

2025



mhs health  
wisconsin™

## Member Handbook

1-888-713-6180 (TTY: 711) | [mhswi.com](https://mhswi.com)

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# Welcome to MHS Health Wisconsin

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MHS Health Wisconsin (MHS Health) is a health plan that runs the BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI program for members in Wisconsin.

- ▶ **BadgerCare Plus** is a health care program that helps low-income children, pregnant people, and adults in Wisconsin.
- ▶ **Medicaid SSI** is a program that helps people who have Supplemental Security Income (SSI) get health care.

This handbook can help you:

- ✓ Learn the basics of BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI.
- ✓ See the services covered by MHS Health and ForwardHealth.
- ✓ Know your rights and responsibilities.
- ✓ File a grievance or appeal if you have a problem or concern.

MHS Health will cover most of your healthcare needs. Wisconsin Medicaid will cover some others through ForwardHealth. See the sections called *Services Covered by MHS Health Wisconsin* on page 17 and *Services Covered by ForwardHealth* on page 22 of this handbook for more information.

## Interpretation and Translation Services

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Communicating with you is important. MHS Health provides the following **at no cost to you**.

- Provides **free** aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
  - Qualified sign language interpreters.
  - Written information in other formats (large print, Braille, audio, accessible electronic formats, and other formats), including the Member Handbook.
- Provides **free** language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
  - Qualified interpreters.
  - Information written in other languages.

Members have the right to have an interpreter at all covered services and during any grievance or appeal process. MHS Health suggests use of a qualified interpreter and not family, friends, or children.

Visit the [Language & Diversity Resources](#) page on the MHS Health website for a list of commonly used interpreter service companies. You can also ask your provider or MHS Health to arrange for interpreter services. Please call us at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).



If you need interpretation and/or translation services,  
call MHS Health Wisconsin at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

***These services are FREE to you!***

## Notice of Availability

Language assistance services are available to you for free. This includes oral interpretation, sign language, and written translation, auxiliary aids and services, and other formats such as large print, Braille, audio, electronic, and printed materials.

► **Do you need language help? Call [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:1-888-713-6180)).**

### Spanish

Los servicios de asistencia lingüística están disponibles para usted de forma gratuita. Esto incluye interpretación oral, lengua de señas, traducción por escrito, ayudas y servicios auxiliares y otros formatos como letra grande, braille, audio y materiales digitales e impresos. Para obtener ayuda, llame al [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:1-888-713-6180)).

### Chinese Mandarin

您可以免費獲得語言協助服務。這包括口譯、手語與書面翻譯，輔助工具和服務，以及其他格式，例如大字版、點字版、語音版、電子版和印刷資料。如需協助，請致電 [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:1-888-713-6180))。

### Hmong

Muaj cov kev pab cuam txhais lus pub dawb rau koj. Qhov no suav nrog kev txhais ua lus hais, lus piav tes, thiab kev txhais ntaub ntawv, cov kev pab txhawb thiab cov kev pab cuam, thiab lwm yam xws li luam ua ntawv loj, ntawv Sur au neeg dig muag, ua suab, ntaub ntawv es lev thos niv, thiab cov ntaub ntawv luam tawm. Yog xav tau kev pab, hu rau [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:1-888-713-6180)).

### Laotian

ມີບໍລິການໃຫ້ຄວາມຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານພາສາຟີລິບປິນໃຫ້ທ່ານ. ເຊິ່ງລວມມີການແປພາສາປາກເປົ່າ, ພາສາມື, ແລະ ການແປພາສາຂຽນ, ການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອແລະການບໍລິການ, ແລະ ຮູບແບບອື່ນໆເຊັ່ນ: ການພິມຂະໜາດໃຫຍ່, ອັກສອນນູນ, ສຽງ, ເອເລັກໂທຣນິກ, ແລະ ອຸປະກອນການພິມ. ເພື່ອຂໍຄວາມຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອ, ໃຫ້ໂທຫາ [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:1-888-713-6180)).

### Burmese

ဘာသာစကား အထောက်အကူ ဝန်ဆောင်မှုများကို အခမဲ့ ရရှိနိုင်ပါသည်။ ယင်းတွင် စကားပြန်အကူအညီ၊ လက်ဟန်ပြဘာသာစကားဖြင့် ဘာသာပြန်ဆိုခြင်းနှင့် စာဖြင့်ရေးသား ဘာသာပြန်ဆိုခြင်း၊ အရန်အထောက်အကူများနှင့် ဝန်ဆောင်မှုများအပြင် ပုံနှိပ်စာလုံးကြီး၊ မျက်မမြင်ဖတ်စာ၊ အသံဖိုင်၊ အီလက်ထရောနစ် စာရွက်စာတမ်းများနှင့် ပုံနှိပ်ထားသော စာရွက်စာတမ်းများကဲ့သို့သော အခြားဖောမတ်များ ပါဝင်ပါသည်။ အကူအညီရယူရန် [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:1-888-713-6180)) သို့ခေါ်ဆိုပါ။

### Somali

Adeegyada kacaawinaya luqadda waxaad ku heli kartaa si bilaash ah. Tan waxaa ku jira tarjumaadda afka, tarjumaadda luqadda dhegoolaha, iyo tarjumaadda qorallada, qalabka taageerada iyo adeegyada, iyo qaabab kale sida far waaweyn, farta indhoolaha, maqalka, elektiroonigga, iyo agab daabacan. Haddii aad u baahan tahay caawinaad, wac [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:1-888-713-6180)).

## Russian

Вам доступны бесплатные услуги языковой поддержки. К ним относятся устный перевод, перевод на жестовый язык и письменный перевод, вспомогательные средства и услуги, а также другие форматы, включая крупный шрифт, шрифт Брайля, аудиоформат, электронные и печатные материалы. Для получения помощи позвоните по номеру [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)).

## Croatian

Usluge jezične pomoći dostupne su vam besplatno. To uključuje usmeno tumačenje, znakovni jezik i pisani prijevod, pomagala i pomoćne usluge te druge formate kao što su uvećani font slova, Brailleovo pismo, zvučni, elektronički i ispisani materijali. Pomoć zatražite pozivom na [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)).

## Arabic

تتوفر لك خدمات مساعدة اللغة مجاناً. ويشمل ذلك الترجمة الشفهية ولغة الإشارة والترجمة الخطية وأدوات المساعدة والخدمات الإضافية والتنسيقات الأخرى مثل المواد المطبوعة الكبيرة والبرائل والمواد الصوتية والإلكترونية والمطبوعة. للحصول على المساعدة، اتصل على الرقم [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)).

## German

Sprachdienstleistungen stehen Ihnen kostenlos zur Verfügung. Dazu gehören mündliche Verdolmetschung, Gebärdensprache und schriftliche Übersetzung, zusätzliche Unterstützung und Dienstleistungen sowie andere Formate wie Großdruck, Braille-Schrift, Audio, elektronische und gedruckte Materialien. Wenn Sie Hilfe benötigen, rufen Sie uns unter folgender Telefonnummer an: [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)).

## Vietnamese

Quý vị được cung cấp miễn phí các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ. Các dịch vụ này bao gồm phiên dịch, ngôn ngữ ký hiệu và biên dịch, các dịch vụ và hỗ trợ bổ sung và các định dạng khác như bản in khổ chữ lớn, chữ nổi Braille, âm thanh, bản điện tử và bản in. Để được trợ giúp, gọi số [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)).

## Korean

언어 지원 서비스는 무료로 제공됩니다. 여기에는 통역, 수화 및 번역, 보조 지원 및 서비스, 대형 활자본, 점자, 오디오, 전자 및 인쇄 자료 등의 기타 형식이 포함됩니다. 도움이 필요한 경우 [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)) 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

## Polish

Usługi wsparcia językowego są dostępne bezpłatnie. Obejmują one tłumaczenia ustne, tłumaczenia w języku migowym, tłumaczenie pisemne, dodatkowe pomoce i usługi, a także materiały z dużą czcionką, w alfabecie Braille'a, audio, w formacie elektronicznym i drukowane. Aby uzyskać pomoc, zadzwoń pod numer [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)).

## Hindi

भाषा सहायता सेवाएँ आपके लिए निःशुल्क उपलब्ध हैं। इसमें मौखिक व्याख्या, सांकेतिक भाषा और लिखित अनुवाद, सहायक उपकरण और सेवाएँ और अन्य फॉर्मेट जैसे बड़ा प्रिंट, ब्रेल, ऑडियो, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक और प्रिंट की गई सामग्री शामिल हैं। मदद के लिए, [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)) पर कॉल करें।

## Albanian

Shërbimet e ndihmës gjuhësore ju ofrohen pa pagesë. Ato përfshijnë interpretimin me gojë, gjuhën e shenjave dhe përkthimin me shkrim, pajisjet dhe shërbimet ndihmëse, si dhe formate të tjera si p.sh. shkrime me germa të përmasave të mëdha, shkrime në alfabetin braj, formate audio, formate elektronike dhe materiale të printuara. Për ndihmë, telefononi në numrin [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:1-888-713-6180)).

## Rohingya

Zubani hédmotor sarvis ókkol oñne maana faíba. línor bútoe ase mukor torjuma, ecarar zuban, ar leká torjuma, hédmoti modot, adde sarvis, ar dusara formeth ókkol zenneki boró printh, Bréle, oódhiyo, ilekthronik adde printh goíjjo saáman ókkol. Modotolla, [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:1-888-713-6180)) ót kool goró.



**If you need interpretation and/or translation services,  
call MHS Health Wisconsin at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:1-888-713-6180)).**

***Interpretation and translation services are free to you!***

## Race, Ethnicity and Language Information (REL)

MHS Health promises to keep your race, ethnicity, and language (REL) information private. We use some of the following ways to protect your information:

- Keeping paper documents in locked file cabinets.
- Requiring that all electronic information stays on physically secure media.
- Maintaining your electronic information in password-protected files.

We may use or share your REL info to perform our work. These activities may include:

- Finding health care gaps.
- Making intervention programs.
- Designing and directing outreach materials.
- Telling health care professionals and doctors about your language needs.
- Promoting equity in access, availability, and accountability of services.

