

The Altais Care Network Thousand Oaks/Ventura Market Frequently Asked Questions – Physicians

Network and Program Background

- ***What is the difference between an Independent Physician Association (IPA) and a Clinically Integrated Network (CIN)?***
 - An IPA is a risk bearing group of physicians typically in a healthcare managed organization (HMO) setting who share risk.
 - Altais' CIN is a selective partnership of physicians collaborating with hospitals to deliver evidence-based care, improve quality, efficiency, and coordination of care, and demonstrate value to the market.
 - We monitor the delivery of care within our CIN by analyzing utilization data, facilitating activities to support clinical improvement and coordination and by providing our physicians scorecards comparing performance to benchmarks.
 - As a high-performing robust CIN, Altais could potentially transition to an IPA, but today in the short term, Altais is establishing a fee-for-service, non-risk bearing CIN.

Payer Contracting and Rates

- ***What incentivizes health plans to contract with Altais?***
 - Coordination of care by referring patients to other network physicians can lead to fewer emergency room (ER) visits, fewer hospital admissions and shorter length of stay as in-patients, ultimately lowering the cost of care for the health plan.
 - Altais shares actionable data with physicians to improve patient outcomes and lower costs, keeping care local and delivering care with higher quality.
 - By aligning high-performing and value focused physicians, we can help keep care local and address the rising costs for health plans associated with utilization of high-cost settings.
- ***Which PPO plans will be included in this program?***
 - Altais is actively collaborating with many other major statewide and national health plans. Altais uses practice taxpayer identification numbers (TINs) to develop an interest list to demonstrate potential networks with health plans partners.
 - Various health plans are in different stages of contract finalization, with Blue Shield of California being the closest to launching.
- ***If Altais has been around for so long, why aren't there other PPO plans?***
 - Our Northern California physician network has been operating for nearly 30 years and has contracts with multiple national payers and rental network payers (17 PPO and 10 HMO plans).
 - Altais is creating a new CIN in the Thousand Oaks market which will begin with Blue Shield of California as our first plan, and we expect to be able to offer more plans in 2024 as the network grows and we continue discussions with health plan partners.

- Demonstrating a comprehensive network roster with health plan partners will help advance our discussions. We do this by providing the health plan with a listing of TINs from prospective practices. Providing your practice TIN to Altais does not obligate you to contract with us but helps us to demonstrate the potential network to the payer.

How often are contracts renegotiated?

- Each health plan has a varying term. Renegotiation terms may be every one, two, or on occasion, three years.
- When Altais negotiates contracts, Altais includes rate adjustments every year or in a strategic cadence.
- For a two-year contract, Altais will negotiate incremental rate increases annually. The contracting team tracks renewals and begins renewal cycles 6 months in advance of the effective date.
- ***Are surgical sub-specialties included in the contracting?***
 - Yes, the CIN is comprised of primary care physicians (PCPs) and every specialty except for behavioral health, and some ancillary specialties like occupational, physical and speech therapy.
- ***Can a physician contract with Altais and separately associate with other entities?***
 - If Altais holds a payer contract, the physicians cannot be contracted with the same payer outside of Altais. The contractual obligation and expectation are that you will bill through Altais for services.
 - If you join Altais, there is no need to terminate your existing payer contract. Your contract will become dormant in the health plan system. When you join Altais, the plan will list the physician under the Altais Care Network taxpayer identification number (TIN).
- ***If Altais does not have a contract in place, can the physician contract through a different entity?***
 - If Altais holds the contract, the contractual obligation is that the claim would come through Altais.
 - If Altais holds the Commercial PPO contract but doesn't offer a Medicare PPO, the physician may contract through a different entity to secure the Medicare PPO contract.
- ***What does it mean to have a "dormant" contract?***
 - Physicians will not need to terminate their individual contract with payers to participate.
 - Instead, the physician will join Altais Care Network and only need to assign the Altais Care Network TIN as the primary while their individual TIN is pushed down to a secondary level "dormant". This will then associate the individual physician TIN with Altais Care Network.
 - If the physician decides to terminate with Altais, the individual TIN will simply revert to the primary TIN and your previously contracted rates would apply.
- ***What if a physician already belongs to another CIN and the contracted rate with that CIN is better than the Altais Care Network rates?***
 - Our goal is to offer improved reimbursement rates. You should review and make the best business decision for your practice.

- As the network grows and Altais demonstrates value through improved quality performance Altais can continue to negotiate rate enhancements.
- **What are the estimated reimbursement rates for contracted payers?**
 - Confidentiality agreements with our health plan partners restrict us from sharing rate information without a signed non-disclosure agreement (NDA) from our prospective physicians.
 - You can download an NDA by visiting our Altais Care Network Program Information Site or request a copy be emailed to you by emailing altaisnetworkdevelopment@altais.com.
 - Once Altais has a signed NDA on file, Altais can provide the confidential PPO Rate Grid when it becomes available.
- **Are there rate differentials for standard payer PPO plans and Covered CA PPO rates?**
 - Yes, there are rate differentials for Covered CA, Standard Network, and Medicare Advantage.
- **Will physicians receive the rates per code billed per specialty?**
 - If a physician signs an NDA, Altais can share the rate tiers and proprietary fee schedules.
 - Physicians can then identify which codes are billed most often and conduct a business review.
- **Will physician extenders (Physician Assistants (PAs) and Nurse Practitioners (NPs)) be part of the contract?**
 - Yes, they will be included and will also need to be credentialed.

Program Fees, Implementation and Other Details

- **What is the lead time to set up?**
 - Lead time is typically 30-45 days.
- **Will ERAs (Electronic Remittance Advice) be received for the claim?**
 - Yes
- **What is the administration fee?**
 - Altais will share more information on the administration fee as soon as it is available.
- **Is the administration fee billed per claim?**
 - Yes
- **Is the administration fee charged after the reimbursement or collected at the time of billing?**
 - Once the claim is submitted, Altais will send the claim to the health plan. The health plan sends it back to Altais and Altais then audits the claim and deducts the administration fee before sending payment to the physician.
- **Would this include all evaluation and management codes (E/MS)?**
 - Yes, the contracted rates would include labs, radiology, injections, anesthesia, and durable medical equipment with potentially varying rates by service type.

Participation and Termination

- **How can I fill out a credentialing application?**
 - Check your inbox for an email with instructions on “Next Steps” that will take you to our [Altai Care Network Program Information Page](#) or email us at altaisnetworkdevelopment@altais.com. Check your inbox for an email with instructions on “Next Steps” that will take you to our Altai Care Network Program Information Page or email us at altaisnetworkdevelopment@altais.com.
 - We recommend filling out the credentialing application first to start the process. Once your application has been reviewed and approved, we will send a contract via DocuSign for your review.
- **How do Altai terminate the arrangement with Altai if it doesn't work out?**
 - The initial contract term with Altai will be 1 year or 2 years, Altai will share once the initial term is finalized.
 - Physicians can also terminate their contract with a 90-day written notice.
- **When will contract cancellations become effective?**
 - a. Each health plan has its own processing time, and Altai will notify the health plans on a weekly basis.
 - It can take from 14-45 days depending on the health plan.