



July 1, 2024

Dear Patient,

Our records show that Cigna is your health insurer. Please read this letter carefully as it contains important information about your ability to continue to access Hunterdon Health providers at the in-network level of care.

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, Hunterdon Medical Center will celebrate its 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary caring for our community. Our commitment to healthcare remains rooted within our 178-bed teaching hospital and our dedicated physician partners who serve patients at over 100 primary and specialty practice sites throughout Hunterdon, Somerset, Mercer, Warren and Morris counties. As we continue to evolve and grow to meet the needs of an expanding and vibrant community, our patients will always be at the center of our care.

Like most healthcare providers across the country, we're facing significant challenges due to rising costs of inflation, staffing/supply costs and physician/healthcare provider shortages to provide patient care. As a not-for-profit medical center (the sole hospital in Hunterdon County) and one of only six independent health systems left in New Jersey, remaining financially viable is of tantamount importance. For the past six months, we have been negotiating a new contract with Cigna and unfortunately those discussions are at an impasse.

Our approach has always been to be a reasonable partner with health insurers. Cigna has not agreed to provide adequate cost of living adjustments that are critical to keeping physician practices and our hospital viable so we can continue to provide quality healthcare services. We find their stance to be unreasonable, especially in light of the fact that Cigna boasted a \$5.2 BILLION profit in 2023.

Cigna's bottom line drives profits to its shareholders. Hunterdon Health's bottom line allows us to provide necessary care to the people in our community.

### **What does this mean if you have Cigna insurance?**

If Hunterdon Health is unable to reach an agreement, our physicians will be considered out of network for patients with Cigna insurance as of August 1<sup>st</sup> and Hunterdon Medical Center will be out of network as of September 15th. This means patients with Cigna coverage may have to pay more out of pocket or find a new provider for necessary care. As a Cigna member, you will need to call Cigna to determine if there are any other network restrictions under your plan. Please note emergency care is always covered at the in-network benefit level.

If in-network access to Hunterdon Medical Center and its physicians is important to you, we ask that you consider taking the following actions:

- **Call Cigna.** Let them know that having a relationship with a trusted Hunterdon physician is important and that, as the sole community hospital in Hunterdon County, it is vital that you have in-network access to necessary hospital care close to home.
- **Discuss this with your Human Resources representative.** Employers make decisions regarding which benefit plans to offer their employees. There are many other insurance plan options available that provide in-network access to Hunterdon Medical Center and its many affiliated physicians.

Please know we will continue to advocate for our Cigna patients to maintain their in-network access.

Sincerely,

*Kristen L. Silberstein*  
Executive Director/CEO  
Hunterdon HealthCare Partners