We will never use your REL information for approving, rate setting, or benefit decisions. We will not give your REL information to unauthorized people.

## Important MHS Health Phone Numbers

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### How to contact MHS Health Customer Service

Call: [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711))

Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday – Friday

*Calls to this number are free. Free language interpreters are available for non-English speakers.*

Call Customer Service for:

- Questions about your MHS Health membership.
- Questions about how to get care.
- Help choosing a primary care physician or other provider.
- Help getting a paper copy of the MHS Health provider directory.
- If you get a medical bill for a service(s) you did not agree to.

### How to contact an MHS Health Member Advocate

Call: [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)) Ask to speak with a Member Advocate.

Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday – Friday

*Calls to this number are free. Free language interpreters are available for non-English speakers.*

Call the Member Advocate for:

- Help solving problems with getting care.
- Help with filing a complaint or grievance.
- Help with requesting an appeal or review of a decision made by MHS Health Wisconsin.
- If you are being billed for a medical service while covered by MHS Health

### How to contact the MHS Health 24/7 Nurse Advice Line

Call: [1-800-280-2348](tel:1-800-280-2348) (TTY: [711](tel:711))

Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

*Calls to this number are free. Free language interpreters are available for non-English speakers.*

Call the 24/7 Nurse Advice Line if you need help after hours or if you are not sure if you are experiencing a medical emergency.



**Nurse Advice Line**  
**Free 24/7 support**  
**[1-800-280-2348](tel:1-800-280-2348)**

## Other Important Phone Numbers

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### ForwardHealth Member Services

Phone number: [1-800-362-3002](tel:1-800-362-3002) (TTY: [711](tel:711))

Hours: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday – Friday

Email: [memberservices@wisconsin.gov](mailto:memberservices@wisconsin.gov)

Call ForwardHealth Customer Service for:

- Questions about how to use your ForwardHealth card.

- Questions about ForwardHealth services or providers.
- Help with getting a new ForwardHealth card.

### **HMO Enrollment Specialist**

Phone number: [1-800-291-2002](tel:1-800-291-2002) (TTY: [711](tel:711))

Hours: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday – Friday

Call the HMO Enrollment Specialist for:

- General information about health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and managed care.
- Help with disenrollment or exemption from MHS Health or managed care.
- If you move out of MHS Health's service area.

### **State of Wisconsin HMO Ombuds Program**

An Ombuds is a person who provides neutral, private, and informal help with any questions or problems you have as an MHS Health member.

Phone number: [1-800-291-2002](tel:1-800-291-2002) (TTY: [711](tel:711))

Hours: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday

Call the Ombuds Program for:

- Help solving problems with the care or services you get from MHS Health.
- Help understanding your member rights and responsibilities.
- Help filing a grievance, complaint, or appeal of a decision made by MHS Health.

### **External Advocate (Medicaid SSI Only)**

Phone number: [1-800-708-3034](tel:1-800-708-3034) (TTY: [711](tel:711))

Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday – Friday

Call the Medicaid SSI External Advocate for:

- Help solving problems with the care or services you get from MHS Health.
- Help filing a complaint or grievance.
- Help requesting an appeal or review of a decision made by MHS Health.
- If you are being billed for a medical service while covered by MHS Health



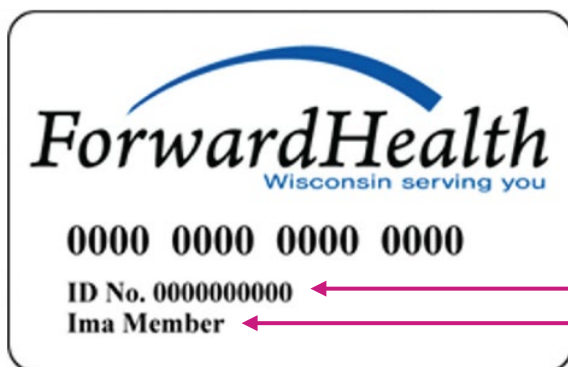
## Using Your ForwardHealth Card

You will get most of your health care through MHS Health providers, but you may need to get some services using your ForwardHealth card.

Your ForwardHealth card is a plastic card with your name on it. It also has a 10-digit number (your Medicaid ID Number) and a magnetic stripe.

**Always carry your ForwardHealth card with you.** Show it every time you go to the provider or hospital and every time you get a prescription filled. You may have problems getting health care or prescriptions if you do not have your card with you. Also, bring any other health insurance cards you may have. This could include any ID card from other service providers.

**TIP: You can begin using your benefits right away, even if you have not received your ForwardHealth card from the state yet.**



Keep your ForwardHealth card safe.  
You will not get another insurance card  
from MHS Health Wisconsin.

← Your Medicaid ID Number

← Your Name



← Magnetic stripe for swiping

← The phone number on the back of the card is for ForwardHealth Member Services. To contact MHS Health Member Services, call [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

### Digital and Printable ForwardHealth Cards

Members can access [digital versions of their ForwardHealth cards](#) on the **MyACCESS** mobile app available in the App Store. Members are able to save PDFs and print out paper copies of their cards from the app. The digital and paper printout versions of the cards are identical to the physical cards for the purposes of accessing Medicaid-covered services. All policies that apply to the physical cards also apply to the digital or printed versions.

**TIP: If you have questions about how to use your ForwardHealth card or if your card is lost, damaged, or stolen, call ForwardHealth Member Services at [1-800-362-3002](tel:1-800-362-3002).**

**Use your ForwardHealth card to get the health care services listed below:**

- Behavioral (autism) treatment services
- Chiropractic services
- Crisis intervention services
- Community recovery services
- Community support program (CPS) services
- Comprehensive community services
- Dental services: ForwardHealth provides dental services in all but six of Wisconsin's 72 counties. *For more information on ForwardHealth Dental Services, see page 20 of this handbook.*

If you live in one of the six counties listed below, MHS Health provides your dental services.

1. Kenosha
2. Milwaukee
3. Ozaukee
4. Racine
5. Washington
6. Waukesha

*For more information on MHS Health Dental Services provided in the six counties listed above, see page 21 of this handbook.*

- Hub and spoke integrated recovery support health home services
- Lead investigations for persons having lead poisoning or lead exposure
- Medication therapy management
- Medicines, store-bought drugs, provider-administered drugs, and diabetes supplies
- Non-emergency medical transportation
- Prenatal care coordination
- Residential substance use disorder treatment
- School based services
- Targeted case management
- Tuberculosis-related services

**To find a provider who accepts your Forward Health card:**

1. Go to [www.forwardhealth.wi.gov](http://www.forwardhealth.wi.gov)
2. Click on the Members link or icon in the middle section of the page.
3. Scroll down and click on the Resources tab.
4. Click on the Find a Provider link.
5. Under Program, select BadgerCare/Medicaid.

Or, contact ForwardHealth Member Services at [1-800-362-3002](tel:1-800-362-3002) (TTY [711](tel:711)).

## Using the Provider Directory

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As a member of MHS Health, you should get your healthcare from providers and hospitals in the MHS Health network. See our provider directory for a list of these providers. Providers accepting new patients are called out in the provider directory.



**Online Find a Provider Directory**



The provider directory is a list of providers, practitioners, clinics, and hospitals that you can use to get health care services as a member of MHS Health. The online [Find a Provider](#) directory is found on the MHS Health website. You can get a copy of the provider directory in different languages and formats. Just call our Customer Service department at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

MHS Health providers are sensitive to the needs of many cultures. See the MHS Health [Find a Provider](#) online directory for a list of providers and what accommodations each provider offers.

## Choosing a Primary Care Provider

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When you need care, call your primary care provider (PCP) first. A primary care provider could be a provider, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or other provider that gives, directs, or helps you get health care services. You can choose a primary care provider from the MHS Health provider directory. Use the list of providers accepting new patients. If you are an American Indian or Alaska Native, you can choose to see an Indian Health Care Provider outside of our network.

If you did not inform us of your PCP, we will assign you a PCP who is in our network. To view your assigned PCP and how to contact them, log into the Member portal or call us at 1-888-713-6180.

You can keep your current primary care provider if they are part of our provider network. Your primary care provider will help you decide if you need to see another provider or specialist. They can give you a referral if needed. If you want to use a certain specialist or hospital, you'll need a referral from your primary care provider. You'll need to get approval from your primary care provider before you see another provider.

You may see a women's health specialist without a referral in addition to choosing a primary care provider. This could be an obstetrician and gynecologist (OB/GYN), nurse midwife, or licensed midwife.

**TIP: Call our Customer Service Department at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)) to choose or change your primary care provider.**

## New Member Discussion of Health Needs

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MHS Health will contact you by phone to talk with you about your individual health needs and circumstances. This is often called a Health Risk Screening (HRS) or a Health Needs Assessment (HNA). We will contact you within the first 60-90 days of your being enrolled with us.

It is very important that you talk with MHS Health so you can get the care you need. We take the time to learn more about you and help you reach your health goals. You can ask about resources in your community or programs and services that are offered through your health plan.

Please choose the correct option below to complete a health screening for yourself and/or any dependents enrolled in Medicaid BadgerCare Plus or Medicaid SSI with MHS Health Wisconsin.

You may complete your health screening with us over the phone or by filling out an online form.

### BadgerCare Plus

Call: [1-833-236-5458](tel:1-833-236-5458) (TTY: [711](tel:711))

Online forms can be found at [mhswi.com/health-screening](https://mhswi.com/health-screening)

*Note: For BadgerCare Plus members, screening must be completed in the first 90 days of you being enrolled with MHS Health Wisconsin.*

### Medicaid SSI

Call: [1-844-545-6326](tel:1-844-545-6326) (TTY: [711](tel:711))

Online forms can be found at [mhswi.com/health-screening](https://mhswi.com/health-screening)

*Note: For Medicaid SSI members, screening must be completed in the first 60 days of you being enrolled with MHS Health Wisconsin.*

## Getting the Care You Need

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### Emergency Care

Emergency care is care that is needed right away for an illness, injury, symptom, or condition that is very serious. Some examples are:

- Choking
- Convulsions
- Prolonged or repeated seizures
- Serious broken bones
- Severe burns
- Severe pain
- Severe or unusual bleeding
- Suspected heart attack
- Suspected poisoning
- Suspected stroke
- Trouble breathing
- Unconsciousness

**If you need emergency care, get help as quickly as possible.** Try to go to an MHS Health hospital or emergency room if you can. If your condition cannot wait, go to the nearest hospital, provider, or clinic.



