



December 18, 2025

## Finding Peace During the Holidays



Twinkling lights on every corner, the sweet scent of gingerbread drifting through kitchens, and carols echoing like joyful snowflakes—Christmas is here! From the jingling of bells to the cozy crackle of fireplaces, every corner seems wrapped in festive magic. What are your favorite sights, sounds and smells of Christmas? Please share with me at [AHP.Providers@Avera.org](mailto:AHP.Providers@Avera.org).

Amid the glitter and cheer, it's easy to get swept up in the hustle and bustle. But while the holidays sparkle on the outside, they can sometimes feel heavy on the inside. Stress, loneliness and high expectations often sneak in behind the tinsel. This

December, let's unwrap the gift of mental well-being. Take time to breathe, set boundaries and find peace in the moments that matter most. Because the best present you can give yourself—and others—is a healthy, happy mind.

From all of us here at Avera Health Plans, we wish you a blessed Christmas and a joyful New Year!

Sincerely,

Josephine

Vice President – Provider Network Management

**December's ProviderView is packed with valuable information—here is what's inside:**

- [Avera Health and Yankton Medical Clinic announce new partnership for Jan. 1, 2026](#)
- [Prior Authorizations: Changes in turnaround time requirements](#)
- [How to search a remittance advice](#)
- [Important coverage update: Zepbound for Obstructive Sleep Apnea \(OSA\)](#)
- [Information on TotalChoice](#)
- [Differences between AgilityPlus Standard & Select](#)
- [Forms to update your information](#)
- [A New Year's Resolution for our providers: Check benefits and eligibility!](#)

Keep reading to learn more!

**Avera Health and Yankton Medical Clinic Announce New Partnership – Jan. 1, 2026**

On Jan. 1, a Professional Services Agreement (PSA) between Avera Health and Yankton Medical Clinic (YMC) will go into effect to initiate a strategic collaboration designed to enhance health care access and strengthen physician recruitment across the Yankton region.

Over the past year, Avera and YMC explored ways to strengthen health care in the Yankton region, resulting in the PSA decision. This partnership allows YMC to remain an independent medical practice while also building increased collaboration with Avera that reflects a shared commitment to the communities both organizations serve to expand access to high-quality, specialized medical care close to home.

Goals of working together include high-quality care, recruitment of physicians and other medical professionals, use of the same electronic medical record and streamlined access to services including outpatient hospital services. Patients will receive care from the same providers as in the past.

**Changes in Prior Authorization Turnaround Time Requirements**

Currently, prior authorization requests are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Urgent requests, which apply when a delay could jeopardize a patient's life, health or ability to regain maximum function or the patient is in severe pain, are given expedited priority and reviewed within 24 hours. If your request is urgent, please indicate that on the form/fax or call us at 888-605-1331.

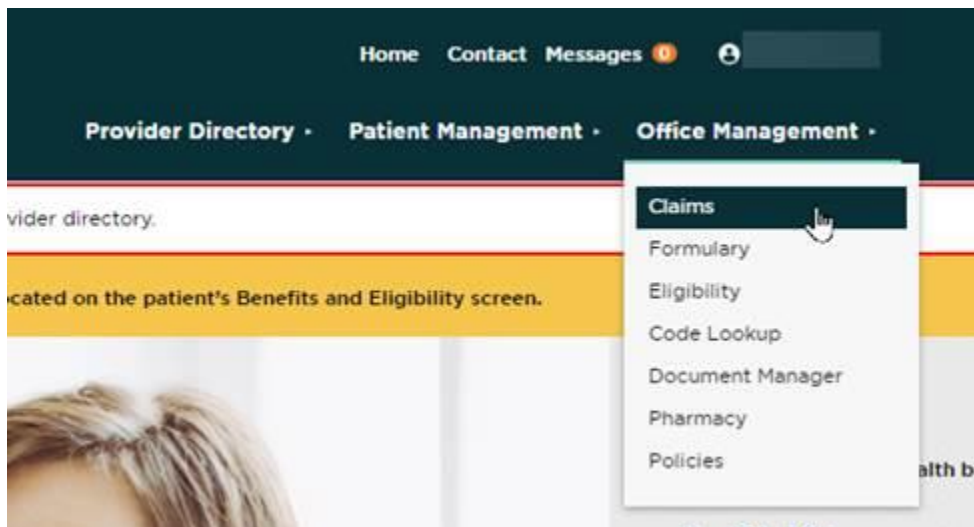
Starting in 2026, turnaround time requirements for some non-urgent, outpatient prior authorization requests are shortening. In South Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska, time requirements will shorten from 15 to seven days. In Minnesota, the requirement is shifting from 15 to five days. All requests will be following these guidelines by July 1, 2026.

