



Partnership Between VNS Health and Elderwood Health Plan Aims to Bolster Local Managed Long-Term Care in Western New York



News 4 Buffalo, Feb 21, 2024

VNS Health, which operates the largest nonprofit managed long-term care plan (MLTC) in New York State, has entered into an agreement with Elderwood Health Plan (Elderwood) to enroll members of Elderwood's MLTC Plan into VNS Health's MLTC, pending New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) approval.

Under this new partnering agreement, Elderwood will continue to play a key role in the care of homebound older adults and people with disabilities in Western New York. Through a recently formed Independent Practice Association (IPA), Elderwood would manage the care of its former members who enroll in the VNS Health MLTC, along with any new and existing VNS Health members who reside in Erie, Genesee, Monroe, Niagara, Orleans and Wyoming counties. The IPA will include delegated care management, local provider relations, and certain administrative functions. Although Elderwood Health Plan is slated to cease its operations as an MLTC as of May 1, 2024, the IPA ensures a seamless transition for Elderwood members, staff, and providers.

The VNS Health–Elderwood partnership is in keeping with provisions enacted in the 2023-2024 New York State (NYS) Budget that require all MLTCs to have a Medicare Advantage Dual Eligible Special Needs Plan (D-SNP), with 3 or more stars.

Integrated benefits for Medicaid members who have Medicare is a priority for the NYS Department of Health this year. With approval by NYS DOH, the partnership will allow MLTC members from Elderwood to transfer to VNS Health, or to choose another MLTC plan in the area.

According to the agreement between the two organizations, VNS Health's MLTC plan will automatically take on any of the approximately 1,200 members now enrolled in Elderwood Health Plan who do not

elect to join another MLTC plan in the area following the 60-day window after notification of the transition by NYS DOH.

“VNS Health and Elderwood are committed to ensuring this transition is a smooth one, with no disruption or change in care for any Elderwood members moving over to VNS Health’s MLTC,” notes **Dan Savitt, President and CEO of VNS Health**. *“We’re honored that Elderwood has entrusted its plan members to us, and we are committed to working closely with the new Elderwood IPA to provide outstanding integrated MLTC benefits and services.”*

“Elderwood is excited to find a partnership in VNS Health and believe this will benefit our members. VNS Health understands the importance of our Western New York community and keeping a local presence through Elderwood. We share the same values of putting our members, community, and employees first, and are excited to pursue this new opportunity.” – **Dr. Jeffrey Rubin, Co-Owner and Co-President of Elderwood Health Plan**

About [VNS Health](#):

VNS Health is one of the nation’s largest nonprofit home and community-based health care organizations. Innovating in health care for more than 130 years, our commitment to health and well-being is what drives us—we help people live, age, and heal where they feel most comfortable, in their own homes, connected to their family and community. **VNS Health** offers a full range of health care services, solutions and health plans designed to simplify the health care experience and meet the diverse and complex needs of those we serve in New York City, Westchester, Long Island and parts of Upstate New York.

WIVB-TV, channel 4 (UHF digital channel 36), is the CBS affiliate in Buffalo, New York. Signing on in 1947, WIVB was Buffalo’s first television station. News 4’s award-winning news product produces more hours of local news than any other station in the market. News 4 Buffalo is a proud member of Nexstar Media Group, Inc. and the Nexstar Nation. It reaches a potential audience of 1,075,710.