**Call 911 or your local police or fire department emergency services if the emergency is very severe, and you are unable to get to the nearest provider.**

If you must go to a non-MHS Health hospital or emergency room, you or someone else should call MHS Health at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)) as soon as you can to tell us what happened.

*Approval is not needed from MHS Health or your primary care provider before getting emergency care.*

Remember, hospital emergency rooms are for true emergencies only. Unless your condition is very serious, call your provider or our 24-hour emergency number at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) before you go to the emergency room. If you do not know if your illness or injury is an emergency, call the 24/7 Nurse Advice Line at [1-800-280-2348](tel:1-800-280-2348), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We will tell you where you can get care.

*You may have to pay a copayment if you go to an emergency room for care that is not an emergency.*

## **Urgent Care**

Urgent care is care for an illness, injury, or condition that needs medical help right away, but does not require emergency room care. Some examples are:

- Bruises
- Minor burns
- Minor cuts
- Most broken bones
- Most drug reactions
- Bleeding that is not severe
- Sprains

You must get urgent care from MHS Health providers unless you get our approval to see a non-MHS Health provider.

Do not go to a hospital emergency room for urgent care unless you get approval from MHS Health first.

## **Specialty Care**

A specialist is a provider who is an expert in an area of medicine. There are many kinds of specialists. Here are a few examples:

- Oncologists, who care for people with cancer.
- Cardiologists, who care for people with heart conditions.
- Orthopedists, who care for people with certain bone, joint, or muscle conditions.

Contact your primary care provider if you need care from a specialist. Most of the time, you need to get approval from your primary care provider and MHS Health before seeing a specialist.



**Online Find a Provider Directory**



## **Care During Pregnancy and Delivery**

Let MHS Health and your county or tribal agency know right away if you become pregnant. They can help you get the extra care you need. You do not have copayments when you are pregnant.

You must go to an MHS Health hospital to have your baby. Talk to your provider to make sure you know which hospital you should go to when it is time to have your baby. Do not go out of the area to have



your baby unless you have MHS Health approval. Your MHS Health provider knows your history and is the best provider to help you.

Also, talk to your provider if you plan to travel in your last month of pregnancy. Traveling during your last month of pregnancy increases the chance that your baby will be born while you are away from home. Many people have a better birthing experience when they use the providers and hospitals that cared for them throughout their pregnancy.

## Telehealth Services

Telehealth is audio and video contact with your provider or health care provider using your phone, computer, or tablet. MHS Health covers telehealth services that your provider can deliver at the same quality as in-person services. This could be provider office visits, mental health or substance abuse services, dental consultations, and more. There are some services you cannot get using telehealth. This includes services where the provider needs to touch or examine you.

Both you and your provider must agree to a telehealth visit. You always have the right to refuse a telehealth visit and do an in-person visit instead. Your BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI benefits and care will not be impacted if you refuse telehealth services. If your provider only offers telehealth visits and you want to do in-person, they can refer you to a different provider.

MHS Health and Wisconsin Medicaid providers must follow privacy and security laws when providing services over telehealth.

## Care When You Are Away from Home

Follow these rules if you need medical care but are too far away from home to go to your regular primary care physician or clinic:

- For true emergencies, go to the nearest hospital, clinic, or provider. Call MHS Health at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)) as soon as you can to tell us what happened. If you need emergency care outside of Wisconsin, health care providers in the area where you are can treat you and send the bill to MHS Health. You may need to pay a copayment if you get emergency care outside of Wisconsin. Call Customer Service at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) if you get a bill for services received outside of Wisconsin.
- For urgent or routine care away from home, you must get approval from MHS Health before you go to a different provider, clinic, or hospital. This includes children who are spending time away from home with a parent or relative. Call us at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)) for approval to go to a different provider, clinic, or hospital.
- For urgent or routine care outside the United States, call MHS Health first. MHS Health does not cover any services provided outside the United States, Canada, and Mexico. This includes emergency services. If you need emergency services while in Canada or Mexico, MHS Health will cover it only if the provider's or hospital's bank is in the United States. Other services may be covered with MHS Health approval if the provider has a bank in the United States. Please call MHS Health if you get any emergency services outside the United States.



## Access and Availability to Care

You should be able to schedule an appointment with your primary care provider and get medical care when you need it. You may have to wait a little longer to get in to see other providers, like specialists. Call MHS Health at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY [711](tel:711)) if you can't get an appointment in a timely manner.

Visit the [Making Appointments](#) section on the MHS Health website to see how quickly you should be able to see a provider.

## When You May Be Billed for Services

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### Covered and Noncovered Services

With BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI, you do not have to pay for covered services other than any copayments that may be required.

You may have to pay the full cost of services if:

- The service is not covered under BadgerCare Plus or Medicaid SSI.
- You needed approval for a service from your primary care provider or MHS Health, but you did not get approval before getting the service.
- MHS Health determines that the service is not medically necessary for you. Medically necessary services are approved services or supplies needed to diagnose or treat a condition, disease, illness, injury, or symptom.
- You received a non-emergency service from a provider that is not in the network. Or you received a non-emergency service from a provider that does not accept your ForwardHealth card.

You can ask for noncovered services if you are willing to pay for them. You'll have to make a written payment plan with your provider. Providers may bill you up to their usual and customary charges for noncovered services.

*If you get a medical bill for a service that you did not agree to, please call [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180).*

### Copayments

Some services under BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid SSI may require copayments. A copayment is a fixed amount of money you pay for a covered health care service. Copayments for BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI members are usually \$3 or less. Copays for services covered under MHS Health are paid for by MHS Health.

The following members also do not have to pay copayments:

- Nursing home residents.
- Terminally ill members receiving hospice care.
- Pregnant women.
- Members younger than 19 years old.
- Children in foster care or adoption assistance.
- Youth who were in foster care on their 18th birthday don't have to pay any copays until age 26.
- Members who join by Express Enrollment.

- American Indians or Alaskan Native Tribal members, children or grandchildren of a tribal member, or anyone who can get Indian Health Services. Age and income do not matter. This applies when getting items and services from an Indian Health Services provider or from the Purchase and Referred Care program.

## Services Covered Under BadgerCare Plus or Medicaid SSI

MHS Health provides most medically necessary, covered services under BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI. See Services Covered by MHS Health on page 17 for more information about services covered by MHS Health.

Some other services are covered by ForwardHealth. See Services Covered by ForwardHealth on page 22 to learn more about these services.

Some services require prior authorization. Prior authorization is written approval for a service or prescription. You may need prior authorization from MHS Health or ForwardHealth before you get a service or fill a prescription.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS		
Services	BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid SSI	Copays (per service)
Ambulance services	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Ambulatory surgical center care	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Behavioral (autism) treatment services	Full coverage (with prior authorization)  Covered by ForwardHealth. Use your ForwardHealth card to get this service.	No copay is required
Chiropractor	Full coverage  Covered by ForwardHealth. Use your ForwardHealth card to get this service.	*\$.50 - \$3
Dental	Preventive, restorative, palliative  MHS Health covers dental services for members living in the following six counties: Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee, Kenosha, Racine, and Washington counties. <i>See also page 20.</i>  Members living outside the six counties listed above can get dental services from any provider who accepts ForwardHealth. <i>See also page 21.</i>	*\$.50 - \$3  MHS Health pays copay for members living in the six counties listed at left

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS		
Services	BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid SSI	Copays (per service)
Disposable medical supplies	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Durable medical equipment (DME)	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Emergency room	Full coverage <i>See also page 11.</i>	MHS Health pays copay
Family planning	Full coverage <i>See also page 19.</i>	No copay is required
HealthCheck screenings for children	Full coverage up to age 21. <i>See also page 19.</i>	MHS Health pays copay
Health education	Asthma, diabetes, hypertension	MHS added benefit
Hearing	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Home health services	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Hospice	Full coverage	No copay is required
Hospital – Inpatient	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Hospital – outpatient	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Medications/Drugs (Pharmacy Services)	<p>Coverage of generic and brand name prescription drugs, and some over-the counter (OTC) medications.</p> <p>Limit of five opioid prescription refills per month.</p> <p><i>Covered by ForwardHealth. Use your ForwardHealth card to get this service.</i></p>	<p>\$0.50 for OTC \$1 for generic \$3 for brand</p> <p>Copays are limited to \$12 per member, per provider, per month.</p> <p>OTC medications do not count toward the \$12 copay maximum.</p>
Medication injected during a provider visit	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Mental health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outpatient</li> <li>Inpatient</li> </ul>	<p>Full coverage</p> <p>Full coverage for ages 0-21. (Stays for ages 22-64 in institutional settings are covered for up to 15 days in a month if medically necessary). <i>See also page 19.</i></p>	<p>MHS Health pays copay</p> <p>MHS Health pays copay</p>

*Summary of Benefits continued on the next page.*

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS		
Services	BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid SSI	Copays (per service)
Nursing home	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Physician services	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Podiatrist	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Prenatal/maternity care	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Substance use disorder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outpatient</li> </ul>	Residential and Hub and Spoke Services are covered by ForwardHealth	MHS Health pays copay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inpatient</li> </ul>	Full coverage <i>See also page 19.</i>	MHS Health pays copay
Therapy (physical, occupational, speech and language)	Full coverage	MHS Health pays copay
Transportation	Full coverage of emergency and non-emergency transportation to and from a provider for a covered service.  Covered by ForwardHealth. Use your ForwardHealth card to get this service.	\$2 for non-emergency ambulance trips  \$1 per trip for transportation by specialized motor vehicle  No copay by common carrier or emergency ambulance
Vision <i>Extra benefit from MHS Health</i>	One exam and pair of glasses per year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$100 allowance for better frames, or</li> <li>\$80 toward contact lenses.</li> </ul> <i>See also page 21.</i>	MHS Health pays copay

## Services Covered by MHS Health Wisconsin

MHS Health is responsible for providing all medically necessary covered services under BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid SSI. Some services may require a provider's order or a prior authorization.