These changes reflect our commitment to improving service and meeting regulatory standards while ensuring timely access to care. Standards for prior authorization turnaround times are established by state and federal agencies, as well as by the National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA), and we adopt the strictest requirements of these standards to maintain compliance and quality.

If you have questions or would like to check the status of a request, please call us at 888-605-1331.

### Steps to Search for a Remittance Advice on the Provider Portal

1. Visit our [website](#) and log into the portal with your username and password.
2. Once in the portal, click on 'Office Management', then 'Claims'.



3. Click on 'Remittance Advice' and enter your search criteria. (We recommend by date if you are trying to match up EFT deposits, but you can also search by check number.)

Claim Status Remittance Advice

## Remittance Advice

By Provider [SELECT PROVIDER](#)

By Tax ID  **NO dash in Tax ID**

By Practice

By Patient [SELECT PATIENT](#)

By Patient Account Number

By Remittance Advice

By Date  From:  To:

4. Find the payment amount you are looking for and click 'View' under the View EOP column to see the PDF version of the printed EOP. (This will download in your browser, but you may also need to check the 'Downloads' folder on your computer.)
  - a. Note: If you get an error when clicking the 'View' button and it is a recent check date, the image may need more time to transmit to the portal. Please let us know if it has been more than a week.

Remittance Advice Search Result

Page 1

View EOP	Check Date	Payment	Vendor Name	Vendor Address	Tax ID Number
<a href="#">View</a>	Feb 22 2024	\$186.44			
<a href="#">View</a>	Feb 22 2024	\$186.44			
<a href="#">View</a>	Feb 22 2024	\$186.44			
<a href="#">View</a>	Feb 22 2024	\$186.44			
<a href="#">View</a>	Feb 22 2024	\$17.66			
<a href="#">View</a>	Feb 22 2024	\$17.66			
<a href="#">View</a>	Feb 22 2024	\$544.70			

Avera Health Plans  
 220 S. Broadway Lane  
 Sioux Falls, SD 57106-0201

Forwarding Service Requested

01/23/24 JLP 02-1733

Page 1 of 1



Product Name: [Redacted]  
 Date: [Redacted]  
 Check Number: [Redacted]  
 Question? Please Call Customer Care  
 (800) 322-2115  
 Toll-Free: 888-322-2115  
 Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. CT  
 Email: [Feedback@averahp.com](mailto:Feedback@averahp.com)



Explanation of Payment:  
 Claim Detail

Provider ID	Patient Patient Number	Member Number Policyholder	Service ID	Claim Number								
Date of Service	Service Code	Amount Allowed	Network Setting	Amount Not Covered	Reason Code	Primary Insurance	Deductible	Co-pay	Coinsurance	Plan Paid	Patient Cost	Medical Amount
Claim Total												
											Net Payment for Claim	
											Patient Responsibility	

Provider ID	Patient Patient Number	Member Number Policyholder	Service ID	Claim Number								
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Claim Total												
											Net Payment for Claim	
											Patient Responsibility	

Which roles have access to search for a remittance advice?

