



Health care is both a hugely complex social issue and yet also an intensely personal experience. This presents a challenging environment in which UnitedHealth Group seeks to help people live healthier lives. The question is “how?” A key answer is through innovation.

As one of the largest and most diverse participants in the health care system, we are working every day to find new and innovative ways to improve the lives and health of the people we serve. By investing in innovative products and services, we are ultimately saving time and money for consumers, businesses and governments.

There is nothing more personal than our health. So we are creating new ways for people to take control of their own well-being with personalized tools, information and programs – all tailored to their specific needs. Following are examples of how we are innovating to expand access to the system and improve the quality of health care in practical, sustainable ways.

## ➤ Customized health care solutions—the eSync Platform<sup>SM</sup>

The eSync Platform is a new technology platform that helps us build a detailed health portrait of each person we serve and then deliver customized health care management solutions directly to them. eSync allows us to combine a wide range of health data, like medical claims, health and lifestyle choices, and demographic factors, and turn it into a practical blueprint that helps people improve their daily lives. eSync lets us offer people effective, personalized care plans – based on their actual needs.

It’s really a simple concept that connects well to the UnitedHealth Group mission: eSync makes it easier for the people we serve to take action and live healthier lives. eSync helps them find the right care, see the right provider, take the right medication, and live the right lifestyle. We may send out background information about an upcoming medical procedure, or a reminder to schedule an annual exam, or tips on starting an exercise plan, but in each case the outreach is based on the actual needs of individuals.

eSync also powers our ability to offer proactive outreach for high-risk members. We know they are high risk because the platform pulls together information like claims data, health assessments and referrals from other

programs. Then our Personal Care Consultants reach out and offer these members a chance to participate in programs specifically designed to reduce their health risk.

eSync helps our members get engaged in healthier lifestyles for a better quality of life, which in the long run may lead to significant total cost savings.

## ➤ Women’s Health Initiative

According to a recent study by the Kaiser Family Foundation, American women make about 85 percent of the health care decisions for their families and control two-thirds of the average family’s health care dollars. Too often, they work at a disadvantage, since so many people have trouble understanding medical and insurance information. So we offer a simpler and more personally relevant way to manage their health care. That means giving them real answers – in plain language – to vital health and wellness questions.

We aim to create and nurture an intimate new community for and dialogue with women. A new Web site, [www.uhc.com/Source4Women](http://www.uhc.com/Source4Women), makes it easier to learn about different health plans, their costs and the language that they use. We’ll give women a way to connect with others with similar health care experiences and build their knowledge through online communities and webinars with leading health, wellness and nutrition experts.

Our innovative programs and tools are designed to support women’s health needs throughout every stage of life. There are health and wellness modules devoted to the concerns of specific age groups, like women in their 20’s and 30’s, women in their 40’s and women over 50. There are also general women’s health education and dedicated care management programs such as Healthy Pregnancy and Cancer Support.

We’re ready to provide information that can help women make informed decisions about their care and take full advantage of their health benefit coverage. We help women get familiar with their plan benefits and make the most of doctor visits and prescription medications. Plus, they can learn about alternative care options, from emergency rooms to retail health clinics.

Our goal is to make health decisions simpler and more manageable. At the same time, we hope that putting control back in women’s hands and creating a shared responsibility between women and UnitedHealthcare will lead to improved health and lower costs.

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## ➤ Immunizations to Protect More Children

Increasing childhood immunizations is one direct way to improve our nation's health.

We're taking innovative steps to help children in public health care plans receive the immunizations they need. Unison Health Plan (a UnitedHealth Group subsidiary) operates public sector health care plans in the southeastern United States. Unison is collaborating with the local Vaccines for Children office, area physicians' offices, clinics, hospitals and schools.

In addition to seeking increased immunization rates, we're also helping to promote timely and accurate vaccine records in order to better serve local families and correct any missed opportunities. Since Medicaid populations can be hard to reach; we need to use creative means to engage them. Things like monthly reminder calls, well child mailers and face-to-face visits are coupled with community events like local health fairs and partnering with a local hospital for its *Dr. Bear Express* immunization van.

The Unison child immunization program demonstrates an innovative approach to increasing access to needed care. It's a tangible example of how we try to improve the overall health and well-being of the people and communities we serve.

## ➤ Developing a Culturally Competent Health Workforce

We're investing in the training of future health professionals in order to improve culturally appropriate care in our underserved communities. In 2009, the United Health Foundation (a not-for-profit, private foundation established by UnitedHealth Group to improve health and health care) has taken an innovative, bottom-up approach to the health problems that burden many minority communities by dedicating \$1.5 million to the United Health Foundation's Workforce Development Initiative.

These Foundation scholarships help train future health professionals from diverse, multicultural backgrounds. The Foundation believes that improved, culturally sensitive health care can help reduce health inequalities and improve long-term health outcomes.

The Foundation recognizes that qualified medical professionals often face financial barriers that prevent them from serving in the communities where they are needed most. The large loans they accumulate during their medical education can bar them from careers at the comparatively low salaries paid by community health centers.

That's why the Foundation has committed a grant to the Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health at A.T. Still University to provide loan repayment for dentists practicing in community health centers. This medical education loan repayment program can help community health centers deliver quality, comprehensive care that might otherwise be unavailable to thousands of adults and children.

## ➤ An Analytical Foundation for Improved Quality of Care

The Natural History of Disease is a tool that lets UnitedHealth Group's Ingenix company analyze the health history of people who share a medical condition. The power of the tool lies in its huge storehouse of health care results, covering 63 million patients going back to 1994. Now we can quickly and easily conduct research that demonstrates the effectiveness of different ways to attack a disease. Studies that previously took days and thousands of dollars can now be performed in just minutes.

A pilot project we have underway shows how this tool can be applied. The aim of the pilot is to identify people who are at risk for developing diabetes. Early work has identified not only the standard precursors for diabetes, such as metabolic syndrome, but as many as 93 other potential flags for diabetes. Our ability to pinpoint these clinical warning signs can then be used together with our eSync technology (see above) so that we can reach out to these at-risk individuals with personalized programs of care.

This is just one example of how the Natural History of Disease uses information in a highly synchronized way to improve the affordability, quality, usability and accessibility of care. In fact, our hope is that someday this powerful analytical tool can be extended to everyone in the health care system in order to provide more proactive care and improved cures for disease.