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January 4, 2021

Elizabeth Fassbender  
Assistant Director, Economic and Regulatory Affairs  
College of American Pathologists  
1001 G Street, NW, Suite 425 West  
Washington, DC 20001

**Re: Designated Diagnostic Provider program**

Dear Elizabeth:

We are continuing our work toward the Triple Aim of better care, better health and lower costs for UnitedHealthcare members. Members can pay significantly more if laboratory services are performed at an outpatient hospital facility instead of a free-standing facility. Starting July 1st, 2021, there will be a new benefit design for UnitedHealthcare fully insured commercial members for outpatient laboratory services. Designated Diagnostic Provider benefit plans are designed to maximize member benefits for lab services, while maintaining access to network of providers, by ensuring laboratory services go to a provider who has met both efficiency and quality standards.

Designated Diagnostic Provider helps our members choose cost-effective and high-quality providers. Members enrolled in Designated Diagnostic Provider plans will receive information on their new plan design and be directed to a provider that meets Designated Diagnostic Provider requirements. Under this benefit plan, outpatient laboratory services are only covered for members when delivered by a Designated Diagnostic Provider laboratory. If a member receives outpatient laboratory services from a provider that is not a Designated Diagnostic Provider laboratory, those services will not be covered.

UnitedHealthcare will be inviting all network free-standing and outpatient hospital laboratories to meet Designated Diagnostic Provider laboratory efficiency and quality requirements. All Preferred Lab Network providers will be considered Designated Diagnostic Provider facilities. Currently contracted laboratory providers that do not meet Designated Diagnostic Provider standards will remain in network with UnitedHealthcare.

We understand that your members may have questions about Designated Diagnostic Provider benefit plan designs and the Designated Diagnostic Provider standards validation process. Please review additional details after Jan. 1, 2021, at [UHCprovider.com/DDP](https://UHCprovider.com/DDP) or let me know if you would like to discuss further. We are open to scheduling time with our subject matter experts and your team at the association, and you can reach me to schedule at [abieck@uhc.com](mailto:abieck@uhc.com).

Together, we can make the health system work better for everyone by consistently promoting cost-effective laboratory testing providers that deliver safe, high-quality care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley Bieck". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Ashley Bieck  
Vice President, National Provider Advocacy  
UnitedHealthcare

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