

HERO Council Meeting Minutes

Health – Empowerment – Resource – Opportunities

Date: 08/05/2026
Meeting Time: 11am to 12pm ET
Location: 1-952-222-7450
962 824 284#
Meeting Leader: Barbara Robinson

Purpose of Council

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a UnitedHealthcare Community Plan (UHC) HERO Council member. Your feedback is important as we support your way, to live life your way.

As a HERO Council member, you may receive confidential surveys. You will meet and talk with people from UHC as well as those who serve our communities. Your input will help us shape and improve the Indiana PathWays for Aging program.

We want to hear your ideas on topics important to you. Your voice matters.

- **Introductions:** Barbara Robinson led an introduction with 27 attendees from the following 16 Indiana counties: Allen, Cass, Clay, Grant, Hamilton, Hendricks, Huntington, Lake, Marion, Morgan, Spencer, St. Joseph, Tippecanoe, Wabash, Vigo, and Wayne. The health plan's Dental

Director, Dietitian, and Housing Coordinator were in attendance to field questions as needed.

- **Information Sharing:** The HERO Council and theme of “your voice matters” was explained to each attendee. SDOH & DME were discussed, highlighting the following aspects and terms related to the subjects:
 - Social Determinates, or Social Drivers of Health, (SDOH), are the non-medical conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age.
 - They shape daily life and include everything from economic stability and education access to neighborhood environments to social support networks. Together, these factors heavily influence health outcomes and inequities.
 - Economic Stability: Includes employment, income, expenses, debt, and medical bills.
 - Education Access and Quality: Surrounds high school graduation, literacy, early childhood education, and vocational training.
 - Healthcare Access and Quality: Covers health insurance coverage, health literacy, and access to culturally focused medical services.
 - Neighborhood and Built Environment: Relates to the safety of a neighborhood, access to public transportation, availability of healthy foods/nutrition, and exposure to environmental hazards.

- Durable Medical Equipment, (DME), includes medically necessary, reusable devices like wheelchairs, hospital beds, and walkers, for example, that are prescribed by a doctor for home use. To qualify, equipment must withstand repeated use, serve a medical purpose, and have an expected lifespan of at least three years.
- You can expect prompt attention and assistance with these matters when you call UnitedHealthcare at 1-800-832-4643.

- **Member Meeting Summary:**

Following a discussion of interesting facts about the month of August, Dr. Poland shared general educational information about the importance of routine dental care for older adults. He encouraged members to maintain regular preventive dental visits when possible and reminded those who need assistance locating a dental provider to contact Member Services for information about available network providers and resources.

A member from Marion County shared that she recently prepared Cowboy Caviar Salsa for her family after seeing the recipe demonstrated in-person at the Vigo County meeting on July 8. She reported that the recipe was easy to prepare and well received by her family.

The conversation led to a discussion by the Registered Dietitian, Bailey, regarding Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) and how living situations can affect an individual's ability to prepare nutritious meals. Members were educated about how factors such as housing stability, access to cooking equipment, refrigeration, transportation, and food availability can influence healthy eating habits.

Healthy Meal Idea

Microwave Paper Bowl

- Brown rice cup
- Frozen vegetables
- Rotisserie chicken or canned chicken
- Garlic powder or Mrs. Dash seasoning

Nutritional Benefits

- Source of protein
- Contains fiber
- Provides vitamins and minerals

The Dietitian discussed practical meal options that may be useful for individuals with limited access to traditional kitchen facilities.

Barbara provided education regarding Social Determinants of Health and how to access to resources such as housing,

education, food, healthcare, transportation, and social supports may impact overall health and well-being. Members were reminded that the health plan offers programs and resources that may help address identified needs.

Available resources may include:

- Housing resource coordination
- Assistance identifying food resources
- Educational opportunities
- Information regarding community and legal resources
- Transportation benefits available through the health plan
- HERO Council meetings that provide health education and resource information

Members were encouraged to contact their Service Coordinators/Care Managers or Member Services for information about programs and resources that may be available to them.

The group briefly discussed Durable Medical Equipment (DME). Educational information was provided regarding the process for obtaining DME, including that some equipment may require a prescription or order from a healthcare provider. Members were reminded to contact Member Services with questions about covered benefits and available resources.

Examples of commonly covered Durable Medical Equipment (DME) may include:

- Wheelchairs (manual and power, when medically necessary)
- Walkers and rollators
- Canes and crutches
- Hospital beds
- Bedside commodes
- Shower chairs and bath benches
- Oxygen equipment and supplies
- Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) machines
- Nebulizers
- Blood glucose monitors and certain diabetic supplies
- Lift chairs (coverage may vary)
- Patient lifts
- Enteral feeding pumps and supplies

For certain DME items, a healthcare provider must first evaluate the member's medical needs and provide an order or prescription. Additional clinical documentation may be required to demonstrate medical necessity. The DME supplier or healthcare provider typically submits a prior authorization (PA) request and supporting documentation to the health plan for review. Approval decisions are based on the member's benefits, applicable coverage, and medical

necessity requirements. Members are always notified of the determination and the next steps.

A member from Lake County shared concerns regarding a housing accommodation request. Annie, the health plan's Housing Coordinator, provided general information about housing-related resources and discussed documentation that may be requested when pursuing housing accommodation. Annie also shared information about community agencies that may be able to provide guidance regarding housing concerns.

A member from Tippecanoe County discussed concerns about mold in her home and its potential impact on her health and living environment. Annie provided general information regarding housing-related resources and organizations that may be able to assist with addressing environmental concerns in the home. Members were encouraged to work with their healthcare providers regarding health-related concerns and to contact appropriate community agencies for housing assistance. She also informed them that their service coordinators can submit referrals on their behalf to her at any time regarding housing issues for assistance.

- **Key Takeaway**

Members and their caregivers received education on preventive oral health, healthy meal planning, Social

Determinants of Health, Durable Medical Equipment, and community resources available through the health plan and local organizations. Members were encouraged to reach out to their Service Coordinators or Member Services for additional information about available support and resources.

- **Invitation** – One-on-one support after the meeting.
- **Wrap-Up:** Today's action items and suggestions re-capped.

How to reach us: You can send Barbara an email at IN_HPops@uhc.com at any time.

UnitedHealthcare Member Services is available by phone at 800-832-4643. We are open Monday through Friday, 8 am to 8 pm Eastern time zone. Our Nurse Line is open 24/7, and you reach them at that same number. This number is also listed on the back of your member ID card.

Please note: Attendance detail and surveys confidentially stored. When we talk about survey results, we do not share the names of those who gave feedback. Thank you for helping us protect the privacy of others.