

# MOVE YOUR PODIATRY PRACTICE TO THE NEXT LEVEL WITH AMERICAN SPECIALTY HEALTH



**Do you want to develop your practice and expand your patient base?**

**Do you want to increase referrals from regional and national health plans?**

If you answered YES to these questions, then American Specialty Health (ASH) can help! ASH is a leading personal health services organization that covers millions of people nationwide by providing musculoskeletal practitioner network, health and wellness coaching, and fitness programs to health plans, insurance carriers, employer groups, and trust funds.

## ASH programs and services include:

- Acupuncture
- Athletic training
- Chiropractic
- Fitness and exercise programs
- Health and wellness coaching
- Naprapathy
- Naturopathy
- Nutrition services
- Occupational therapy
- Oriental medicine
- Physical therapy
- Podiatry
- Speech therapy
- Therapeutic massage

Since our inception in 1987, ASH and its subsidiaries have achieved a variety of industry firsts, including the first specialty group for chiropractic and acupuncture to receive NCQA certifications for Utilization Management and Credentialing. ASH's subsidiaries cover more than 43 million Americans under their benefit administration programs alone.

## WHY JOIN ASH?

- Increased patient access
- Online support through the ASHLink® website
- Online reimbursement submission and payment
- Standardized paperwork and administration
- Practitioner initiatives—we listen to you!
- No application fee or annual fee
- Listing on health plan client websites
- Access to new benefit plans and programs as they become available

## PRODUCTS

American Specialty Health Incorporated subsidiaries offer or administer a series of products designed to meet the full range of needs and requirements of full-service health plans, insurance carriers, employer groups, school districts, municipalities, and union trust funds. ASH offers benefit plans as well as ChooseHealthy®, a discount program.

### BENEFIT PLANS

ASH subsidiaries administer HMO, PPO, POS, OAP, EPO, Medicaid, and Medicare Advantage programs on behalf of health plan clients and employer groups. Access to contracted practitioners may be direct or may require a primary care physician referral.

Depending on the health plan or employer group requirements, medical necessity review may or may not be required prior to reimbursement of services. Members have an annual benefit limit, as well as a deductible copayment or coinsurance due to the contracted practitioner at each visit.

Through our plans, practitioners that are part of our group may be better positioned to attract more business in the process.

### HOW IT WORKS

- Eligible members select a practitioner and call to make an appointment.
- Practitioner examines member and provides necessary treatment.
- Practitioner submits treatment plan to ASH for review of services beyond those covered under the Medical Necessity Review Waiver (see MNR Waiver section)
- Treatment plans are reviewed by peers.
- Some services may require pre-certification; refer to the Client Summary for additional details.
- Each treating practitioner works with an ASH clinical quality evaluation manager who is in the same specialty field.
- ASH fully reviews most treatment plans within 2 business days of receipt. If an ASH contracted practitioner has any questions regarding a treatment plan, the practitioner may call an ASH clinical quality evaluation manager via a toll-free number.

### ASH provides comprehensive support services.

- Each practitioner has toll-free access to ASH's customer service department Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. PT.
- Additional support includes practitioner education webinars and information available in the “Resources” section of ASHLink. (More information on ASHLink follows.)

## MNR WAIVER

Practitioners do not have to submit for verification of medical necessity for many routine services provided to Members on the first date of service, each calendar year.

## THE CHOOSEHEALTHY® PROGRAM

The ChooseHealthy program provides a unique way for ASH and its contracted practitioners to work with health plans that may be hesitant to offer specialty health care benefits. It provides a mechanism for the health plan to provide members with discounted access to specialty health care and to learn about the benefits of these services.

Under this program, members have direct access to practitioners; no medical referral is required. Contracted practitioners give a discount in their fees to the members and members pay contracted practitioners directly for services rendered. The contracted practitioner is not required to obtain approval or to submit reimbursements, and there are no annual limits to this program. The health plan actively promotes the program to its members and encourages members to access contracted practitioners.

## IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND CUT COSTS

### ASHLINK

To more effectively integrate with our contracted practitioners, ASHLink provides an efficient online mechanism for a variety of interactions between ASH and our contracted practitioners. ASH utilizes this technology system to manage our health quality improvement systems and support transactions with practitioners. Through ASHLink, contracted practitioners can:

- Exchange clinical information about individual cases for quality assurance and medical necessity review
- Reference clinical practice guidelines to support the delivery of health care services
- Check for member eligibility verification and benefits
- Submit clinical appeals

In addition, a comprehensive educational library of information about working within the ASH system is available.

Contracted practitioners can streamline routine office procedures, such as member eligibility verification and electronic reimbursement submissions. ASHLink is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, which helps practitioners and their office staff reduce time spent on the phone, and allows a faster response time and access to all necessary information required to integrate with ASH.

Once you have completed the credentialing process and have received your welcome letter, you can activate your ASHLink account by:

- Logging on to [www.ASHLink.com](http://www.ASHLink.com)
- Clicking the “Online Activation Process” link
- Using the User ID and PIN provided in your welcome letter

Once your account is activated, you can begin submitting electronic transactions immediately.