The list below is a summary of covered services. Please read this entire section for more information. Covered services include:

- Services by providers and nurses, including nurse practitioners and nurse midwives



- Inpatient and outpatient hospital services
- Laboratory and X-ray services
- HealthCheck for members under 21 years of age, including referral for other medically necessary services
- Certain podiatrists' (foot providers) services
- Inpatient mental health stays in institutional settings for members ages 22-64, unless provided for less than 15 days instead of traditional treatment
- Optometrists (eye providers) or optician services, including eyeglasses
- Mental health and substance abuse services (Please see special section below)
- Family planning services and supplies
- Abortions when necessary to protect the health or life of the patient or when the pregnancy was the result of sexual assault or incest
- Prostheses and other corrective support devices
- Hearing aids and other hearing services
- Home health care
- Personal care
- Independent nursing services
- Medical supplies and equipment
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Speech therapy
- Respiratory therapy
- Nursing home services
- Medical nutrition counseling
- Hospice care
- Telehealth
- Certain dental services in certain areas (not all dental services are covered)
- Some medications administered by healthcare providers.

### **Extra Benefits for MHS Health Members**

- \$100 extra allowance to upgrade eyeglass frames or \$80 allowance for contact lenses
- No co-pays for MHS Health covered services.
- Rewards dollars for healthy behaviors
  - Learn more at [mhswi.com/rewards](https://mhswi.com/rewards)
- 24/7 Nurse Advice Line - offers bilingual registered nurses that provide free 24-hour medical advice, 7 days a week at [1-800-280-2348](tel:1-800-280-2348) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).
- An experienced team of local staff and clinicians to serve you.
- Health education programs if you have asthma or diabetes.



- Start Smart for Your Baby® is a program for pregnant persons and new parents that offers health education and incentives to ensure a healthy pregnancy and first year of life for their babies. Call [1-800-496-5803](tel:1-800-496-5803).
- Online health education resources available at <https://mhswi.kramesonline.com/>



## Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

MHS Health provides mental health and substance abuse (drug and alcohol) services to all members. If you need these services, call your primary care provider or MHS Health at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180).

If you need immediate help:

- If your life or the life of someone else is in danger, call [911](tel:911) or visit the nearest emergency room.
- Call or text the Suicide and Crisis Prevention Lifeline at [988](tel:988).
- Call the MHS Health 24-Hour Nurse Line at [1-800-280-2348](tel:1-800-280-2348).



*All mental health and substance use services provided are private.*

## Family Planning Services

MHS Health provides private family planning services to all members, including people under age 18. If you do not want to talk to your primary care provider about family planning, call our Customer Service Department at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)). We will help you choose an MHS Health family planning provider who is different from your primary care provider.

We encourage you to get family planning services from an MHS Health provider. This allows us to better coordinate your health care. However, you can also go to any family planning clinic that will accept your ForwardHealth ID card, even if the clinic is not part of MHS Health's provider network.

## HealthCheck

HealthCheck covers health checkups for members younger than 21 years old. HealthCheck exams, also known as "well-child checks," are provider visits your child or young adult has when they are well. The provider asks questions and examines your child. This is to make sure your child is healthy and taking the right steps to stay healthy. It's a good time to ask health questions you or your child may have. HealthCheck also covers treatment for choice any problems found during your child's HealthCheck exam.

HealthCheck has three purposes:

1. To find and treat health problems for members younger than 21 years old.
2. To share information about special health services for members younger than 21 years old.
3. To make members younger than 21 years old eligible for some health care services that are not otherwise covered.

The HealthCheck exam includes:

- Age-appropriate immunizations (shots)
- Blood and urine lab tests
- Dental checks and a referral to a dentist beginning at age 1
- Health and developmental history

- Hearing checks
- Head-to-toe physical exam
- Lead testing for children between the ages of 1 and 2 years old; and children under age 6 who have never had a blood lead level test
- Vision checks

To schedule a HealthCheck exam or for more information, call our Customer Service Department at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

If you need a ride to or from a HealthCheck appointment, please call the Wisconsin non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) manager at [1-866-907-1493](tel:1-866-907-1493) (TTY [1-800-855-2880](tel:1-800-855-2880)) to schedule a ride.

## Dental Services

If you live in one of the six counties listed below, MHS Health provides dental services. MHS Health dental services are provided through [Envolve Dental](#).

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. Milwaukee | 4. Kenosha    |
| 2. Waukesha  | 5. Racine     |
| 3. Ozaukee   | 6. Washington |

You must go to an Envolve Dental dentist. Call MHS Health at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) or use our online tool at [mhswi.com/find-a-doctor](https://mhswi.com/find-a-doctor) to find a dentist who meets your needs.



- **You have the right to a routine dental appointment within 90 days of your request for an appointment.** Call MHS Health at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)) if you are unable to get a dental appointment within 90 days.
- **You can get a ride to your dental appointment.** Call the Wisconsin non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) manager at [1-866-907-1493](tel:1-866-907-1493) (TTY [711](tel:711)) if you need help with getting a ride to or from the dentist's office.
- **If you have a dental emergency, you have the right to treatment within 24 hours of your request for an appointment.** A dental emergency is severe dental pain, swelling, fever, infection, or injury to the teeth.

If you are having a dental emergency:

- If you already have a dentist who is with Envolve Dental:
  - Call the dentist's office.
  - Tell the dentist's office that you or your child are having a dental emergency.
  - Tell the dentist's office what the exact dental problem is. This may be something like a severe toothache or swollen face.
  - Call us if you need help getting a ride to or from your dental appointment.
- If you do not currently have a dentist who is with Envolve Dental:
  - Call MHS Health at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)) to let us know if you or your child is having a dental emergency. We can help you get dental services.
  - Tell us if you need help getting a ride to or from the dentist's office.

***If you live in one of the other Wisconsin counties not listed above***

If you do not reside in Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee, Kenosha, Racine, or Washington counties, you may get dental services from a Medicaid-enrolled provider who will accept your ForwardHealth ID card.

To find a Medicaid-enrolled provider:

1. Go to [www.forwardhealthwi.gov](http://www.forwardhealthwi.gov).
2. Click on the Members link or icon in the middle section of the page.
3. Scroll down and click on the Resources tab.
4. Click on the Find a Provider link.
5. Under Program, select BadgerCare/Medicaid.

You can also call ForwardHealth Member Services at [1-800-362-3002](tel:1-800-362-3002) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

- **You have the right to a routine dental appointment within 90 days of your request for an appointment.** Call ForwardHealth Member Services at [1-800-362-3002](tel:1-800-362-3002) if you are unable to get a dental appointment within 90 days.
- Call the Wisconsin non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) manager at [1-866-907-1493](tel:1-866-907-1493) (TTY [711](tel:711)) if you need help with getting a ride to or from the dentist's office.
- **If you have a dental emergency, you have the right to treatment within 24 hours of your request for an appointment.** A dental emergency is severe dental pain, swelling, fever, infection, or injury to the teeth. If you are having a dental emergency:
  - If you already have a dentist who is with ForwardHealth:
    - Call the dentist's office.
    - Tell the dentist's office that you or your child are having a dental emergency.
    - Tell the dentist's office what the exact dental problem is. This may be something like a severe toothache or swollen face.
    - Call the NEMT manager at [1-866-907-1493](tel:1-866-907-1493) or ForwardHealth Member Services at [1-800-362-3002](tel:1-800-362-3002) if you need help getting a ride to or from your dental appointment.
  - If you do not currently have a dentist who is with ForwardHealth:
    - Call ForwardHealth Member services at [1-800-362-3002](tel:1-800-362-3002) (TTY: [711](tel:711)). Tell them that you or your child are having a dental emergency. They can help you get dental services.
    - Tell them if you need help getting a ride to and/or from the dentist's office.

## Vision Services

MHS Health provides vision coverage through [Envolve Vision](#). This includes one eye exam each year and extra \$100 to use for eyeglass frames or \$80 to buy contact lenses. Some limitations apply. Call us at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)) for more information.



**Online Find a Provider Directory**



## Services Covered by ForwardHealth

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### Behavioral (Autism) Treatment Services

Behavioral treatment services are covered under BadgerCare Plus. Behavioral treatment services are used to treat autism. You can get autism treatment services from a Medicaid-enrolled provider who will accept your ForwardHealth ID card. To find a Medicaid-enrolled provider:

1. Go to [www.forwardhealth.wi.gov](http://www.forwardhealth.wi.gov).
2. Click on the Members link or icon in the middle section of the page.
3. Scroll down and click on the Resources tab.
4. Click on the Find a Provider link.
5. Under Program, select BadgerCare/Medicaid.

Or you can call ForwardHealth Member Services at [1-800-362-3002](tel:1-800-362-3002) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

### Chiropractic Services

Chiropractic services are covered under BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI. You can get chiropractic services from a Medicaid-enrolled provider who will accept your ForwardHealth ID card. To find a Medicaid-enrolled provider:

1. Go to [www.forwardhealth.wi.gov](http://www.forwardhealth.wi.gov).
2. Click on the Members link or icon in the middle section of the page.
3. Scroll down and click on the Resources tab.
4. Click on the Find a Provider link.
5. Under Program, select BadgerCare/Medicaid.

Or you can call ForwardHealth Member Services at [1-800-362-3002](tel:1-800-362-3002).

### Transportation Services

You can get non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) services through Wisconsin's NEMT manager. The NEMT manager arranges and pays for rides to covered services for members who have no other way to get there.

NEMT can include rides using:

- Public transportation, such as a city bus
- Non-emergency ambulances
- Specialized medical vehicles
- Other types of vehicles, depending on a member's medical and transportation needs

If you have a car and are able to drive yourself to your appointment but cannot afford to pay for gas, you may be eligible for mileage reimbursement (money for gas).

**Learn more about your [NEMT benefits](#).**

**Schedule a ride. Call: [1-866-907-1493](tel:1-866-907-1493) (TTY [711](tel:711)) Online: <https://www.mtm-inc.net/wisconsin/>**

You must schedule routine rides at least two business days before your appointment. Call the NEMT manager at [1-866-907-1493](tel:1-866-907-1493) (TTY [711](tel:711)), Monday - Friday, 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. You may also schedule rides for urgent appointments. A ride to an urgent appointment will be provided in three hours or less.