- Eligibility, Claims and Billing
- Office Manager
- Provider Local Administrator

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

## **Important Coverage Update: Zepbound for Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA)**

Avera Health Plans is updating coverage criteria for Zepbound (tirzepatide) when prescribed for obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), effective Jan. 1, 2026.

### Key Changes:

- Coverage requests for OSA will only be approved if the member's benefit plan explicitly includes coverage for weight-loss medications.
- Current Avera Health Plans members approved for Zepbound prior to this effective date will be grandfathered and may continue therapy, provided they meet criteria for extended authorization.
- Diagnoses where the primary therapeutic mechanism is weight reduction remain excluded unless the plan includes weight-loss coverage.
- OSA is now specifically listed as an excluded diagnosis for non-weight-loss plans under the "Non-Diabetic GLP-1 Agonists" policy.
- These updates promote appropriate utilization and cost-effective care as research continues on GLP-1s for weight-related complications.

### Why This Change?

- Zepbound received FDA approval for OSA in December 2024, resulting in a significant increase in utilization and spend during 2025.
- The updated criteria will help manage costs while supporting evidence-based use of GLP-1 therapies.

### Provider Best Practices:

- Verify member benefit coverage before submitting prior authorization requests for Zepbound for OSA. Requests for members without weight-loss coverage will be denied.

If you have questions about this update or need additional details, please contact us at 888-322-2115. Thank you for your continued partnership!

