

## Meridian Health Plan of Illinois Becomes First Medicaid Health Plan in U.S. to Offer Incentives to Help Hospitals Achieve Health Care Equity Certification from The Joint Commission - Mar 20, 2024

Certification program advances health equity and addresses disparities that hinder patients' access to high-quality care

CHICAGO, March 20, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- [Meridian Health Plan of Illinois, Inc.](#) (Meridian), a provider of government-sponsored managed care services to families, children, seniors, and individuals with complex medical needs and wholly-owned subsidiary of [Centene Corporation](#), today announced it will reimburse a portion of the certification fee for in-network Illinois hospitals that complete the [Health Care Equity \(HCE\) Certification](#) program offered by [The Joint Commission](#).

Meridian is actively encouraging participation in the HCE Certification. The health plan's support of the program aims to ensure in-network hospitals formalize structures, processes, and goals for identifying and addressing health care disparities in the communities they serve. Reimbursement of the annual application fee will be 25% for Safety Net and Critical Access hospitals, while all other hospitals will be reimbursed 15%.

"We're thrilled to be the first Medicaid health plan in the country to leverage The Joint Commission's Health Care Equity Certification to advance our mission to transform the health of the community, one person at a time," said Cristal Gary, Meridian Plan President and CEO. "Together, we will work to ensure our providers have the right resources and support to deliver high-quality and equitable care with dignity and respect for all people we collectively serve."

Established on July 1, 2023, The Joint Commission's HCE Certification program offers hospitals a comprehensive framework to improve health equity efforts through assessment, monitoring and a focus on diversity, inclusion, and accessibility to create measurable impact.

"Health care equity is not only an issue of social justice, but also a fundamental issue of patient safety and quality of care," said Jonathan B. Perlin, MD, PhD, MSHA, MACP, FACMI, The Joint Commission enterprise President and CEO. "The Health Care Equity Certification Program distinguishes those organizations making health care equity a strategic priority, and those that are collaborating with patients, families, caregivers, and external organizations to identify and address needs that help translate equitable health care into better outcomes."

[Learn more](#) about Meridian's support of the HCE Certification program.

### About Meridian Health Plan of Illinois

Meridian Health Plan of Illinois, Inc. and its family of health plans provide government-sponsored managed care services to families, children, seniors, and individuals with complex medical needs. This includes Meridian's Medicaid and Medicare-Medicaid plans, and YouthCare HealthChoice Illinois. YouthCare is a specialized program designed to address the healthcare needs of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) youth in out-of-home placement and former foster youth. Meridian connects members to care and offers comprehensive services to support lifelong health and wellness. Meridian is a wholly owned subsidiary of [Centene Corporation](#), a leading healthcare enterprise committed to helping people live healthier lives. Learn more at [ILmeridian.com](#).

SOURCE Meridian of Illinois

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