

**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
ALL-EMPLOYEES MEMORANDUM**

---

**DATE: NOVEMBER 21, 2023**

**EMPLOYEE MEDICAL HEALTH PLAN OF SUFFOLK COUNTY (EMHP)**

**SAFEGUARD RX PROGRAM OFFERED BY EXPRESS SCRIPTS AND  
COBRA PAYMENTS RELATED TO NY STATE DISABILITY RETIREMENT APPLICATION**

As part of our continuing effort to provide our members with important updates regarding the Employee Medical Health Plan of Suffolk County (EMHP), the Labor/Management Committee, which oversees the EMHP, would like to provide you with an important update concerning your Prescription Drug Benefits and COBRA payment for Members awaiting a disability retirement determination from the New York State Retirement System.

**SAFEGUARDRX PROGRAM (EXPRESS SCRIPTS) – EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2024**

SafeguardRx includes several voluntary programs, based upon one's medical condition, that Members can avail themselves of for assistance with the treatment and management of certain chronic health conditions. Each program is intended to assist the Plan and Members by combating rising drug costs and helping ensure important therapies and specialized care are available for Members. Each of these programs has a different unique plan design requirement, including using Express Scripts Specialty Pharmacy Accredo, exclusively, or a Smart90 network provider, along with certain clinical rules that are already in place in the EMHP's prescription drug plan.

Enrollment by the Member is voluntary, at no cost to the Member and can be cancelled without penalty at any time.

**a. Available SafeguardRx Programs**

Please note that all references made below to "remote monitoring", while many Members may appreciate the opportunity to partake in this offering, is NOT a requirement for participation by a Members in any of the applicable programs listed below.

**1. Diabetes Care Value Program**

- a. Health solution designed to motivate patients and deliver healthier outcomes to contain diabetes costs through patient engagement technologies and quality pharmacy network
- b. Digital Diabetes Prevention and Obesity Solution helps patients get healthier and avoid diagnosis
- c. Member engagement through remote blood glucose monitoring

- d. Access to the enhanced care model of the Diabetes Therapeutic Resource Center and additional engagement tools (Digital Diabetes Prevention and Obesity Solution and remote monitoring)

## **2. Pulmonary Care Value program**

- a. Holistic approach to maximize the health of patients being treated for asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- b. Member engagement through pulmonary remote monitoring
- c. Access to the enhanced care model of the Pulmonary Therapeutic Resource Center and to additional engagement tools (remote monitoring)

## **3. Cardiovascular Care Value program**

Member Outreaches for adherence and abandonment for anti-coagulant medications including Cardiovascular Therapeutic Resource Center pharmacist support 24/7.

## **4. HIV Care Value program**

- a. An enhanced approach to ensuring patients remain adherent - which is critical to disease prevention. This personalized program provides advanced technology to give the patient tools, insights and expert support to help develop healthy habits that last.
- b. Increased adherence with access to ESI's specially trained Therapeutic Resource Center clinicians.
- c. Educational material for high risk patients not on PrEP treatment.

## **5. Neurological Care Value program**

- a. This expanded program holistically tackles the clinical and financial challenges of neurological conditions and their critical medications, beginning with migraine and epilepsy, by working with Members and their prescribers to ensure clinical appropriateness and providing Members with specialized, convenient care.
- b. Specialized one-on-one support from the Express Scripts Neuroscience Therapeutic Resource Center for Members on a preventative neurological product, now including anti-epilepsy medications, providing counseling for new-to-therapy patients and adherence outreaches.

## **6. Weight Management Care Value program**

- a. With the help of weight-loss medications, and the right support tools along the way, the program's goal is that Members could substantially improve their health.
- b. Specialized, one-on-one support helps patients address and tackle their personal health barriers, including dedicated, personalized coaching from registered dietitians, nutritionists and exercise physiologists to ensure that Members know where to start and also help support them along the weight loss journey.
- c. Telemedicine through MDLIVE offering a Digital Obesity Solution with dedicated, personalized coaching.

- d. A cellular-connected scale that automatically transfers weigh-ins to a coach for review, a personalized, behavior-based weight loss program, approved by the Centers for Disease Control, that delivers actionable, and timely health signals to drive lasting behavior change, peer support through a virtual community of 15-20 individuals on their own journeys to better health, where Members can challenge and encourage each other through in-app messaging.

### **7. Hepatitis Cure Value program**

Access to the enhanced care model of the Hepatology Therapeutic Resource Center starting with the first fill.