## Pharmacy Benefits

You may get a prescription from an MHS Health provider, specialist, or dentist. You can get covered prescriptions and certain over-the-counter items at any pharmacy that accepts your ForwardHealth ID card.

You may have copayments or limits on covered medications. If you cannot afford your copayments, you can still get your prescriptions.

If you have any questions about the medications covered under BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI or medication copayments, contact ForwardHealth Member Services at [1-800-362-3002](tel:1-800-362-3002) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

## Services Not Covered Under BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI

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The services below are not covered under BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI:

- Services that are not medically necessary
- Services that have not been approved by MHS Health or your primary care provider when approval is required
- Normal living expenses like rent or mortgage payments, food, utilities, entertainment, clothing, furniture, household supplies, and insurance
- Experimental or cosmetic services or procedures
- Infertility treatments or services
- Reversal of voluntary sterilization
- Inpatient mental health stays in institutional settings for members ages 22-64, unless provided for less than 15 days instead of traditional treatment
- Room and board

## In Lieu of Service or Setting

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MHS Health may cover some services or care settings that are not normally covered in Wisconsin Medicaid. These services are called “in lieu of” services or settings.

The following in lieu of services or settings are covered under BadgerCare Plus or Medicaid SSI:

- Inpatient mental health services in an institute of mental disease (IMD) for a person 22-64 years of age for no more than 15 days during a month.
- Sub-acute community based clinical treatment (short-term residential mental health services).

Deciding if an “in lieu of” service or setting is right for you is a team effort. MHS Health will work with you and your provider to help you make the best choice. You have a right to choose not to participate in one of these settings or treatments.

## Getting a Second Medical Opinion

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If you disagree with your provider's treatment recommendations, you may be able to get a second medical opinion. Contact your provider or our Customer Service Department at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

## Completing an Advance Directive, Living Will, or Power of Attorney for Health Care

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You have the right to give instructions about what you want done if you are not able to make decisions for yourself. Sometimes people become unable to make health care decisions for themselves due to accidents or serious illness. You have the right to say what you want to happen in these situations. This means you can develop an "advance directive."

There are different types of advance directives and names for them. Documents called "living will" and "power of attorney for health care" are examples.

You decide whether you want an advance directive. Your providers can explain how to create and use an advance directive. But they cannot force you to have one or treat you differently if you don't have one.

Contact your provider if you want to know more about advance directives.

You can also find advance directive forms on the Wisconsin Department of Health Services website at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms/advdirectives>.

You have the right to file a grievance with the DHS Division of Quality Assurance if your advance directive, living will, or power of attorney wishes are not followed. See more about Contesting an Advance Directive, Living Will, Or Power of Attorney for Health Care on page 31.



**You can find  
Advance Directive  
forms online**

## New Treatments and Services

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MHS Health has a process for reviewing new types of services and treatments. As part of the review process, MHS Health:

- Reviews scientific studies and standards of care to make sure new treatments or services are safe and helpful.
- Looks at whether the government has approved the treatment or service.

## New Technology

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MHS Health has a clinical policy committee made up of providers. They evaluate new technologies and new uses for technology. This is done as a review for possible inclusion in your benefit plan. We know it is important to stay up to date and we want our members to have access to safe and effective care.

## Other Insurance

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Tell your providers if you have other insurance in addition to BadgerCare Plus or Medicaid SSI. Your providers must bill your other insurance before billing MHS Health. If your MHS Health provider does not accept your other insurance, call the HMO Enrollment Specialist at [1-800-291-2002](tel:1-800-291-2002) (TTY: [711](tel:711)). They can tell you how to use both insurance plans.

## If You Move

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MHS Health provide services in all 72 Wisconsin counties. That means you are covered wherever you move in Wisconsin. If you are planning to move but stay within your county, contact your county or tribal agency. If you move to a different county, you must also contact the county or tribal agency in your new county to update your eligibility for BadgerCare Plus or Medicaid SSI.

If you move out of MHS Health's service area, call the Wisconsin HMO Enrollment Specialist at [1-800-291-2002](tel:1-800-291-2002). They will help you choose a new HMO that serves your new area.

## Changes in Your Medicaid Coverage

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If you have moved from ForwardHealth or a BadgerCare Plus or Medicaid SSI HMO to a new BadgerCare Plus or Medicaid SSI HMO, then you have the right to:

- Continue to see your current providers and access your current services for up to 90 days. Please call your new HMO when you enroll to let them know who your provider is. If this provider is still not in the HMO network after 90 days, you will choose a new provider that is in the HMO network.
- Get services that you need to avoid serious health risk or hospitalization.

Call MHS Health Customer Service at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) for information about changes in your coverage.

## HMO Exemptions

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MHS Health is a health maintenance organization, or HMO. HMOs are insurance companies that offer services from select providers.

Generally, you must enroll in an HMO to get health care benefits through BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid SSI. An HMO exemption means you don't have to join an HMO to get your BadgerCare Plus or Medicaid SSI benefits. Most exemptions are granted for only a short period of time. It's usually to allow you to complete a course of treatment before you are enrolled in an HMO. If you think you need an exemption from HMO enrollment, call the HMO Enrollment Specialist at [1-800-291-2002](tel:1-800-291-2002) for more information.

# Filing a Grievance or Appeal

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## Grievances

### ***What is a grievance?***

You have a right to file a grievance if you are unhappy with our plan or providers. A grievance is any complaint about MHS Health or a network provider that is not related to a decision MHS Health made about your health care services. You might file a grievance about things like the quality of services or care, rudeness from a provider or an employee, and not respecting your rights as a member.

### ***Who can file a grievance?***

You can file a grievance. An authorized representative, a legal decision maker, or a provider can also file a grievance for you. We will contact you for your permission if an authorized representative or provider files a grievance for you.

### ***When can I file a grievance?***

You (or your representative) can file a grievance at any time.

### ***How do I file a grievance with MHS Health?***

Contact a MHS Health Member Advocate if you have a grievance.

Write to: MHS Health Wisconsin Grievances                      Or call: [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711))  
Attention: Advocates  
801 S. 60th Street, Suite 200  
West Allis, WI 53214

If you file a grievance with MHS Health, you will have the opportunity to appear in-person in front of MHS Health's Grievance and Appeal Committee. MHS Health will have 30 days from the date the grievance is received to give you a decision resolving the grievance.

### ***Who can help me file a grievance?***

MHS Health's Member Advocate can work with you to solve the problem or help you file a grievance.

If you want to talk to someone outside MHS Health about the problem, you can call the Wisconsin HMO Ombuds Program at [1-800-760-0001](tel:1-800-760-0001). The Ombuds Program may be able to help you solve the problem or write a formal grievance to MHS Health. If you are enrolled in a Medicaid SSI Program, you can also call the SSI External Advocate at [1-800-928-8778](tel:1-800-928-8778) for help with filing a grievance.

### ***What if I disagree with MHS Health's response?***

If you don't agree with MHS Health's response to your grievance, you can request a review of your grievance with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS).

Write to: BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid SSI                      Or call: [1-800-760-0001](tel:1-800-760-0001) (TTY: [711](tel:711))  
HMO Ombuds  
P.O. Box 6470  
Madison, WI 53716-0470

***Will I be treated differently if I file a grievance?***

You will not be treated differently from other members because you file a complaint or grievance. Your health care and benefits will not be affected.

**Appeals*****What is an appeal?***

You have a right to request an appeal if you are unhappy with a decision made by MHS Health. An appeal is a request for MHS Health to review a decision that affects your services. These decisions are called adverse benefit determinations.

An adverse benefit determination is any of the following:

- MHS Health plans to stop, suspend, or reduce a service you are currently getting.
- MHS Health decides to deny a service you asked for.
- MHS Health decides not to pay for a service.
- MHS Health asks you to pay an amount that you don't believe you owe.
- MHS Health decides to deny your request to get a service from a non-network provider when you live in a rural area with only one HMO.
- MHS Health does not arrange or provide services in a timely manner.
- MHS Health does not meet the required timeframes to resolve your grievance or appeal.

MHS Health will send you a letter if you have received an adverse benefit determination.

***Who can file an appeal?***

You can request an appeal. An authorized representative, a legal decision maker, or a provider can also file an appeal for you. We will contact you for your permission if an authorized representative or provider requests an appeal for you.

***When can I file an appeal?***

You (or your representative) must request an appeal within 60 days of the date on the letter you get describing the adverse benefit determination.

***How do I file an appeal with MHS Health?***

If you would like to appeal an adverse benefit determination, contact an MHS Health Member Advocate.

Write to: MHS Health Wisconsin Appeals      Or call: [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711))  
Attention: Advocate Department  
801 S. 60th Street, Suite 200  
West Allis, WI 53214

If you request an appeal with MHS Health, you will have the opportunity to appeal in-person in front of MHS Health's Grievance and Appeal Committee. Once your appeal is requested, MHS Health will have 30 calendar days to give you a decision.



***What if I can't wait 30 days for a decision?***

If you or your provider think that waiting 30 days could seriously harm your health or ability to perform your daily activities, you can request a fast appeal. If MHS Health agrees that you need a fast appeal, you will get a decision within 72 hours.

***Who can help me request an appeal?***

If you need help writing a request for an appeal, call a MHS Health Member Advocate at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180).

If you want to speak with someone outside MHS Health, you can call the BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid SSI Ombuds at [1-800-760-0001](tel:1-800-760-0001). If you are enrolled in a Medicaid SSI Program, you can also call the SSI External Advocate at [1-800-708-3034](tel:1-800-708-3034) (TTY: [711](tel:711)) for help with your appeal.

***Can I continue to get the service during my appeal?***

If MHS Health decides to stop, suspend, or reduce a service you are currently getting, you have the right to ask to keep getting your service during your appeal. You'll have to mail, fax, or email your request within a certain timeframe, whichever is later:

- On or before the date MHS Health plans to stop or reduce your service.
- Within 10 days of getting notice that your service will be reduced.

