

**Office of Human Resources**

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To: UAMS Employees in Northwest Arkansas  
From: Becky Goins, Benefits Director  
Date: September 18, 2006  
Subject: NWA Health Care Providers

The University of Arkansas has recently learned that Northwest Health System/PremierCare Northwest has decided to cease being a participating provider for QualChoice effective October 19, 2006.

While this is disappointing to us; the University of Arkansas health plan still maintains a large provider network in Northwest Arkansas through QualChoice. This network includes 636 physicians and seven hospitals in Washington, Benton, Madison, and Carroll Counties. In 2005-2006, 90% of the inpatient services received by University of Arkansas members were provided utilization at in-network facilities that will remain in the QualChoice network. Please read below for a description of how this development will affect your situation.

**Hospitals**

As a result of this decision by Northwest Health System/PremierCare Northwest, the following hospitals will **not** be listed as in-network facilities as of October 19, 2006:

Northwest Medical Center - Springdale  
Northwest Medical Center - Bentonville  
Willow Creek Women's Hospital

Your in-network hospitals in Northwest Arkansas area will continue to include:

Washington Regional Medical Center (Fayetteville)  
St. Mary's Hospital/Mercy Health Center (Rogers)  
Eureka Springs Hospital (Eureka Springs)  
Siloam Springs Memorial Hospital (Siloam Springs)  
St. John's Hospital (Berryville)  
St John's Hospital (Springfield, Mo)  
Gravette Medical Center

**Physicians**

QualChoice is in the process of contacting all Northwest Health System/PremierCare Northwest physicians affected by this development and offering them the opportunity to remain in the QualChoice network. Once QualChoice determines how many of these

physicians elect to remain in the QualChoice network, this information will be communicated to you. For the physicians electing not to continue participation in the QualChoice network, the effective date of termination will be October 19, 2006. The Provider Search on the QualChoice website, [www.qcark.com](http://www.qcark.com), has been updated to exclude the Premier Care physicians. You can access that website to determine which doctors will continue to be QualChoice providers. Those PremierCare Physicians who elect to continue their QualChoice participation will be added back to the on-line provider listing.

### **Continuity of Care**

Although October 19, 2006 is the effective date of this change in the QualChoice provider network, the University of Arkansas health plan will offer appropriate continuity of care beyond the October 19, 2006 deadline. The following are some guidelines that will be applied for affected members:

1. Physician appointments and Surgeries scheduled **before** October 19, 2006 at Northwest Medical Centers in Springdale and Bentonville must be pre-authorized by QualChoice in order to receive in-network benefits even if the scheduled date for the procedure is beyond the October 19 deadline. You can receive this pre-authorization by contacting the QualChoice customer service team at 800-235-7111. However, the procedure must be performed by December 31, 2006 to receive in-network benefits coverage.
2. Physician appointments and Surgeries scheduled **after** October 19, 2006 at Northwest Medical Centers in Springdale and Bentonville must be performed at another in-network hospital to receive maximum plan benefits.
3. Maternity deliveries at Northwest Medical Centers in Springdale or Bentonville or Willow Creek Women's Hospital will be covered through delivery as long as they are pre-authorized through QualChoice by October 19, 2006. You can receive this pre-authorization by contacting the QualChoice customer service team at 800-235-7111. Appropriate follow-up care, not to exceed 90 days from date of delivery, also will be covered.
4. The University of Arkansas health plan requires a primary care physician (PCP) selection. If you currently have a PremierCare PCP who will not be participating in the QualChoice network beyond the October 19, 2006 deadline, you will need to change to a physician who will be in the QualChoice network in order to receive in-network benefits. You need to make this change no later than October 19, 2006 or you will have reduced benefits. You may change your PCP via the QualChoice Website at [www.qcark.com](http://www.qcark.com) or by calling QualChoice directly at 1-800-235-7111.
5. Please make sure that if you or your family members are currently seeing a PremierCare Northwest Physician that you confirm they are still participating as a QualChoice provider.

If you have any questions, please contact Human Resources/Employee Services at (501) 686-5650. If you have questions about the provider network, please call QualChoice at 800-235-7111.