

## UHC Medicare Advantage Terminations Guidance Document

MSNJ heard from many members concerned about recent notices from UnitedHealthcare (UHC) regarding termination from the Medicare Advantage Network. We are hearing from practices, large and small, representing almost every specialty. MSNJ is concerned about the reasoning behind the terminations as well as the impact that these terminations will have on network adequacy and continuity of care. We contacted UHC for more information on the scope of the terminations, network adequacy, criteria used for terminations, continuity of care issues, and patient notification. While UHC has not yet answered our questions, they have agreed to speak with us about the terminations on Monday.

To our knowledge, UHC **has not** provided patients with any information about these network terminations. As a result, many physicians will have to begin informing their patients of the change.

This conversation can be confusing and at times difficult for patients. Remember that as a physician, your responsibility is to **educate and inform** – let your patients make decisions about the best choice for their healthcare needs. To help you provide your patients with appropriate and actionable information, here is a list of “dos and don’ts.”

### **DO:**

- Inform your patients that you will no longer be part of the UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage network as of February 1, 2014.
- Indicate that the termination was not your choice, but rather a unilateral decision on the part of UnitedHealthcare.
- Explain to your patients that effective February 1, 2014 you will no longer be able to treat them under the UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage plan.
- Let your patients know that there are alternatives, including other Medicare Advantage products or traditional fee-for-service Medicare.
- Remind patients that Medicare Open Enrollment is underway (October 15 – December 7), and that this is their opportunity to switch coverage for 2014. The next Open Enrollment will take place next year (in late 2014).
- Provide your patients with a list of the other networks you currently participate in, such as traditional fee-for-service Medicare or other Medicare Advantage plans.

### **DO NOT:**

- Do not disparage or make negative remarks about UnitedHealthcare! Remember that terminated physicians are still under contract until February 1, 2014.
- Do not tell or otherwise instruct your patients to drop UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage. Remember the goal is to **educate and inform** your patients – then let them make the ultimate decision on the future of their healthcare.

Use these guidelines to develop talking points or patient handouts. This information can also be displayed as a poster in the waiting area. You can also mail information to patients.