If MHS Health's decision about your appeal is not in your favor, you might have to pay MHS Health back for the service you got during the appeal process.

***Will I be treated differently if I request an appeal?***

You will not be treated differently from other members because you request an appeal. The quality of your health care and other benefits will not be affected.

***What if I disagree with MHS Health's decision about my appeal?***

You can request a fair hearing with the Wisconsin Division of Hearing and Appeals if you disagree with MHS Health's decision about your appeal. Learn more about fair hearings below.

**Fair Hearings*****What is a fair hearing?***

A fair hearing is a review of MHS Health's decision on your appeal by an Administrative Law Judge in the county where you live. You must appeal to MHS Health first before requesting a fair hearing.

***When can I request a fair hearing?***

You must request a fair hearing within 90 days of the date you get MHS Health's written decision about your appeal.

***How do I request a fair hearing?***

If you want a fair hearing, write to:

Department of Administration  
Division of Hearings and Appeals  
P.O. Box 7875  
Madison, WI 53707-7875

You have the right to be represented at the hearing, and you can bring a friend for support. If you need a special arrangement for a disability or for language translation, please call [1-608-266-7709](tel:1-608-266-7709) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

***Who can help me request a fair hearing?***

If you need help writing a request for a fair hearing, please call the BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid SSI Ombuds at [1-800-760-0001](tel:1-800-760-0001). If you are enrolled in a Medicaid SSI Program, you can also call the SSI External Advocate at [1-800-708-3034](tel:1-800-708-3034) (TTY: [711](tel:711)) for help.

***Can I keep getting the service during my fair hearing?***

If MHS Health decides to stop, suspend, or reduce a service you are currently getting, you have the right to ask to keep getting your service during your MHS Health appeal and fair hearing. You'll have to request that the service continue during your fair hearing, even if you already requested to continue the service during your MHS Health appeal. You'll have to mail, fax, or email your request within a certain timeframe, whichever is later:

- On or before the date MHS Health plans to stop or reduce your service.
- Within 10 days of getting notice that your service will be reduced.

If the administrative law judge's decision is not in your favor, you might have to pay MHS Health back for the service you got during the appeal process.

***Will I be treated differently if I request a fair hearing?***

You will not be treated differently from other members because you request a fair hearing. The quality of your health care and other benefits will not be affected.

## Your Rights

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**1. You have a right to get information in a way that works for you. This includes:**

- Your right to have an interpreter with you during any BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI covered service.
- Your right to get this member handbook in another language or format.

**2. You have a right to be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness and with consideration for privacy. This includes:**

- Your right to be free from discrimination. MHS Health must obey laws that protect you from discrimination and unfair treatment. MHS Health provides covered services to all eligible members regardless of the following:
  - Age
  - Color
  - Disability
  - National origin
  - Race
  - Sex
  - Religion
  - Sexual orientation
  - Gender identity
- All medically necessary, covered services are available and will be provided in the same manner to all members. All persons or organizations connected with MHS Health that refer or recommend members for services shall do so in the same manner for all members.
- Your right to be free from any form of restraint or seclusion used to coerce, discipline, be convenient, or retaliate. This means you have the right to be free from being restrained or

forced to be alone to make you behave in a certain way, to punish you, or because someone finds it useful.

- Your right to privacy. MHS Health must follow laws protecting the privacy of your personal and health information. See MHS Health's Notice of Privacy Practices for more information.

**3. You have the right to get health care services as provided for in federal and state law, including:**

- Your right to have covered services be available and accessible to you when you need them. When medically appropriate, services must be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week

**4. You have a right to make decisions about your health care. This includes:**

- Your right to get information about treatment options, regardless of cost or benefit coverage.
- Your right to accept or refuse medical or surgical treatment and participate in making decisions about your care.
- Your right to plan and direct the types of health care you may get in the future if you become unable to express your wishes. You can make these decisions by completing an advance directive, living will, or power of attorney for health care. See more information on page 24, Completing an Advance Directive, Living Will, Or Power of Attorney for Health Care.
- Your right to a second opinion if you disagree with your provider's treatment recommendation. Call Customer Service at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) for more information about how to get a second opinion.

**5. You have a right to know about our providers and any physician incentive plans MHS Health uses.**

This includes:

- Your right to ask if MHS Health has special financial arrangements (physician incentive plans) with our physicians that can affect the use of referrals and other services you might need. To get this information, call our Customer Service department at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) and request information about our physician payment arrangements.
- Your right to request information about MHS Health providers, including the provider's education, board certification, and recertification. To get this information, call our Customer Service department at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

**6. You have a right to ask for copies of your medical records from your provider.**

- You may correct inaccurate information in your medical records if your provider agrees to the correction.
- Call [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) for assistance with requesting a copy or change to your medical records. Please note that you may have to pay to copy your medical records.

**7. You have a right to be informed about any Medicaid covered benefits that are not available through the MHS Health because of moral or religious objection. This includes:**

- Your right to be informed of how to access these services through ForwardHealth using your ForwardHealth card.
- Your right to disenroll from MHS Health if MHS Health does not cover a service you want because of moral or religious objections.

- 8. You have a right to file a complaint, grievance, or appeal if you are dissatisfied with your care or services. This includes:**
- Your right to request a fair hearing if you are dissatisfied with MHS Health’s decision about your appeal or if MHS Health does not respond to your appeal in a timely manner.
  - Your right to request a Department of Health Services grievance review if you are unhappy with MHS Health’s decision about your grievance or if MHS Health does not respond to your grievance in a timely manner.
  - For more information on how to file a grievance, appeal, or fair hearing, see page 26, Filing a Grievance or Appeal.
- 9. You have the right to receive information about MHS Health, its services, its practitioners, providers, and member rights and responsibilities. This includes:**
- Your right to know about any big changes with MHS Health at least 30 days before the effective date of the change.
- 10. You have a right to be free to exercise your rights without negative treatment by MHS Health and its network providers. This includes:**
- Your right to make recommendations about MHS Health Wisconsin’s Member Rights and Responsibilities Policy.

### **Knowing About Physician Incentive Plan**

You have the right to ask if we have special financial arrangements with our physicians that can affect the use of referrals and other services you might need. To get this information, call our Customer Service Department at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) and request information about our physician payment arrangements.

### **Knowing Provider Credentials**

You have the right to information about our providers including the provider’s education, board certification, and recertification. To get this information, call our Customer Service Department at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

### **Contesting an Advance Directive, Living Will, Or Power of Attorney for Health Care**

You have the right to file a grievance with the DHS Division of Quality Assurance if your advance directive, living will, or power of attorney wishes are not followed. You can get help filing a grievance by calling the DHS Division of Quality Assurance at [1-800-642-6552](tel:1-800-642-6552) (TTY: [711](tel:711)). For more information about these forms, contact your provider or see page 24 of this handbook.



MHS Health offers many helpful and secure tools to assist you. You also have access to your healthcare information through our Secure Member Portal. Visit [mhswi.com/login](https://mhswi.com/login). Creating an account is free and easy. On the portal you can:

1. Change your primary care provider.
2. Update your personal information.
3. Send us a message.

## Your Responsibilities

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- You have a responsibility to provide the information that MHS Health and its providers need to provide care.
- You have a responsibility to let MHS Health know how best to contact and communicate with you. You have a responsibility to respond to communications from MHS Health.
- You have a responsibility to follow plans and instructions for care that you have agreed to with your providers.
- You have a responsibility to understand your health problems and participate in creating treatment goals with your providers.

## Ending Your Membership in MHS Health

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You may switch HMOs for any reason during your first 90 days of enrollment in MHS Health. After your first 90 days, you will be “locked in” to enrollment in MHS Health for the next nine months. You will only be able to switch HMOs once this “lock-in” period has ended unless your reason for ending your membership in MHS Health is one of the reasons described below:

- You have the right to switch HMOs, without cause, if the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) imposes sanctions or temporary conditions on MHS Health.
- You have the right to end your membership with MHS Health at any time if:
  - You move out of MHS Health’s service area.
  - MHS Health does not, for moral or religious objections, cover a service you want.
  - You need one or more services performed at the same time and you can’t get them all within the provider network. This applies if your provider determines that getting the services separately could put you at unnecessary risk.
  - Other reasons, including poor quality of care, lack of access to covered services, or lack of access to providers experienced in dealing with your care needs.

If you choose to switch HMOs or completely disenroll from the BadgerCare Plus or Medicaid SSI programs, you must continue to get health care services through MHS Health until your membership ends.

For more information about how to switch HMOs or to disenroll from BadgerCare Plus and/or Medicaid SSI completely, contact the HMO Enrollment Specialist at [1-800-291-2002](tel:1-800-291-2002) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

## Your Civil Rights

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MHS Health provides covered services to all eligible members regardless of the following:

- |                   |                   |                      |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| • Age             | • Ethnicity       | • Sexual orientation |
| • Color           | • Race            | • Religion           |
| • Disability      | • Sex             | • Marital status     |
| • National origin | • Gender identity |                      |

All medically necessary covered services are available and will be provided in the same manner to all members. All persons or organizations connected with MHS Health that refer or recommend members for services shall do so in the same manner for all members.

## Care Management (Coordination)

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As a member of MHS Health you have access to a care management team. Care management is a free service for MHS Health members. It will help you identify and meet your health and wellness goals. The care management team will also connect you with providers, community services, and social supports.

When you sign up for our plan, you will get an outreach letter or call to talk about your unique health needs. It is important to respond so we know how to best meet your needs. You can also call the Care Management team directly at [1-844-545-6326](tel:1-844-545-6326) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).

Your care manager can also help you transition from the hospital or other care settings to your home. Call your care manager at [1-844-545-6326](tel:1-844-545-6326) for help if you are hospitalized.

Care management is part of your health benefits and is provided to you at no cost. MHS Health pays for this service. You may be selected for these services in a variety of ways:

- Your provider may enroll you.
- We may call you after reviewing your medical information.
- You or your caregiver may call 1-888-713-6180 and ask for help.

Your care manager will help you work toward better health using the following methods:

- Frequent contact with members, family, and health providers.
- Member assessment and evaluation.
- Care planning and setting short- and long-term goals.
- Coordination of services to provide necessary and efficient care.

