Information for Physicians regarding American Gastroenterological Association Registry Participation

Gastroenterologists participating in the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) Digestive Health Outcomes Registry® will help define best practices for digestive disorder treatment and advance quality patient care.

Improving patient care and improving outcomes for patients with digestive disorders are goals shared by gastroenterologists and the AGA. The AGA Registry is a national, outcomes-driven registry that enables you to monitor the care you provide to patients, provides data to compare the efficacy of treatments, and allows your practice to participate in setting a standard for best practices in care.

To advance high-quality, cost-effective best practices for gastroenterology, UnitedHealthcare became the first health care company to collaborate with the AGA on this initiative. Specifically, UnitedHealthcare intends to incorporate treatment data from gastroenterologists on colorectal cancer prevention and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) from the AGA Registry into its physician performance measurement programs that compare individual treatment practices against national treatment standards.

Participation in the AGA Registry benefits you and your patients by providing data on how your practice compares with your peers’ practices and allows you the opportunity to impact standards of care within gastroenterology.

What Is the AGA Registry?
The AGA Registry was launched in May 2010 with an initial focus on both guidelines-driven management of IBD and effective strategies for colorectal cancer prevention. The mission of the Registry is to collect, analyze and report clinically-relevant data, empowering the health care community to optimize quality of care.

Why Choose the AGA Registry?
The AGA Registry provides information regarding patient health outcomes, instead of simply documenting care processes and procedures. Process measures show whether an action was completed, such as writing a prescription, administering a drug or providing patient education. Outcome measures; however, take stock of the actual results of care.

Because the AGA Registry focuses on data/indicators that impact healthcare outcomes, your practice can demonstrate meaningful quality improvement, monitor and improve patient care, and better manage patient populations.

The AGA Registry uses rigorously developed, evidence-based guidelines and measures developed by your peers and many are approved by the American Medical Association Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement, endorsed by the National Quality Forum (NQF) and incorporated by the CMS Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS).

The AGA Registry is the only GI-specific registry qualified for reporting data as part of PQRS. Because the AGA Registry is qualified by CMS, you can submit data on Medicare beneficiaries with chronic hepatitis C to the CMS Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS) through the AGA Registry.

You have instant access to your data and to numerous on-demand reports providing clinician- and practice-level results and patient-level detail for all AGA Registry measures. You decide who has access to your data. Reports can be tailored by time frame, treating clinician, and using patient characteristics such as age and sex, allowing for targeted quality assessment and measurement. This information can be used to identify areas for improvement, and manage patient populations by identifying patients in need of intervention or follow-up evaluation.

“The AGA Registry captures clinical—not claims—data that allow for actionable feedback at the provider and practice level. Even more valuable is the Registry’s ability to positively impact patient outcomes. By tracking medication-related injuries and adverse events, providers can learn a lot about how their patients are doing, as well as how they can care for these patients. From a research and learning perspective, best practices relating to GI care and its delivery can be identified and shared across the field.”

—Lawrence S. Kim, MD,
South Denver Gastroenterology, Colorado
How will UnitedHealthcare use the AGA Registry data to improve care?
Information obtained from the AGA Registry will help UnitedHealthcare and the AGA support best practices related to care of patients with digestive disorders. UnitedHealthcare is committed to helping clinicians improve performance and patient care and is encouraging its national network of gastroenterologists to join the AGA Registry and contribute practice data regarding treatment of their patients. UnitedHealthcare intends to incorporate the data from the AGA Registry into its physician performance measurement programs, including the UnitedHealth Premium® designation program and value-based contracting.

UnitedHealth Premium-designated physicians receive public recognition of their performance, and may also be listed in the highest benefit tier for certain benefit plans. Data from the AGA Registry also will support UnitedHealthcare’s expanding portfolio of physician incentive programs and performance-based contracting initiatives that reward physicians who demonstrate high-quality care as well as improved affordability for their patients.

UnitedHealthcare’s involvement with the GI community extends back several years. In 2010, UnitedHealthcare received the Richard L. Doyle Award for Innovation and Leadership in Health Care from Milliman Care Guidelines for working with physicians and other health care professionals to identify and employ best practices to prevent complications from major bowel surgery. Also in 2010, UnitedHealthcare established a GI Scientific Advisory Board to obtain direct input into its programs from leaders in the GI field.

The Benefits of AGA Registration
The AGA Registry can help you:

- **Improve patient care** by monitoring patient interactions, tracking interventions, identifying and addressing opportunities for quality of care, and measuring quality outcomes.
- **Manage patient populations** by running reports on specific care criteria. As you enter patient data into the registry, you will be able to generate listings on your patients who need certain interventions and follow-up.
- **Benchmark your practice** by comparing your practice data against the aggregate performance data of other practices. You can run quality reports that provide clinician- and practice-level results and patient-level detail for all AGA Registry measures.
- **Enhance quality and practice efficiency** by using registry data to analyze practice processes and procedures, effectively manage patient care, demonstrate the appropriate use of resources to payers and purchasers, and make fact-based decisions related to your practice.
- **Participate in quality reporting and incentive programs** (and potentially increase reimbursement) by taking advantage of quality recognition and physician designation programs that are associated with the AGA Registry.

How to Get Started
Gastroenterologists need to meet the following criteria to be eligible for participation in future UnitedHealthcare performance measurement programs.

- Be a participating gastroenterologist in the UnitedHealthcare network.
- Participate with and provide the required data to the AGA Registry for consideration by UnitedHealthcare.
- Be an eligible AGA Registry participant in one of the 20 initial UnitedHealthcare metropolitan areas targeted for participation.
- Allow the AGA Registry to share its results with UnitedHealthcare. (Please be advised that UnitedHealthcare will not have access to data for individual patients, only to the aggregate reports.)

To request an enrollment package for the AGA Registry, visit AGAregistry.org, or contact an enrollment advisor at info@agaregistry.org or 877-809-9559 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET. You can also learn more about UnitedHealthcare’s physician performance measurement programs at UnitedHealthcareOnline.com or by calling 866-270-5588.

As a special promotion, AGA is offering a six-month, no obligation trial period for the AGA Registry. You can submit data, run reports and experience the value of the AGA Registry first-hand with a minimal commitment of time and without any financial obligation should you decide not to continue participation in the registry. Speak to an AGA Registry enrollment advisor for more detailed information about this offer.