



*Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary*

**MARYLAND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
September 24, 2019**

**TO:** All Provider Types

**FROM:** Jill Spector, Director  
Medical Benefits Management

Lisa Burgess M.D., Acting Deputy Secretary  
Behavioral Health Administration

**RE:** Public Behavioral Health System Administrative Service Organization Vendor Change

**NOTE:** **Please ensure that appropriate staff members in your organization are informed of the contents of this transmittal**

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The Maryland Department of Health is pleased to announce UnitedHealth Group's health services platform, Optum, will be the next Administrative Service Organization for the Public Behavioral Health System. The contract award begins January 1, 2020. The contract base period is five years (January 1, 2020—December 31, 2024) with a single two-year option which could extend the contract award period through December 31, 2026.

Optum has performed similar functions to those required by Maryland in other states and has a successful history in provider management and maintenance, participant education, authorization and utilization management, participant and provider assistance and communication, provider audits and training, quality management and evaluation, provider and participant appeals and grievances, claims processing and payment, progressive data analytics, reports, and special projects/new initiatives.

MDH is working with its outgoing vendor, Beacon Health Options, and Optum to ensure the transition is successful. The transition process includes transferring authorizations, claims payment processing, participant history, and other information and materials from Beacon Health Options to Optum. As Optum opens its Maryland operations, it will execute an aggressive plan to conduct outreach, train providers to use its system, and work steadily with the current vendor, Beacon Health Options, to support providers throughout the process.

The current toll-free number, for providers and consumers, 1-800-888-1965 will remain the same. Additional information will be forthcoming as Optum engages its Maryland staff who will be part of outreach and communication plans as they evolve.

Please direct any questions regarding the information in this transmittal to the Maryland Medicaid Behavioral Health Unit at [mdh.bhasotransition@maryland.gov](mailto:mdh.bhasotransition@maryland.gov).