A care manager is a resource person:

- To answer questions about treatment
- To help you meet your health needs by using knowledge of the healthcare system.
- To help you consider your options and choices.
- To work with you to develop a plan of care for home health services, if needed. These might include such things as nursing services, medical equipment, and physical therapies.
- To help with referrals for treatment at healthcare facilities.
- To act as your link to MHS Health.
- To identify covered benefits and help with referrals to specialists.
- To help to plan your transition out of the hospital. This helps reduce the stress of dealing with an often complex healthcare system.

## Confidentiality

The information obtained through our care management process is confidential. It is shared only when needed to plan your care and to properly pay your claims.

## Ethics

MHS Health provides care management services in an ethical manner based on the Commission for Care management Certification's Statement on Ethics and Standards of Practice. Upon your request, information on MHS Health policies and standards regarding its ethical framework for care management, are available to staff, members, consumers, contractors, and clients.

## Health problems

If you have a serious condition and need extra help, please call MHS Health. Together we can decide if you need a care management program at no cost to you.

## Transition From Pediatric to Adult Care

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We can help you or your child transition from pediatric care to adult care. We will work with the pediatric provider to make sure the change goes smoothly. Members may continue to see their pediatric provider after they are adults, but it is important to move to a PCP that treats adults eventually. If you need help making this shift, just call us at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)) and ask for an advocate. The advocates can also help with transitioning from Birth-to-Three programs.

## Right to Medical Records

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You have the right to ask for copies of your medical records from your provider(s). We can help you get copies of these records. Please call [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) for help. Please note that you may have to pay to copy your medical records. You may correct inaccurate information in your medical records if your provider agrees to the correction.

## Mobile Access to Your Health Records

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On July 1, 2021, a new federal rule named the Interoperability and Patient Access Rule (CMS 9115 F) made it easier for members to get their health records when they need it most. You now have full access to your health records\* on your mobile device. This lets you manage your health better and know what resources are open to you. Learn more about [Interoperability and Patient Access](#) on our website.

*\*You can get information for dates of service on or after January 1, 2016.*

## Medical Decisions

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Decisions MHS Health makes about the services you receive are based on the care you need and on your coverage. MHS Health does not do or approve of the following:

- We do not reward providers for reducing care or services.



- We do not reward anyone for issuing denials of service.
- We do not provide incentives for our decision-makers that result in underuse of services.

## Medical Terminology Glossary

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### **Advance Directive**

A document expressing a person's wishes about critical care when he or she is unable to decide for himself or herself. A Living Will and a Power of Attorney for Healthcare are examples of Advance Directives.

### **Appeal**

A request for your managed care organization to review a decision that denied, reduced, or suspended a service. For example, if your care team refuses to pay for a service or ends a service, you have the right to file an appeal.

### **Copayment or copay**

A fixed amount (\$5, for example) you pay for a covered health care service.

### **Durable medical equipment**

Equipment for everyday or extended use that you may need because of a medical issue or disability. Durable medical equipment may include oxygen equipment, wheelchairs, or walkers.

### **Emergency medical condition**

An illness, injury, symptom, or condition so serious that a reasonable person would seek care right away to avoid severe harm.

### **Emergency medical transportation**

Transportation by ambulance for an emergency medical condition.

### **Emergency room care**

Health care services you get in an emergency room.

### **Emergency services**

Evaluation or treatment of an emergency medical condition.

### **Excluded services**

Services your managed care organization or Medicaid do not cover.

### **Habilitation services**

Health and long-term care services that help you keep, learn, or improve skills and functioning for daily living.

### **Health insurance**

A contract that requires a health insurer to pay some or all your health care costs.

**Home health services (also known as home health care)**

Health and long-term care services you receive at home, where you work, or in the community. Examples of home health services include nursing, medical supplies and equipment, and home health aide services.

**Hospice care services**

Services to provide comfort and support for people in the last stages of a terminal illness. These services include providing supportive care to the person's family and friends.

**Hospitalization**

Care in a hospital that requires admission as an inpatient and usually requires an overnight stay.

**Hospital outpatient care**

Care in a hospital or outpatient department that usually doesn't require admission to the hospital.

**Medically necessary**

Health and long-term care services or supplies needed to diagnose or treat an illness, injury, condition, disease, or its symptoms and that meet accepted standards.

**Network**

The facilities, providers, and suppliers your managed care organization has contracted with to provide health and long-term care services.

**Non-emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)**

NEMT connects members with free rides on public buses, specialized medical vehicles, or other types of vehicles depending on their needs.

**Non-network provider (also known as non-participating provider)**

A provider who does not have a contract with your managed care organization to provide services to you.

**Nurse Midwife**

A nurse skilled in helping women with prenatal care and in childbirth, especially at home or in another non-hospital setting.

**Physician services**

Health care services a licensed medical physician (M.D. or Medical Doctor) provides or coordinates. Services may be provided in a physician's office, hospital, nursing home, or in your home.

**Plan**

An individual or group health plan that provides or pays the cost of your medical care.

**Prior authorization (also known as pre-authorization)**

Written approval that may be required from your managed care organization or the State of Wisconsin before you get a service or fill a prescription.

**Network Provider (also known as participating provider or provider)**

A provider who has a contract with your managed care organization to provide services to you.

**Premium**

The amount you pay to Medicare, an insurance company, or a health care plan every month for health or prescription drug coverage.

**Prescription drug coverage**

The payment of some or all of your costs by a health insurance plan for prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, and medical supplies.

**Prescription drugs**

Drugs and medications that, by law, require a prescription.

**Primary care physician**

The physician (M.D. Medical Doctor or D.O. Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine) who directly provides or coordinates your health care services.

**Primary care provider**

A primary care physician (a medical doctor), nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or other licensed provider who provides, coordinates, or helps you access health care services.

**Provider**

A person who is trained and licensed to give health care.

**Rehabilitation services**

Services that help you keep, get back, or improve functioning for daily living due to an illness, injury, or disability.

**Skilled nursing (also known as skilled nursing care)**

Skilled nursing services your physician orders and that are provided by an advanced practice nurse, registered nurse (RN), or a licensed practical nurse (LPN) who is supervised by an RN.

**Specialist**

A physician who focuses on a specific area of medicine or surgery.

**Urgent care or urgent service needs**

Care for an illness, injury, or condition that requires medical care right away but not so severe it requires emergency room care.

## Notice of Non-Discrimination

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**MHS Health Wisconsin** complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), per Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act. MHS Health Wisconsin does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity).

## MHS Health Wisconsin

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
  - Qualified sign language interpreters.
  - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats), including the Member Handbook.
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
  - Qualified interpreters.
  - Information written in other languages.
- **If you need these services, contact MHS Health Wisconsin at [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711)).**  
For more information on interpretation and translation services, go to page 2 of this handbook.

Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act also requires all healthcare facilities to make it easy to file a complaint. MHS Health Wisconsin has a person called a Civil Rights Coordinator who makes sure all members are treated fairly and can help you file a grievance.

If you believe that MHS Health Wisconsin has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), you can file a grievance with the Civil Rights Coordinator. Grievances can be completed in person or by mail, fax, or email.

Mail to: Civil Rights Coordinator  
PO Box 31384, Tampa, FL 33631  
Call: [1-855-681-4672](tel:1-855-681-4672) (TTY: [711](tel:711))  
Fax: 1-866-388-1769  
Email: [CivilRightsCoordinator@centene.com](mailto:CivilRightsCoordinator@centene.com)

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Room 509F, HHH Building  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
[1-800-368-1019](tel:1-800-368-1019), [1-800-537-7697](tel:1-800-537-7697) (TDD)  
Complaint forms are available  
at <https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/complaints/index.html>

*This notice is available at <https://www.mhswi.com/non-discrimination-notice.html>*

## Notice of Privacy Practices

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THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

NOTE: Interpreter and translation services are provided free of charge to you. Please visit our [Language and Diversity Resources](#) page for more information.

### **Covered Entity's Duties**

MHS Health Wisconsin is a Covered Entity as defined and regulated under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). MHS Health Wisconsin is required by law to maintain the privacy of your protected health information (PHI), provide you with this Notice of our legal duties and privacy practices related to your PHI, abide by the terms of the Notice that is currently in affect, and notify you in the event of a breach of your unsecured PHI.

This Notice describes how we may use and disclose your PHI. It also describes your rights to access, amend and manage your PHI and how to exercise those rights. All other uses and disclosures of your PHI not described in this Notice will be made only with your written authorization.

MHS Health Wisconsin reserves the right to change this Notice. We reserve the right to make the revised or changed Notice effective for your PHI we already have as well as any of your PHI we receive in the future. MHS Health Wisconsin will promptly revise and distribute this Notice whenever there is a material change to the following:

- The Uses or Disclosures
- Your rights
- Our legal duties
- Other privacy practices stated in the notice

We will make any revised Notices available on our website or through a separate mailing.

### **Internal Protections of Oral, Written and Electronic Protected Health Information (PHI)**

MHS Health Wisconsin protects your PHI. We are also committed in keeping your race, ethnicity, and language (REL), and sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) information confidential. We have privacy and security processes to help.

These are some of the ways we protect your PHI:

- We train our staff to follow our privacy and security processes.
- We require our business associates to follow privacy and security processes.
- We keep our offices secure.
- We talk about your PHI only for a business reason with people who need to know.
- We keep your PHI secure when we send it or store it electronically.
- We use technology to keep the wrong people from accessing your PHI.

### **Permissible Uses and Disclosures of Your Protected Health Information (PHI)**

The following is a list of how we may use or disclose your PHI without your permission or authorization:

**Treatment** - We may use or disclose your PHI to a physician or other health care provider providing treatment to you, to coordinate your treatment among providers, or to assist us in making prior authorization decisions related to your benefits

**Payment** - We may use and disclose your PHI to make benefit payments for the health care services provided to you. We may disclose your PHI to another health plan, to a health care provider, or other entity subject to the federal Privacy Rules for their payment purposes. Payment activities may include processing claims, determining eligibility or coverage for claims, and reviewing services for medical necessity

**Health Care Operations** - We may use and disclose your PHI to perform our healthcare operations. These activities may include providing customer service, responding to complaints and appeals, and providing care management and care coordination.

