

GEISINGER HEALTH PLAN

Business Update

Quarter 1 2023



Geisinger

An expanding network means more care options for you

Because we're continuing to expand our Geisinger Health Plan (GHP) network, you'll have more options — and we can serve even more members. If you have a tiered plan, the following new groups have been added to the network.

Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) is now accepting GHP insurance, making it easier and more cost-effective for GHP members to get the care they need at any LVHN location. GHP members could previously use some locations and products through LVHN. As of Nov. 1, GHP members now have in-network access to all products and locations, including inpatient and outpatient LVHN services.

LVHN includes 13 hospitals, 28 health centers, numerous primary and specialty care physician practices, 10 specialty care facilities and 20 ExpressCARE locations.

UPMC hospitals and affiliated providers added in Dauphin and Cumberland counties. University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) hospitals and providers in south-central Pennsylvania have joined the provider network.

The new agreement, which went into effect Oct. 1, makes UPMC providers in Dauphin and Cumberland counties in-network providers for GHP members. UPMC Harrisburg, UPMC Community Osteopathic and UPMC West Shore are included.

"As Pennsylvanians review their health coverage for the next year, they're considering affordability and what health care providers are in network for them," said Roger van Baaren, chief sales officer for Geisinger Health Plan. "So we're pleased to offer more in-network providers to our GHP members in Dauphin and Cumberland counties."

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Have the flu? Antibiotics aren't for you

As an employer, you probably see a lot more employees out sick this time of year. Everyone wants to get back to normal as quickly as possible, and that means back to work, too. However, taking antibiotics when you're sick might not be the best treatment.

Before you call your doctor and ask for medications, know the difference between bacterial and viral infections. What you've caught will determine your treatment.

Viral infections and antibiotics

Antibiotics treat bacterial infections, but influenza is caused by a virus, so antibiotics aren't effective treatment. In fact, they may do more harm than good if you have the flu. They won't help you feel better, and they can cause other health problems.

That's because viruses infect your body in a different way. Because viruses multiply in your cells, antibiotics can't reach (or kill) them.

Antibiotics: Too much of a good thing

The fewer antibiotics we all take, the better — for ourselves and the whole planet.

Although antibiotics kill both good and bad bacteria, they can miss bacteria like *Clostridium difficile* (C. diff). After taking antibiotics, you could get a C. diff infection, which causes diarrhea and may need emergency medical attention. Antibiotics can also cause abdominal pain and yeast infections like vaginosis or thrush.

Overuse or misuse of antibiotics also contributes to the rise of "superbugs," or antibiotic-resistant bacteria. So avoiding antibiotics when you don't need them is one way to promote good health globally.

Prevention is the best medicine

Keeping your employees (and yourself) healthy during flu season starts with prevention.

The best first step: vaccination. The flu shot may not be 100% effective in preventing illness, but it can keep you from getting severely ill.

Getting your flu shot is easier than ever for Geisinger patients. Walk-in flu shots are available during business hours at:

- Geisinger primary care clinics
- ConvenientCare (urgent care) clinics
- Geisinger Pharmacy locations

To avoid longer wait times, you can schedule an appointment.

Treatments for flu

Feeling sick? Ask your doctor whether you have a bacterial or viral infection. From there, they can tell you what the best treatment is. If it's bacterial, antibiotics can help. But if it's viral, it needs to run its course.

If you have the flu, seek treatment early. In the first two days doctors can prescribe antiviral medications that can make you feel less sick — and for less time. If you're diagnosed with the flu after more than two days, over-the-counter medication can still help you feel better.

Even without medication, viruses are "self-limiting," meaning they'll go away with or without treatment. Try some home remedies, too, like:

- **Rest:** Sleep will help your immune system fight the illness.
- **Drinking plenty of fluids:** Water, herbal tea with honey and lemon, broth and 100% juice can help you feel better and keep you hydrated.
- **Home remedies:** Using menthol ointment, taking a hot bath and eating chicken soup are tried-and-true ways to relieve cold and flu symptoms.

If you're not getting better after 10 days with a cold or flu, or if your symptoms are getting worse at any time, talk to your doctor. People at high risk of flu complications include:

- Young children
- Adults age 65 and older
- Pregnant women
- People with certain medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes and heart disease

Vaccines, plenty of rest and eating well will always help your immune system fight the flu.



Geisinger hospitals and caregivers recognized

You can feel good about choosing Geisinger Health Plan for your employees. Why? GHP services are integrated with Geisinger's health system, which allows us to manage costs, develop innovative programs, improve access to care and offer a growing network of top-quality healthcare professionals who deliver positive outcomes for your employees.

