



## **24-Hour Limit for Hospital Outpatient Observation Stays, Effective Jan. 1, 2017**

Effective Jan. 1, 2017, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Maryland will deny claims for hospital observation stays of 24 hours or longer as non-covered services. We are making this change per the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene transmittal [PT 16-17](#), which states that Maryland Medicaid agencies may only reimburse hospitals for up to 24 hours in an outpatient setting, including observation stays.

As a result, we will no longer require hospitals to submit medical records for medical necessity review of observation stays exceeding 24 hours since these stays will not be reimbursed. If an overpayment occurs while we are updating our systems to accommodate this change, we will work to recover that overpayment according to state regulations.

If you have questions, please call Provider Services at 800-445-1638. Thank you.