



NEWS RELEASE

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Wellmark recognizes four Iowa facilities for demonstrating quality cardiac care

DES MOINES, Iowa (Jan. 3, 2023) — Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield announced that select health care facilities in Iowa have received Blue Distinction Centers+ for Cardiac Care designations, as part of the [Blue Distinction Specialty Care program](#). Blue Distinction Centers are nationally designated providers that have proven to deliver quality care with safe practices that lead to better health outcomes for patients.

In the United States, one person dies every 34 seconds from a cardiovascular disease, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Blue Distinction Centers for Cardiac Care empower patients with the information they need to choose quality, in-network cardiac care. To receive a Blue Distinction Center for Cardiac Care designation, health care facilities must demonstrate expertise in delivering safe and effective cardiac care for:

- Percutaneous coronary interventions
- Coronary artery bypass graft
- Aortic valve replacement
- Mitral valve replacement and repair

Health care facilities recognized as Blue Distinction Centers are assessed using [quality information supplied by facilities and third-party data registries](#), which were developed with input from the medical community and leading accreditation and quality organizations. Blue Distinction Centers+ have also proven to provide more cost-efficient care and are evaluated using cost measures derived from Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) companies' medical claims. Only those health care facilities that first meet the quality measures for Blue Distinction Centers are considered for designation as a Blue Distinction Center+.

The following health care facilities have received Blue Distinction Centers+ for Cardiac Care designations:

- **MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center**
- **MercyOne Dubuque Medical Center**
- **UnityPoint Health – Allen Hospital**
- **University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics**

BCBS companies across the nation have recognized hundreds of health care facilities under the Blue Distinction Centers for Cardiac Care program for providing quality care for patients and have lower in-hospital mortality rates and lower bleeding complication rates for angioplasty than non-Blue Distinction Centers. Designated facilities also meet additional national standards, with patients facing fewer readmissions and mortality rates for coronary artery bypass graft procedures and heart attacks, compared to facilities that do not meet the criteria. In addition to meeting the quality criteria, on average, Blue Distinction Centers+ for Cardiac Care are 21% more cost-efficient than their non-Blue Distinction Centers+ peers.

Since 2006, the Blue Distinction Specialty Care program has helped patients find quality specialty care in the areas of bariatric surgery, cancer care, cardiac care, cellular immunotherapy, fertility care, gene therapy, knee and hip replacements, maternity care, spine surgery, substance use treatment and recovery, and transplants, while encouraging health care professionals to improve the care they deliver.

For more information about the program and for a complete listing of the designated providers, visit www.bcbs.com.

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About Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield

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About Blue Distinction Centers

Blue Distinction Centers (BDC) met overall quality measures, developed with input from the medical community. A local Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) company may require additional criteria for providers located in its own service area; for details, contact your local BCBS company. Blue Distinction Centers+ (BDC+) also met cost measures that address consumers' need for affordable healthcare. Each provider's cost of care is evaluated using data from its local BCBS company. Providers in CA, ID, NY, PA, and WA may lie in two local BCBS company's areas, resulting in two evaluations for cost of care; and their own local BCBS company's decide whether one or both cost of care evaluation(s) must meet BDC+ national criteria. National criteria for BDC and BDC+ are displayed on www.bcbs.com. Individual outcomes may vary. For details on a provider's in-network status or your own policy's coverage, contact your local BCBS company and ask your provider before making an appointment. Neither Blue Cross Blue Shield Association nor any BCBS company are responsible for non-covered charges or other losses or damages resulting from Blue Distinction or other provider finder information or care received from Blue Distinction or other providers.