In our healthcare operations, we may disclose PHI to business associates. We will have written agreements to protect the privacy of your PHI with these associates. We may disclose your PHI to another entity that is subject to the federal Privacy Rules. The entity must also have a relationship with you for its healthcare operations. This includes the following

- Quality assessment and improvement activities.
- Reviewing the competence or qualifications of healthcare professional.
- Care management and care coordination.
- Detecting or preventing healthcare fraud and abuse.

Your race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, and gender identity are protected by the health plan's systems and laws. This means information you provide is private and secure. We can only share this information with health care providers. It will not be shared with others without your permission or authorization. We use this information to help improve the quality of your care and services. This information helps us to:

- Better understand your healthcare needs.
- Know your language preference when seeing healthcare providers.
- Providing healthcare information to meet your care needs.
- Offer programs to help you be your healthiest.

This information is not used for underwriting purposes or to make decisions about whether you are able to receive coverage or services.

**Group Health Plan/Plan Sponsor Disclosures** - We may disclose your protected health information to a sponsor of the group health plan, such as an employer or other entity that is providing a health care program to you, if the sponsor has agreed to certain restrictions on how it will use or disclose the protected health information (such as agreeing not to use the protected health information for employment-related actions or decisions).

#### **Other Permitted or Required Disclosures of Your Protected Health Information (PHI)**

**Fundraising Activities** – We may use or disclose your PHI for fundraising activities, such as raising money for a charitable foundation or similar entity to help finance their activities. If we do contact you

for fundraising activities, we will give you the opportunity to opt-out, or stop, receiving such communications in the future.

***Underwriting Purposes*** – We may use or disclose your PHI for underwriting purposes, such as to make a determination about a coverage application or request. If we do use or disclose your PHI for underwriting purposes, we are prohibited from using or disclosing your PHI that is genetic information in the underwriting process.

***Appointment Reminders/Treatment Alternatives*** – We may use and disclose your PHI to remind you of an appointment for treatment and medical care with us or to provide you with information regarding treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services, such as information on how to stop smoking or lose weight.

***As Required by Law*** – If federal, state, and/or local law requires a use or disclosure of your PHI, we may use or disclose your PHI information to the extent that the use or disclosure complies with such law and is limited to the requirements of such law. If two or more laws or regulations governing the same use or disclosure conflict, we will comply with the more restrictive laws or regulations.

***Public Health Activities*** – We may disclose your PHI to a public health authority for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease, injury, or disability. We may disclose your PHI to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ensure the quality, safety or effectiveness of products or services under the jurisdiction of the FDA.

***Victims of Abuse and Neglect*** – We may disclose your PHI to a local, state, or federal government authority, including social services or a protective services agency authorized by law to receive such reports if we have a reasonable belief of abuse, neglect or domestic violence.

***Judicial and Administrative Proceedings*** – We may disclose your PHI in response to an administrative or court order. We may also be required to disclose your PHI to respond to a subpoena, discovery request, or other similar requests.

***Law Enforcement*** – We may disclose your relevant PHI to law enforcement when required to do so for the purposes of responding to a crime.

***Coroners, Medical Examiners and Funeral Directors*** – We may disclose your PHI to a coroner or medical examiner. This may be necessary, for example, to determine a cause of death. We may also disclose your PHI to funeral directors, as necessary, to carry out their duties.

***Organ, Eye and Tissue Donation*** – We may disclose your PHI to organ procurement organizations. We may also disclose your PHI to those who work in procurement, banking or transplantation of cadaveric organs, eyes, and tissues.

***Threats to Health and Safety*** – We may use or disclose your PHI if we believe, in good faith, that the use or disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious or imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public.

***Specialized Government Functions*** – If you are a member of U.S. Armed Forces, we may disclose your PHI as required by military command authorities. We may also disclose your PHI to authorized federal officials for national security concerns, intelligence activities, The Department of State for medical



suitability determinations, the protection of the President, and other authorized persons as may be required by law.

**Workers' Compensation** – We may disclose your PHI to comply with laws relating to workers' compensation or other similar programs, established by law, that provide benefits for work-related injuries or illness without regard to fault.

**Emergency Situations** – We may disclose your PHI in an emergency situation, or if you are incapacitated or not present, to a family member, close personal friend, authorized disaster relief agency, or any other person previously identified by you. We will use professional judgment and experience to determine if the disclosure is in your best interest. If the disclosure is in your best interest, we will only disclose the PHI that is directly relevant to the person's involvement in your care.

**Inmates** – If you are an inmate of a correctional institution or under the custody of a law enforcement official, we may release your PHI to the correctional institution or law enforcement official, where such information is necessary for the institution to provide you with health care; to protect your health or safety; or the health or safety of others; or for the safety and security of the correctional institution.

**Research** – Under certain circumstances, we may disclose your PHI to researchers when their clinical research study has been approved and where certain safeguards are in place to ensure the privacy and protection of your PHI.

### **Uses and Disclosures of Your Protected Health Information (PHI) That Require Your Written Authorization**

We are required to obtain your written authorization to use or disclose your PHI, with limited exceptions, for the following reasons:

**Sale of PHI** – We will request your written authorization before we make any disclosure that is deemed a sale of your PHI, meaning that we are receiving compensation for disclosing the PHI in this manner.

**Marketing** – We will request your written authorization to use or disclose your PHI for marketing purposes with limited exceptions, such as when we have face-to-face marketing communications with you or when we provide promotional gifts of nominal value.

**Psychotherapy Notes** – We will request your written authorization to use or disclose any of your psychotherapy notes that we may have on file with limited exception, such as for certain treatment, payment or healthcare operation functions.

You have the right to revoke your authorization, in writing at any time except to the extent that we have already used or disclosed your PHI based on that initial authorization.

### **Individuals Rights**

The following are your rights concerning your protected health information (PHI). If you would like to use any of the following rights, please contact us using the information at the end of this Notice.

**Right to Request Restrictions** - You have the right to request restrictions on the use and disclosure of your PHI for treatment, payment, or healthcare operations, as well as disclosures to persons involved in your care or payment of your care, such as family members or close friends. Your request should state

the restrictions you are requesting and state to whom the restrictions apply. We are not required to agree to this request. If we agree, we will comply with your restriction request unless the information is needed to provide you with emergency treatment. However, we will restrict the use or disclosure of PHI for payment or health care operations to a health plan when you have paid for the service or item out of pocket in full.

***Right to Request Confidential Communications*** - You have the right to request that we communicate with you about your PHI by alternative means or to alternative locations. This right only applies if the information could endanger you if it is not communicated by the alternative means or to the alternative location you want. You do not have to explain the reason for your request, but you must state that the information could endanger you if the communication means or location is not changed. We must accommodate your request if it is reasonable and specifies the alternative means or location where you PHI should be delivered.

***Right to Access and Receive a Copy of your PHI*** - You have the right, with limited exceptions, to look at or get copies of your PHI contained in a designated record set. You may request that we provide copies in a format other than photocopies. We will use the format you request unless we cannot practicably do so. You must make a request in writing to obtain access to your PHI. If we deny your request, we will provide you a written explanation and will tell you if the reasons for the denial can be reviewed. We will also tell you how to ask for such a review or if the denial cannot be reviewed.

***Right to Amend your PHI*** - You have the right to request that we amend, or change, your PHI if you believe it contains incorrect information. Your request must be in writing, and it must explain why the information should be amended. We may deny your request for certain reasons, for example if we did not create the information you want amended and the creator of the PHI is able to perform the amendment. If we deny your request, we will provide you a written explanation. You may respond with a statement that you disagree with our decision and we will attach your statement to the PHI you request that we amend. If we accept your request to amend the information, we will make reasonable efforts to inform others, including people you name, of the amendment and to include the changes in any future disclosures of that information.

***Right to Receive an Accounting of Disclosures*** - You have the right to receive a list of instances within the last 6-year period in which we or our business associates disclosed your PHI. This does not apply to disclosure for purposes of treatment, payment, health care operations, or disclosures you authorized and certain other activities. If you request this accounting more than once in a 12-month period, we may charge you a reasonable, cost-based fee for responding to these additional requests. We will provide you with more information on our fees at the time of your request.

***Right to File a Complaint*** - If you feel your privacy rights have been violated or that we have violated our own privacy practices, you can file a complaint with us in writing or by phone using the contact information at the end of this Notice.

You can also file a complaint with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights.

Send a letter to:  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Or call: [1-800-368-1019](tel:1-800-368-1019) (TTY: [1-800-537-7697](tel:1-800-537-7697))

[Visit the HHS website to learn more about how to file a complaint.](#)

**MHS HEALTH WISCONSIN WILL NOT TAKE ANY ACTION AGAINST YOU FOR FILING A COMPLAINT.**

***Right to Receive a Copy of this Notice*** - You may request a copy of our Notice at any time by using the contact information listed at the end of the Notice. If you receive this Notice on our web site or by electronic mail (e-mail), you are also entitled to request a paper copy of the Notice.

### **Contact Information**

**Questions about this Notice:** If you have any questions about this notice, our privacy practices related to your PHI or how to exercise your rights you can contact us in writing or by phone by using the contact information listed.

Mail to:  
MHS Health Wisconsin  
Attention: Privacy Official  
801 S. 60th Street, Suite 200  
West Allis, WI 53214

Or call: [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711))

## Fraud and Abuse

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If you suspect fraud or abuse of the Medicaid program, report it at [www.reportfraud.wisconsin.gov](http://www.reportfraud.wisconsin.gov).

## Contact Information

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Mail to: MHS Health Wisconsin  
Suite 200  
801 S. 60th Street  
West Allis, WI 53214

Call: [1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711))  
*Please see page 6 for other important phone numbers at MHS Health Wisconsin.*

Visit: [mhswi.com](http://mhswi.com)



MHS Health Wisconsin  
801 S. 60th Street, Suite 200  
West Allis, WI 53214  
[1-888-713-6180](tel:1-888-713-6180) (TTY: [711](tel:711))  
[www.mhswi.com](http://www.mhswi.com)

*April 2025*

**Connect with us on social media.**

