NowClinic Physician FAQ

**Why is OptumHealth introducing NowClinic℠ online care?**
Just like you, we’re concerned about patients receiving convenient care when they need it – and maintaining continuity of care. That’s why we created this exciting new service. NowClinic online care allows patients to speak with physicians and other providers about a health issue or concern anytime via a computer with internet access¹ using secure live chat or a webcam – or by phone. In addition to anytime, anywhere access, patients can also schedule appointments.

OptumHealth is excited to make this service available to physicians and other providers. It helps improve convenience and access to care and preserves health care continuity, which is a growing health concern.

**How does NowClinic℠ online care work?**
Using NowClinic is much like having a visit in your exam room, as you’ll be able to ask questions, discuss symptoms, review the patient’s supplied online record, and even write electronic prescriptions.⁵ Physicians and patients simply need a computer with Internet access¹ or telephone. A Webcam isn’t required, but it would give you the opportunity to be seen by patients and, if your patient has one, see him or her.

When you’re willing to accept visits, just log on to the system and indicate your availability. If a patient is waiting in the queue within the state in which you practice, you’ll receive a request for care. You’ll have an opportunity to review the medical issue and either accept or decline the visit. Upon acceptance, the visit between you and the patient will begin. When the patient ends the visit, his or her payment⁶ will be processed, and you’ll simply submit final notes. You may elect to waive visit fees in appropriate circumstances.

**When will OptumHealth NowClinic℠ online care be available?**
Patients have access to the service 24 hours a day, but physicians and other providers only receive requests for visits during which they chose to log in.
Why is OptumHealth offering this opportunity?
OptumHealth is concerned with escalating fragmentation in the health care system, including issues related to care access and continuity of care. One third of Americans report having difficulty getting timely appointments for routine care.¹

More and more, patients are seeking care from emergency rooms, urgent care centers, and retail clinics. OptumHealth’s NowClinicSM online care provides an avenue for these patients to get care anytime, anywhere via the internet.¹ With NowClinic, you can provide patients the access to care they want.

Why should physicians sign up to be part of NowClinicSM online care?
The demand for online care is already growing. It is estimated that by 2013, 25% of care that can be delivered online will be.³ This program offers an easy way to deliver care to patients who are currently demanding increased access to physicians.

NowClinic offers physicians the opportunity to expand patient relationships through a new medium. NowClinic also improves care continuity by channeling patients away from unnecessary emergency and retail clinic visits.

Is there a patient interest for this type of care?
Yes, that’s why we’ve made this initiative a priority at OptumHealth. Patients have indicated that they are ready to take advantage of online care. In a survey, 74% of people said they would be likely to use online care. Moreover, nearly half said online care would resolve issues for which they currently see a doctor for. And more than 85% of those who have used online care in the past say they are likely to use it again in the future.⁴

How is OptumHealth NowClinicSM online care different from other systems?
Unlike an e-visit, where a patient emails a physician with a question or concern and has to wait for a response, NowClinic happens in real-time, from anywhere, via the internet.¹ The system allows the physician access to patient-supplied health information, with permission, to provide the patient with more informed care. NowClinic maintains a complete record of each session and records a detailed summary that patients can store or share with other physicians as appropriate.
Which physicians are eligible to provide NowClinic℠ online care services?
If you are interested in providing services through NowClinic, please contact us by emailing nowclinicprovidersupport@customerelation.com or calling 877-269-1365. Physicians and other providers must have met all requirements.

How can patients be assured that physicians will be available when they need care?
Sophisticated logic is used by the system to match physician availability with patient demand. Physicians who make themselves available are aggregated into “pools” based on their respective discipline (e.g., pediatrics, family practice, OB/GYN), which in turn are tapped by patients. No single physician needs to be available at any point in time, as pools are constantly changing based on the discretionary availability.

How much do patients pay for NowClinic℠ online care services?
Patients pay $45 for the first ten-minute medical session with a physician, plus an additional $5-$10 for every five minutes thereafter. This has one exception: after the first 10 minutes, providers have the option of extending the visit another three minutes to wrap up, at no additional charge to the patient. However, the vast majority of visits are completed within the ten-minute time frame.

Pricing can vary by provider types, however. For example, therapy appointments are longer and have different costs associated with them.

With NowClinic℠ online care, will physicians have access to a patient’s health information?
Initially, physicians will have access to the information that the patient enters in his or her online health history. Following the online visit, a history of the online session – including a secure chat transcript, physician notes, diagnoses, follow-up suggestions, and prescriptions – is captured for future reference, as subject to patient permission.

When a consumer searches for a physician, how are the results displayed?
A patient may search for a specific physician by name or practice group. If the patient conducts an open physician search, the results can be prioritized in a number of ways. First, the system analyzes the patient’s supplied health information and attempts to make the best match for the patient based on his or her health information and condition. The patient also may enter specific search criteria, such as gender, languages spoken, or specialty areas.
**How is privacy ensured?**

OptumHealth is very sensitive to privacy issues. Each interaction is in full compliance with the privacy and security requirements under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

**If physicians are signed up for OptumHealth NowClinic℠ online care, can they step away?**

You’ll have the option of scheduling established online hours, or the flexibility of logging in at any time to provide care. Once you have indicated that you are available for an online visit, the system will alert you if a patient is in the queue.

**What is the connection between OptumHealth and American Well?**

OptumHealth and American Well have worked together to create the first nationwide service that offers patients anytime, anywhere access to physicians and other providers via the internet.¹ The collaboration extends the mission of both organizations to meet demand for immediate access to affordable, efficient, quality care.

1. NowClinic online care requires Internet Explorer version 7 and higher, Firefox version 2.0 or higher, or Safari version 4.0 or higher.
5. If clinically appropriate. No controlled substances may be prescribed, and the availability of other prescriptions may be restricted by law.
6. Charges for services provided via NowClinic online care are not submitted by NowClinic or the provider to any private or public third-party payor. Patients are solely responsible for all fees for services provided via NowClinic online care. Payment for NowClinic services does not cover pharmacy charges; patients must pay for prescriptions separately, if any.