

Provider View



November 20, 2025

A Time of Gratitude



I find myself eagerly anticipating the familiar sights, sounds and flavors of the season. I can already picture our home filled with loved ones and the comforting aroma of some of the classics—roasted Cornish hens with savory sage dressing, a crisp salad topped with cranberries and an assortment of nuts, mashed potatoes with fresh herbs, homemade rolls warm from the oven and an assortment of pies.

This year, we're adding something truly meaningful to our tradition: volunteering at a local shelter to serve meals to others. It's a small way to give back and share the spirit of gratitude beyond our own home.

After volunteering, what I'm looking forward to most is our simple but powerful ritual: sharing what we are most thankful for. It's a moment that grounds us in gratitude and reminds us of what truly matters.

How do you celebrate Thanksgiving?

We'd love to hear your traditions, recipes or acts of kindness! Please share your ideas with us at AHP.Providers@avera.org. Your story might inspire others in our community.

These traditions remind me of the importance of continuity and care—values that resonate deeply with Avera Health Plans. Just as family traditions evolve while staying rooted in what matters most, so does our commitment to service.

From all of us at Avera Health Plans, we wish you a Thanksgiving filled with gratitude, good food and great company. Here's to traditions that keep us grounded and progress that keeps us moving forward.

Sincerely,

Vice President, Provider Network Management

Upcoming Holiday Closures

In observance of the holidays, our office will be closed on Nov. 27 and 28 for Thanksgiving, Dec. 24 and 25 for Christmas and Jan.1 for New Year's Day.

Open Enrollment

Open enrollment started Nov. 1 and ends Jan. 15. Beginning in January, it will be important to pay close attention to member ID cards as changes may occur. Also, you will need to verify eligibility and benefits for your members.

With open enrollment, our Customer Care Team is experiencing a higher volume of calls than typical. Please be patient, as you may experience a longer than normal wait time. Thank you for your understanding and patience!

Avera Health Plans Transitioning to Freestyle Diabetic Testing Supplies – Effective January 1, 2026

Beginning Jan. 1, 2026, Avera Health Plans will transition from OneTouch diabetic testing supplies (including OneTouch Verio and OneTouch Ultra test strips and meters) to Freestyle diabetic testing supplies as the exclusive preferred option.

This change follows LifeScan, Inc., the manufacturer of OneTouch products, filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in July. To reduce potential member impact from anticipated supply chain disruptions, we are proactively removing OneTouch supplies from our formulary.

Currently, approximately 400 members have filled prescriptions for OneTouch test strips this year. These members have been notified by letter about the transition to Freestyle. The communication included:

- Instructions for obtaining a free Freestyle glucose meter
- A recommendation to contact their provider for a new prescription for Freestyle test strips

If you have any questions about this transition or need additional details, please contact [888-322-2115](tel:888-322-2115) for assistance.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to delivering high-quality care to our members.

Preventative Lab Work

As a reminder, the only lab work that is covered under preventive services for adults is the Lipid Panel & Glucose. All other covered labs done during the preventive visit would fall under normal plan benefits and be subject to the member's deductible and coinsurance.

Join DirectConnect - [Today!](#)

Since 2022, Avera Health Plans has offered an HMO benefit plan under the name 'Avera Direct' in Minnehaha, Lincoln and Brown counties. Beginning Jan. 1, 2026, we are expanding this offering—and rebranding the network as 'DirectConnect'—to include Stanely, Hughes, Davison, Hanson, McCook, Aurora, Douglas, Yankton, Hutchison and Clay counties.

As a reminder, the HMO plan design requires members to receive care from participating HMO providers as out-of-network services are not covered.

By joining DirectConnect, you'll have the opportunity to:

- Expand your patient base by gaining access to newly enrolled members in your county
- Strengthen your relationship with Avera Health Plans through deeper integration into our NCQA-accredited provider network
- Benefit from timely and reliable claim payments, ensuring efficient reimbursement for services rendered

If you are interested in participating in the HMO network for 2026, please [follow this link](#) to complete our online form. Be sure to include "DirectConnect" in the "Additional Information" field at the bottom of the form.

If you have any questions, please contact us at AHP.Providers@Avera.org.

Innovative Benefits Design

With the new year around the corner, Avera Health Plans has new innovative benefits coming for individual/family, small and large group plans.

We are now offering MyWeighForward plans in our entire service area, which are designed to help consumers who want to manage their weight. These plans offer members weight loss medications and other tools to support their weight loss journey.

We also will be offering two new \$0 deductible plan designs beginning Jan. 1, 2026. These plans have inpatient and outpatient facility copays, as well as copays for diagnostic testing and advanced imaging. These plans will help consumers understand their costs for their health care needs prior to receiving care.

For our Medicare Supplement plan, AgilityPlus Plan G enhanced benefits include an annual physical, hearing screening/hearing aid fitting and heart/vascular screening through Avera Planet Heart. These are all 100% covered for AgilityPlus members in South Dakota and Iowa.

If you have any questions, please contact us at [888-322-2115](tel:888-322-2115).

Update on symplr

On Nov. 5, symplr began sending initial credentialing applications. symplr's standard is to have applications completed within 30 days.

We understand there is some confusion regarding where to direct questions.

- If you have questions regarding Avera Health Plans credentialing, please contact AHP-Credentialing@Avera.org.
- If your questions are regarding an application for hospital privileges, rather than Avera Health Plans, please contact AHCredentialing@Avera.org.

Thank you for your patience during this transition.

Provider Manual Updates

Avera Health Plans recently began a comprehensive review and update of our [Provider Manual](#) . This process will be completed in phases, with Phase 1 already complete. Sections 1, 2, 3 and 8 of our manual have been updated, reflecting our most current information.

The next phase will be implemented in the coming months. Please stay tuned for more updates and details.