



Contract Administration

TO: PEF Membership, Executive Board Members, Field Services
FROM: Erika Frasier, Health Benefits Specialist
DATE: July 5, 2024
RE: **The Empire Plan's Contract with St. Peter's Health Partners**

There have been concerns raised about St. Peter's Health Partners contract termination/ negotiations with UnitedHealthcare (UHC). PEF has been notified by the State that the contract renewal negotiations between UnitedHealthcare, The Empire Plan's Medical/Surgical Program administrator, and St. Peter's Health Partners in New York's Capital District are underway and will not impact NYSHIP Empire Plan members.

UnitedHealthcare and St. Peter's Health Systems have been in negotiations and the current agreement expired effective Monday, July 1, 2024. While the contract expiration means that St. Peter's Health Systems will no longer be part of the UnitedHealthcare network of providers, there is a state mandated two-month cooling off period during which negotiations are expected to continue. This gives patients covered by UHC until September 1, 2024, before having to contend with St. Peter's termination.

We expect that Empire Plan members will not have to suffer the affects of the possible termination of St. Peter's on September 1. UHC has asked St. Peter's to exempt Empire Plan enrollees from the effects of any termination and continue to provide services to Empire Plan members on an in-network basis regardless of the status of contract negotiations and St. Peter's has agreed.

A notice has been posted on the St. Peter's Health Systems website that includes a statement about the exemption of Empire Plan members from having to obtain services there on an out-of-network basis.

The State has advised that a notice will be posted via NYSHIP Online soon. If you have questions or for more information, please call 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) and press or say 1 for the Medical/Surgical Program.