

# Walmart, UnitedHealth ink agreement to offer data-powered preventive care

Article

**The news:** Walmart and UnitedHealth Group signed a 10-year deal to offer preventive care for seniors and Medicare beneficiaries.

- Walmart and UnitedHealth Group will team up at 15 Walmart Health locations in Florida and Georgia in 2023 to provide preventive care for people ages 65+.
- UnitedHealthcare Choice Plus PPO members can access Walmart Health virtual care.
- Walmart Health clinicians will use UnitedHealth's **Optum** analytics and decision support tools to boost value-based care (VBC).
- The two companies will offer a cobranded Medicare Advantage plan called **UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage Walmart Flex**.

**Trendspotting:** Walmart will keep pace with **CVS Health** and **Walgreens Boots Alliance** by expanding its physician network, offering VBC, and accessing analytics.

- For example, CVS, which owns **Aetna**, announced it will acquire **Signify Health** for about **\$8 billion** to expand its value-based care network and access Signify's proprietary analytics platform. CVS will benefit from Signify's analytics technology, while Walmart will leverage Optum's analytics tools to gain insight on the social determinants of health (SDOH) for patient populations.
- Meanwhile, Walgreens invested **\$5.2 billion** in primary care provider **VillageMD** in October 2021 to make gains in the retail clinic battle.

**Analytics informs care:** Companies such as Walmart and CVS recognize the value of tools like Optum and Signify in addressing patients' SDOH factors.

- **41% of Medscape's physician audience** considered investment in the "technological and human capacity to connect patients with community resources they need to be healthy" as very important, per an April 2022 Physicians Foundation survey.

## Importance of Select Strategies in Supporting US Physicians in Addressing Their Patients' Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), Feb 2022

% of respondents

	Very important	Somewhat important
Significantly reducing existing payer reporting requirements and other administrative burdens to provide the necessary time to help address SDOH	45%	35%
Investing in community capacity to address patients' SDOH	43%	38%
Investing in the technological and human capacity to connect patients with community resources they need to be healthy	41%	40%
Creating financial incentives for physician-directed efforts to address SDOH (e.g., SDOH screening, workforces to navigate patients to community resources)	40%	38%
Screening patients to identify social needs	38%	43%
Include SDOH in risk scoring that insurance companies use to determine patient complexity	35%	40%
Capturing standard patient-level SDOH to inform efforts to reduce health disparities	25%	45%
Capturing standard patient-level SDOH data to stratify clinical and cost-of-data purposes of risk adjustment	23%	44%
Prioritizing the shift to value-based care	23%	33%

Note: n=1,502; the sample for this study represents the Medscape online population; only "somewhat important" and "very important" responses shown  
Source: The Physicians Foundation, "2022 Survey of America's Physicians: Part One," April 5, 2022

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Under VBC contracts, providers use data analytics to gain insight on which patients will experience adverse health outcomes—and doctors get paid according to their patients' health outcomes. Optum analytics will help Walmart Health physicians in underserved areas in Florida and Georgia (and later other areas) gain key insights on the drivers of health conditions—which predominantly include SDOH factors like housing instability, food insufficiency, and transportation. Meanwhile, UnitedHealth will benefit from the deal by expanding the reach of its Medicare Advantage plans.

**Go deeper:** Read more about SDOH programs in our [Social Determinants of Health Investments report](#).

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