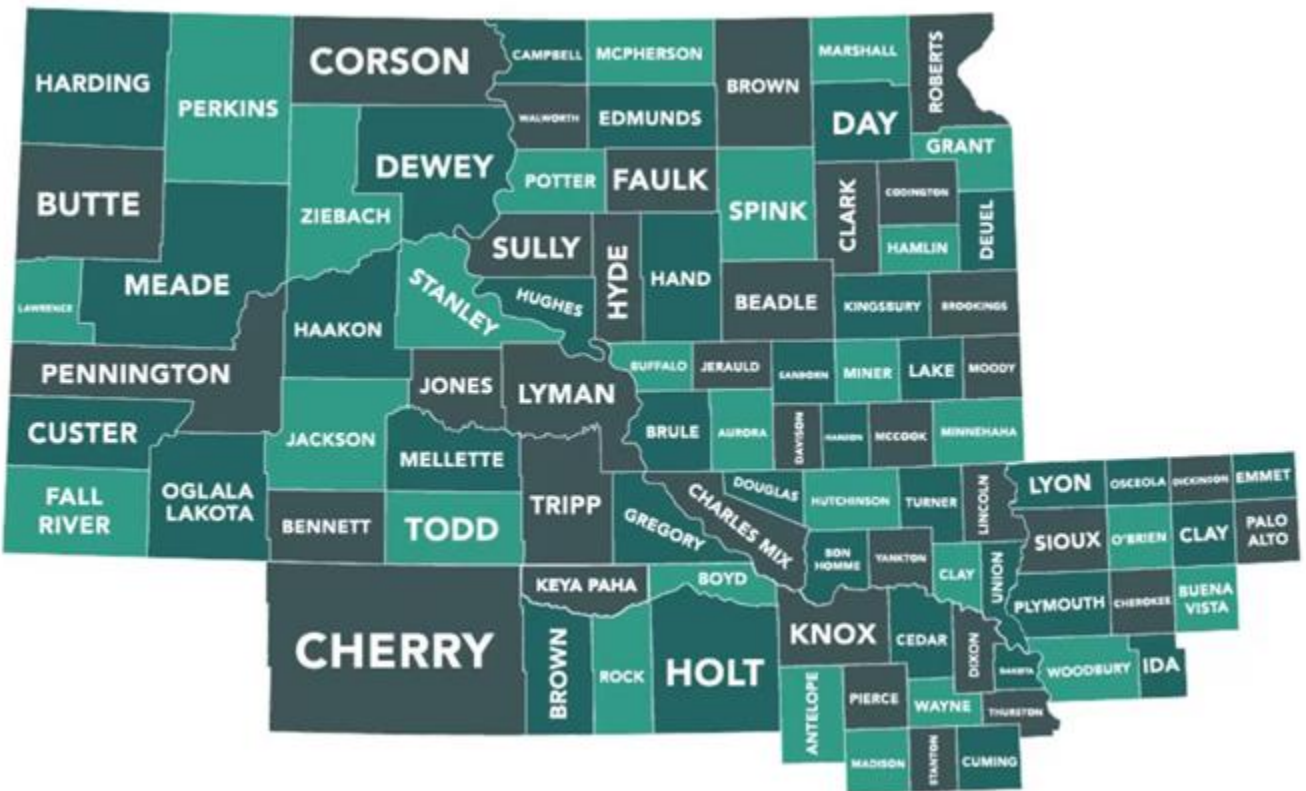
## **TotalChoice Reminder**

As we launch our new product, TotalChoice, on Jan. 1, we want to remind you of the main features of this network.

What does the ID card look like?

			
<b>MEMBERS:</b> Customer Care: <b>1-888-322-2115</b> Pharmacy Member Services: <b>1-833-464-7663</b>  Log in to see benefit information at: <b>AveraHealthPlans.com</b>  This card does not guarantee eligibility for benefits or payment of claims.		<b>PROVIDERS:</b> Providers outside South Dakota or surrounding counties in the Avera Service area, submit medical claims to: UHSS, PO Box 20783, Salt Lake City, UT 84130-0783. Payer ID: 35026. <b>UHSS Provider Services:</b> 866-830-0179   <a href="https://uhss.unm.edu">https://uhss.unm.edu</a>   UHSS Member ID: UN1000140202 UHSS Group ID: 75-800328  <b>For Prior-Authorizations call UHSS:</b> 866-397-7465 Failure to get prior-authorization may reduce benefits.	
Subscriber: Bugs Bunny Group: Dakota Tube Member: Bugs Bunny	Subscriber #: 10002222201 Group #: A0005982 Member #: 10002222201	PCP Copay \$35 Specialist Copay \$70 In-Network Ind Ded \$5000	Out-of-Network Ind Ded \$10000 In-Network Ind OOP \$6000 Out-of-Network Ind OOP \$15000
If services are rendered outside South Dakota or surrounding counties in the Avera Service area, please reference the back of the card.			RXBIN: 026952 RXPCN: AVERA
		<b>Providers inside South Dakota or surrounding counties in the Avera Service Area, submit medical claims to:</b> First Choice Health Network, PO Box 2289, Seattle, WA 98111-2289. Payer ID AH002. <b>Avera Health Plans Provider Services:</b> 833-964-0711. Visit <a href="https://Avera.org/PA">Avera.org/PA</a> for details. For Prior-Authorizations, visit <a href="https://Avera.org/PA">Avera.org/PA</a> . Failure to get prior-authorization may reduce benefits.	

What is the TotalChoice service area?



\*County color variation is for visual appeal and has no meaning.

Where do I send claims?

- For services rendered inside the TotalChoice service area, send all claims to First Choice Health, at PO Box 2289, Seattle, WA 98111-2289 using Payer ID AH002.

- For services rendered outside the TotalChoice service area, send all claims to UnitedHealthcare Options PPO Network, at UHSS, PO Box 30783, Salt Lake City, UT 84130-0783 using Payer ID 39026.

Am I included in this network if I am within the service area?

- For providers already contracted with Avera Health Plans, they are included in the TotalChoice network.

When can I expect to start seeing TotalChoice ID cards?

- Starting Jan. 1, 2026, providers can anticipate seeing more TotalChoice member ID cards.

Where can I view the TotalChoice provider directory?