### ASHLINK ACCOUNT RESOURCES

- Practitioner Services Agreement
- Client summaries
- Operations manual
- Forms
- Practitioner education library
- Notifications
- Value-Added Program discounts
- Newsletters

## EARN INCENTIVES

You can increase your office revenue through the Incentive Payment Program (IPP). You may be eligible for incentive payments under the IPP based on performance including your use of ASHLink and documenting quality activities such as the use of Functional Outcome Measure (FOMs) and providing home care instructions. Incentive payments are described further in Attachment J of the Practitioner Services Agreement.

## DIRECT DEPOSIT

In addition to conserving paper and being environmentally friendly, there are additional bonuses when you sign up for our direct deposit program. The advantages of participating in the program include:

- **Quick payment processing** (average turnaround time from receipt of a reimbursement sent in via ASHLink to direct deposit takes less than 4 business days)
- Easy tracking through your ASHLink account
- Faster access to your funds
- Time savings—no going to the bank

Last year, ASH paid more than \$8.3 million to practitioners in ASHLink incentives.

## CREDENTIALING AND GUIDELINES

### WHAT TO EXPECT

Upon successful submission of the application materials, the credentialing process will begin.

## CREDENTIALING

If additional information is needed or if there is anything missing from the credentialing materials you submitted, you will receive communication from an ASH credentialing department representative. The following documents will be needed to consider an application complete:

- Credentialing Application
- Practitioner Services Agreement
- W-9
- Election to Participate Form (where applicable)
- Copy of your Professional Liability (Malpractice) Insurance

If you have questions regarding ASH's clinical guidelines at any time during the credentialing process, you may refer to the Clinical Quality and Clinical Practice Guidelines section by going to **[www.ashlink.com](http://www.ashlink.com) and navigating to Resources > Providers > Podiatry > Clinical Quality and Clinical Practice Guidelines > Clinical Practice Guidelines (All)**. Additionally, you may also call to request a phone appointment with one of our clinicians. Our clinicians are peers in your same field of expertise and are here to answer your questions regarding matters of a clinical nature.

ASH strives to be as efficient as possible and, in many cases, we can complete your credentialing in as little as 45 - 60 days.

**Note:** ASH follows all state guidelines in accordance with NCQA regarding limited time frames for processing credentialing applications. As such, it is very important that you return all needed documents within a timely manner (or as soon as possible) to prevent a possible credentialing cancellation.

## ASH GUIDELINES

Please review our guidelines as follows:

- **Agreement:** Execute agreement(s) with ASH to participate in benefit plans and programs.
- **Credentialing:** Complete the practitioner credentialing application form for each practitioner in your facility and provide supporting documentation consisting of Attachment A and signature page from the Practitioner Services Agreement and Professional Liability (Malpractice) face sheet.
- **Peer Review:** Reimbursement for services may be subject to peer review. Peer medical necessity review is provided by licensed podiatrists.
- **Quality Management:** Participate in ASH's or the health plan's appeals, grievance, and dispute processes if there are any disagreements regarding coverage, medical necessity review decisions, or administrative actions.
- **Fee Schedule Amounts:** Accept the ASH fee schedule amounts as payment in full. There is no allowance of "balance billing" members for any reductions in payment or unapproved services.
- **Professional Liability (Malpractice) Insurance Coverage;** refer to agreement for requirement.

## QUALITY

### OUR COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

One of our objectives is to support organizational, process, service, and clinical quality improvement activities. By identifying opportunities for improvement and implementing corrective actions where necessary, we continue to enhance the quality of care and service rendered to our members, your patients.

Additionally, our specialty health care system exists to enhance and strengthen the practitioner-patient interface, to positively influence the quality of clinical outcomes, and to provide access to clinically necessary and appropriate services for all members. It is a "peer-based" system with licensed podiatrists rendering all credentialing and medical necessity review decisions.

Our commitment to quality relies on high clinical and member satisfaction outcomes, and the enhancement of our members' health and well-being.

## OUR MISSION

**TO EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS TO LIVE HEALTHIER.**

### Specialty Network Management URAC and NCQA Accreditations

(includes chiropractic, acupuncture, massage therapy, naturopathy, nutrition services, physical therapy, and speech therapy programs)



**HITRUST**  
CSF Certification

## READY TO JOIN?

For more information, visit [ASHLink.com](https://www.ashlink.com) and select “Join Our Network” at the top of the page. Or call a practitioner recruitment representative at **888.511.2743**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. PT.

## ARE YOU REGISTERED WITH CAQH?

ASH participates with the Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH) and is able to download practitioner applications once we receive your Practitioner Services Agreement Signature Page. It is important to note that all applicants to CAQH must give global authorization.

Please log in to your CAQH account, click the Authorization tab, and select American Specialty Health, Inc. from the list. Doing this will authorize ASH to access your application information. Apply today by completing, signing, and returning:

- The ASH signature page
- Attachment A
- W-9 form
- Your CAQH identification number

Once we receive these, we will begin the credentialing process.