Making better health easier for everyone is our goal, and the healthcare industry is taking notice. We're honored to have received recognition for our efforts in improving patient outcomes. Here are some of the accolades we've been awarded:

The Hearst Health Prize

Geisinger was chosen as one of three finalists for the 2022 Hearst Health Prize for its innovative use of data science to manage chronic conditions, identify and treat at-risk patients and improve health outcomes. Specifically, our array of health data science solutions identify at-risk patients across our largely rural population to provide them with appropriate clinical services. These include:

- **ConnectedCare365**, a virtual care delivery platform that uses remote patient monitoring, artificial intelligence and data analysis to connect patients with care management resources and prevent unnecessary hospital and emergency room visits
- A machine-learning algorithm that identifies patients at high risk of developing colorectal cancer to promote follow-up screening
- A model that uses natural language processing — a type of artificial intelligence allowing computers to understand human language — on radiology reports to identify cases of potentially deadly abdominal aortic aneurysm that might otherwise be missed

The Top Patient Experience Clinicians Awards

Geisinger providers — including physicians, physician assistants and certified registered nurse practitioners — were ranked among the best in the country by their patients, according to Press Ganey's 2022 medical practice survey results. This survey gives patients an opportunity to grade the service and care they received from a provider. Among the 237 clinicians honored, three were spotlighted for exemplary work, receiving Geisinger awards for going above and beyond when it comes to compassionate patient care:

- Kara Anne Levandoski, PA-C, in cardiology at Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center

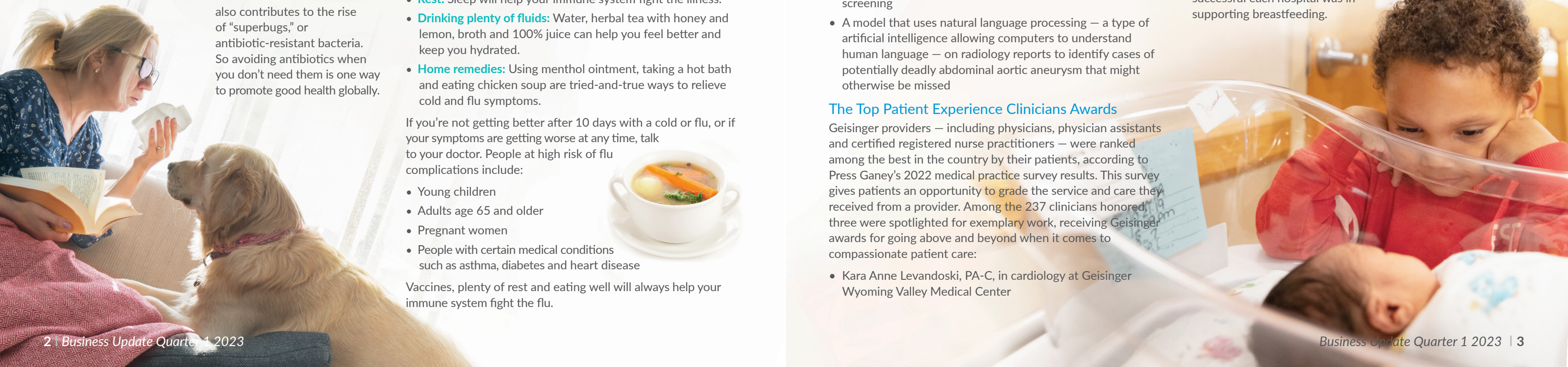
- Greg Francis Burke, MD, Geisinger's chief patient experience officer and internal medicine physician at Geisinger Medical Center
- Jason R. Woloski, MD, family medicine physician at Geisinger South Wilkes-Barre

Newsweek's World's Best Smart Hospital

Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center and Geisinger Medical Center made *Newsweek's* list of World's Best Smart Hospitals for 2023 for their commitment to innovation and advancement in healthcare. They were among only seven hospitals recognized in Pennsylvania and 87 hospitals selected in the United States. Ranked hospitals were evaluated on five criteria: electronic functionalities, telemedicine, digital imaging, artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics — all of which can lead to shorter recovery times and better outcomes for our patients.

U.S. News and World Report's Best Hospitals for Maternity Services for 2022–23

Geisinger Bloomsburg Hospital, Geisinger Lewistown Hospital, and Geisinger Wyoming Valley all earned the designation of High Performing in Adult Maternity Care (uncomplicated pregnancy). To be recognized among the Best Hospitals for Maternity Services, hospitals had to excel on multiple quality metrics, including unexpected complication rates in term newborns, rates of C-sections, whether vaginal births are routinely available after C-sections at the hospital, whether births were scheduled too early in pregnancy and how successful each hospital was in supporting breastfeeding.





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Benefits corner

Case management for your employees

Managing complex conditions should be as simple as possible for our members.

Your employees can stay healthy with help from our population health team. Our case managers work with:

- Members in a high-risk category due to complex conditions like heart failure, COPD, diabetes and others
- Members who are at risk for being admitted or readmitted to the hospital

Case managers hold regular check-ins, coordinate appointments and help catch potential problems before they become serious, among other things. You can even arrange to have high-risk employees automatically referred to a Geisinger Health Plan case manager.

Have an employee who qualifies for case management? If your group isn't set up to be automatically referred to a case manager, your employee's physician can refer them, or they can refer themselves. Connect with your customer care team if you have questions.

The Business Update is published quarterly by Geisinger Health Plan and serves as an informational resource for employers. Share feedback at healthplan@geisinger.edu.

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