- Please visit this [link](#) to view the participating provider directory. If you are currently part of the Avera Health Plans network today, you should already be included in the new directory for TotalChoice.
  - If you happen to see an error, please email us at [AHP.Providers@Avera.org](mailto:AHP.Providers@Avera.org).

If you have any questions or concerns beyond this, please do not hesitate to contact us at [AHP.Providers@Avera.org](mailto:AHP.Providers@Avera.org) or [888-322-2115](tel:888-322-2115). The [TotalChoice webpage](#) is also a great resource to reference for common questions and concerns.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we launch this new product!

## **AgilityPlus Standard vs. Select – What is the Difference?**

Avera Health Plans offers a variety of [Medicare Supplement Insurance](#) plans in South Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska to help Original Medicare beneficiaries keep costs down for out-of-pocket health care expenses.

Where is Avera AgilityPlus Standard available?

- All South Dakota counties, 13 counties in northwest [Iowa](#) and 17 counties in northeast [Nebraska](#).

Where is Avera AgilityPlus Select available?

- Only in South Dakota: Brown, Lincoln, Minnehaha, McCook, Yankton, Davison, Hanson, Hughes and Stanley County

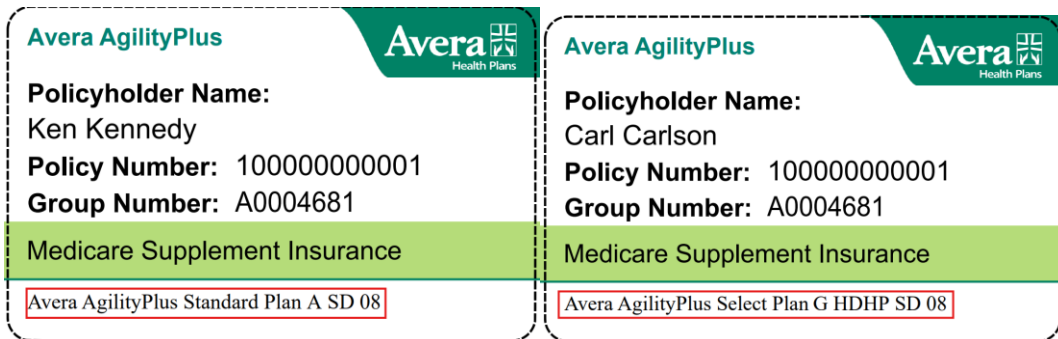
What are the key differences between AgilityPlus Standard and Select?

- AgilityPlus Standard is offered in all SD counties (plus some counties in Iowa and Nebraska), while AgilityPlus Select is only offered in nine SD counties.

- AgilityPlus Standard allows access to any Medicare approved location. AgilityPlus Select plans use a restricted network for hospitals, surgery centers and dialysis centers; a directory can be [found here](#).

Our [webpage on SD Medicare Supplement plans](#) provides a distinct breakdown between these two plans. Please note that these differences are only applicable in South Dakota, as AgilityPlus Select is only offered there.

What do the ID cards for AgilityPlus Standard and Select look like?



If you are unsure of which plan a member is enrolled in, please refer to their member ID card. The differences between the two are called out in red.

Please contact us at [888-322-2115](tel:888-322-2115) if you have any further questions.

### Is Your Information Accurate?

With the New Year approaching us, now is a great time to verify that your information with Avera Health Plans is correct and up to date. If any of the below apply to you, please follow the link to make your changes.

- I want to contract with Avera Health Plans, add an additional network, or change my tax ID number – [click here](#).
- I need to add a practitioner to an existing Avera Health Plans contract or my credentialing has lapsed – [click here](#).
- I need to add, edit or remove a practitioner and/or organization information – [click here](#). This includes demographic information, phone number, email, website, etc.

We appreciate your diligence in helping us maintain accurate records.

## New Year, New Changes

As a suggested New Year's resolution to our providers, please be sure to verify member's eligibility, benefits and ID cards beginning Jan. 1, as there may be changes.

