



NEWS RELEASE

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University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics receives Blue Distinction Center designation

DES MOINES, Iowa (Feb. X, 2022) — Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield has recognized the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics with a Blue Distinction Center for Transplants designation for Pediatric Kidney transplant. Additionally, the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics has earned a transplants designation for Adult Liver. With these new transplant designations, Wellmark members living with kidney or liver failure will be able to find designated facilities in their area that provide accessible, higher quality transplant services.

To receive a Blue Distinction Centers for Transplants designation for kidney transplants, a health care facility must demonstrate success in meeting nationally established, objective quality measures along with delivering higher quality transplant services within the Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) network. Quality measures used in the evaluation are publicly reported by the Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients (SRTR). All Blue Distinction Centers for Transplants facilities must be fully accredited by a national accrediting organization, meet the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) certification requirements, and adhere to transplant guidelines from the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS).

Blue Distinction Centers for Transplants facilities have demonstrated their commitment to quality care, resulting in better overall outcomes for transplant patients. They offer a broad range of transplant services through a coordinated, streamlined transplant management program. To date, Blue Distinction Centers for Transplants has designated more than 149 facilities nationwide — with some facilities being designated for more than one program to represent a total of more than 365 transplant programs — that meet its evidence-based selection criteria.

Blue Distinction Centers are nationally designated providers that show expertise in delivering improved patient safety and better health outcomes, based on objective measures that were developed with input from the medical community and leading accreditation and quality organizations.

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 replacement, maternity care, spine surgery, substance use treatment and recovery, and transplants, while encouraging health care professionals to improve the care they deliver. Based on data-driven analysis of Blue Distinction Centers, designated facilities, compared to other hospitals and facilities, demonstrate better quality and improved outcomes for patients. On average, Blue Distinction Centers+ are also 20 percent more cost-efficient than non-Blue Distinction Center+ designated hospitals and facilities¹.

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

¹ BCBSA and registry data (where applicable), BDC/BDC+ eligible facilities vs. relevant comparison group. Results based on most recent designation cycle for each specialty. Savings based on BDC/BDC+ total episode cost.

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About Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield

Wellmark, Inc. (Wellmark.com) does business as Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa. Wellmark and its subsidiaries and affiliated companies, including Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of South Dakota, Wellmark Health Plan of Iowa, Inc., Wellmark Advantage Health Plan, Inc., and Wellmark Value Health Plan, Inc., insure or pay health benefit claims for more than 2 million members in Iowa and South Dakota. Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa, Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of South Dakota, Wellmark Health Plan of Iowa, Inc. and Wellmark Value Health Plan, Inc. are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield Association

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association is a national federation of 36 independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide health care coverage for one in three Americans. BCBSA provides health care insights through [The Health of America Report](#) series and the national [BCBS Health IndexSM](#). For more information on BCBSA and its member companies, please visit BCBS.com. We also encourage you to connect with us on [Facebook](#), check out our videos on [YouTube](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).

About Blue Distinction Centers

Blue Distinction Centers (BDC) met overall quality measures, developed with input from the medical community. A Local Blue Plan may require additional criteria for providers located in its own service area; for details, contact your Local Blue Plan. 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 Blue Plan. Providers in CA, ID, NY, PA, and WA may lie in two Local Blue Plans' areas, resulting in two evaluations for cost of care; and their own Local Blue Plans 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 Blue Plan and ask your provider before making an appointment. Neither Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association nor any Blue Plans are responsible for noncovered charges or other losses or damages resulting from Blue Distinction or other provider finder information or care received from Blue Distinction or other providers.