

MEDIA CONTACTS:

UCare - Wendy Wicks, 612-306-3698
wwicks@ucare.org

Essentia Health – Louie St. George III, 218-428-1781
Louie.StGeorge@EssentiaHealth.org

EssentiaCare* adds new \$0 premium plan, expanded coverage area and cost savings

Medicare Advantage plan from UCare and Essentia Health comes to Pine County in 2021

MINNEAPOLIS, Oct. 6, 2020 – [UCare](#), a nonprofit health plan, and [Essentia Health](#), an integrated health system, are increasing value in their existing [EssentiaCare](#) plans – Secure and Grand – and introducing a new \$0 premium Access plan in 2021. Access will be available in newly added Pine County, as well as Bayfield, Douglas and Washburn counties in Wisconsin. Secure and Grand will be available in all 11 northern Minnesota counties and in the three Wisconsin counties.

EssentiaCare is a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) Medicare Advantage plan combining the strengths of UCare’s Medicare coverage with Essentia Health’s quality care and network of specialists, physicians and advanced practitioners**. It currently serves around 2,000 members and features Essentia Health’s extensive network of physicians, advanced practitioners, clinics and hospitals, including access to the Mayo Clinic for rare or complex health issues. UCare and Essentia Health have 50/50 equity in the plan’s administration and risk to drive quality results.

In 2021, members will have lower monthly and out-of-pocket costs, and several new benefits:

- Reduced premiums and reduced copays on key services such as specialty care
- A new hearing aid allowance in the Grand plan
- A new over-the-counter allowance on all plans
- Fixed insulin costs at \$30-35/month for covered insulin and SHINGRIX*** vaccine moved to Tier 1 low-cost pricing

“This year we focused on bringing more value to our members in northern Minnesota and western Wisconsin. We know how precious every health care dollar is to them, and we were pleased to offer financial relief through lower premiums and out-of-pocket costs, plus additional benefits,” said Ghita Worcester, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs and Chief Marketing Officer. “This partnership supports members with high-value coverage and high-quality health care from providers they know and trust.”

“We have a unique partnership designed to deliver trusted, affordable care. This program allows us to better understand our patients, facilitating personal care to meet their individual needs. We’re excited to support the health and vitality of our Medicare enrollees,” said Michael Van Scoy, MD, Essentia Health medical director.

Medicare shoppers can learn about 2021 EssentiaCare plans by:

- Visiting [UCare's EssentiaCare site](#)
- Attending an [online meeting](#)
- Talking with their insurance broker
- Calling UCare sales at 1-855-432-7027, 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday
- Emailing sales@ucare.org

* EssentiaCare is a trademark of Essentia Health

** Other providers available in our network

*** SHINGRIX is a registered trademark of GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals, S.A.

About UCare

[UCare](#) is an independent, nonprofit health plan providing health care and administrative services to more than 500,000 members throughout Minnesota and parts of western Wisconsin. UCare partners with health care providers, counties, and community organizations to create and deliver Medicare, Medicaid and Individual & Family health plans. All of its plans are National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) certified.

The health plan addresses health care disparities and care access issues through a broad array of community initiatives. UCare has received Top Workplaces honors from the Star Tribune for ten consecutive years since the rankings began in 2010.

About Essentia Health

[Essentia Health](#) is an integrated health system serving patients in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and North Dakota.

Headquartered in Duluth, Minnesota, Essentia Health combines the strengths and talents of 13,500 employees, including more than 2,100 physicians and advanced practitioners, who serve our patients and communities through the mission of being called to make a healthy difference in people’s lives.

Essentia Health, which includes many Catholic facilities, is guided by the values of Quality, Hospitality, Respect, Joy, Justice, Stewardship, and Teamwork. The organization lives out its mission by having a patient-centered focus at 14 hospitals, 70 clinics, six long-term care facilities, three assisted living facilities, three independent living facilities, five ambulance services and one research institute.

Essentia Health is accredited as an Accountable Care Organization by the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

Additional Information

This information is not a complete description of benefits. Call 1-877-523-1518 (TTY users call 1-800-688-2534) for more information.

EssentiaCare is a PPO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in EssentiaCare depends on contract renewal.

#

Y0120_8783_10147_102020_M