### **8. Oncology Care Value program**

- a. Aligns medications with outcomes in the following indications: prostate cancer, non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), multiple myeloma, renal cell carcinoma, chronic myeloid leukemia (CML), breast cancer, ovarian cancer, and basal cell carcinoma.
- b. Optional genetic testing for chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) patients to provide additional information in order to optimize the treatment journey, avoid adverse drug events, improve health outcomes and drive savings.
- c. Drugs managed under the program that are not currently available at Accredo may be filled at any specialty pharmacy with access to the medication.
- d. Access to the enhanced care model of the Oncology Therapeutic Resource Center starting with the first fill.

### **9. Inflammatory + Atopic Conditions Care Value program**

- a. The Inflammatory + Atopic Conditions Care Value (IACCV) Program manages high cost, specialty drugs for patients with inflammatory and/or atopic conditions at the indication-level. By segmenting these classes and setting preferences at each indication, or category level, Members and physicians have access to clinically sound treatment options targeted specifically for their condition.
- b. Indication-level management refines utilization by indication, which segments these classes and sets treatment preferences for each disease category, enabling patients and physicians to select drugs by disease, not therapy class—ensuring only the right patient gets the right medication at the right time. Rigorous clinical documentation ensures the best therapy option is filled and patients get the medications that they need.

### **10. Multiple Sclerosis Care Value program**

Access to the enhanced care model of the Neurology & Multiple Sclerosis Therapeutic Resource Center.

### **11. Rare Conditions Care Value program**

Access to the enhanced care model of the Rare & Gene Therapies Therapeutic Resource Center

## 12. Market Events Protection program

- a. Quick action against extreme price increases, unwarranted price discrepancies and patent expirations.
- b. Drives members to the most clinically appropriate, cost-effective therapies, or dispensing channels.

## COBRA PAYMENT WHILE AWAITING NY STATE DISABILITY RETIREMENT DETERMINATION

### Disability Retirement

If a separated employee has been approved by the retirement system\* for a disability retirement, the separated employee and eligible dependents are eligible for health coverage regardless of age or service time, as a retiree. **Employees who receive a disability retirement are not required to pay health benefits contributions upon retirement.**

In order to be eligible for retiree benefits at no cost due to being granted a disability retirement, the separated employee must have submitted their application for the disability retirement to New York State while employed by Suffolk County (i.e., not separated from service or terminated). Therefore, **the effective date of the NYS Disability Retirement must be a date on which the separated employee was not otherwise terminated from employment with Suffolk County.**

For separated employees who have applied for and are awaiting NYS Disability Retirement decisions at the time of publication of this booklet, their self-pay or COBRA premium obligation will be waived and the health coverage in place at the time they were separated will continue, *provided however*, that a denial of the application will result in the obligation of the separated employee to reimburse Suffolk County for such waived premiums. In order for the waiver to go into effect, such separated employees will be required to execute a Confession of Judgment provided by the County in the amount of the waived self-pay premiums payable.

Effective 1/1/24, premiums for any separated employee who applies for a NYS disability retirement will also be waived on the conditions detailed above, however, they will be required to execute a Confession of Judgment at the time they file their application with NYS, or when EBU is notified of said filing if later, in order for their health coverage to continue while their application is being considered by NYS.

If the separated employee opts to pay interim self-pay premiums, once they are granted the disability retirement and deemed eligible for retiree benefits by EBU, these premiums will be refunded.

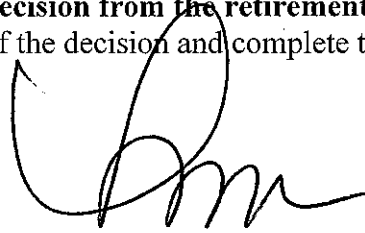
Any separated employee who is denied a NYS Disability Retirement will be responsible for reimbursement of 100% of the self-pay or COBRA “premiums” back to the date they left payroll.

For any separated employee refusing to repay any amount owed to the County, in its entirety, the County will take all steps necessary to enforce the Confession of Judgment to recover any funds owed.

\* For purposes of these provisions only, employees enrolled in TIAA-CREF shall be considered the same as enrollees in the New York State Teacher's Retirement System and employees enrolled in the New York State Voluntary Defined Contribution Program (NYSVDC) shall be considered the same as enrollees in the New York State Employees Retirement System.

**NOTE: The effective date of disability retirement must be a date on which the separated employee was not otherwise terminated from employment from the County.**

**Once you receive the decision from NYS granting your disability retirement, you must apply to EBU, in writing, within thirty (30) days of the date of the written decision from the retirement system, requesting reinstatement of EMHP coverage. You must provide a copy of the decision and complete the necessary forms for enrollment as a retiree.**



---

**LISA BLACK  
CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

**DISTRIBUTION:  
ONE COPY PER EMPLOYEE**