recredentialing
- Reporting Timeliness
- Internal Audits

Centene Vision Services is committed to ensuring patient safety is a top priority and has the following methods in place to monitor for patient safety issues, trends, and other concerns:

- Identification and escalation of significant Quality of Care events
- Tracking of member/provider complaints
- Tracking of member/provider appeals
- Monitoring of peer review activities
- Review of Member Satisfaction Surveys for any safety issues

2023 QI Program Highlights

- The Quality Department identified a higher quality of responses and an increased response rate for the provider satisfaction surveys and will continue to identify internal quality improvement opportunities to best serve our providers and members.
- The Quality Department continuously delivered reports to health plans timely and accurately, exceeding the benchmark routinely.
- The Network Management team worked diligently to close notable gaps in various markets and improve network adequacy.
- The QI Letters Team continued to assist with the accuracy, adherence, and streamlining of Centene Vision Services member and provider letters in an effort to improve the quality and efficiency of communications.

If you are interested in learning more about the Centene Vision Services QI Program or to request copies of program documents, please contact Quality@Centene.com.

Clinical Policy Updates

The clinical policies below have been updated recently. To stay up to date on all changes, be sure to visit our [Eye Health Manager](#) provider portal or envolvevision.com/policies.


Clinical Policy	Policy Title	Update
CP.VP.06	Medically Necessary Hardware	Updated coverage criteria for contact lenses and ultraviolet lens coating to allow aphakia diagnoses.
CP.VP.40	Photodynamic and Intravitreal Therapies and Pharmaceuticals	Added coding information for Eylea and Eylea HD.
CPG.VP.47	Pediatric Eye Examinations	Added family history of congenital glaucoma and strabismus to clinical indications for a comprehensive pediatric eye examination.

VISION CARE BY THE NUMBERS

Centene Vision Services Proudly Serves

 **31** STATES +
PUERTO RICO

 **26,000+**
PROVIDERS

 **870,000**
MEDICARE LIVES

 **4M**
HEALTH INSURANCE
MARKETPLACE LIVES

 **10M**
MEDICAID LIVES

About Us

A subsidiary of Centene for more than 30 years, **Centene Vision Services** has partnered with vision care providers across the country to administer eye care programs that meet the needs of our members. You are among 26,000+ unique eye care providers, including independent providers and popular retail chains, within our network. Thank you for partnering with us to provide quality vision services to your patients.

CENTENE™

VISION SERVICES