

Highmark Partners with Ria Health to Offer Coverage for At-home Alcohol Use Disorder Treatment

Ria's online program features coaching, targeted medication, and digital tools that reduce blood alcohol rates by 75 percent on average

SAN FRANCISCO - September 14, 2021 - [Ria Health](#), a leading telehealth provider specializing in alcohol use disorder (AUD) treatment, today announced a formal agreement with Highmark, one of America's leading health insurance organizations and an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Highmark members are now able to access Alcohol Use Disorder treatment via telehealth from Ria's team of physicians and coaches as part of its evidence-based program available to many commercial insurance plans. The announcement comes as the U.S. experiences a significant spike in problematic alcohol use, likely the result of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).

Ria Health's treatment plan offers another choice for those seeking treatment for AUD. Studies suggest that a major barrier to people seeking treatment is that they believe abstinence is their only option. Ria Health's clinical approach focuses on reducing harmful drinking by providing a program that supports goals of reduction as well as abstinence. Ria's physicians use a combination of anti-craving prescription medication and coaching support to move patients from high-risk to lower-risk behavior. The program helps patients stay on track with one-on-one coaching and digital tools that measure alcohol consumption.

"People need evidence-based options when it comes to treating alcohol use disorder," said Tom Nix, CEO of Ria Health. "Providing a private, at-home program that is clinically effective in helping people reduce or stop their harmful drinking will benefit the health and wellbeing of many members and their families. On average, 58 percent of Ria Health patients engage with the Ria Health program for at least six months, and the average patient shows a reduction in their blood alcohol level by 75 percent."

Studies show that patients see a substantial improvement in mental and physical health with each World Health Organization (WHO) risk level reduction. A patient with a risk level of four (seven or more drinks per day for men and four or more drinks per day for women), for example, can lower systolic blood pressure and liver enzyme levels by dropping to a risk level of three.

"Telemedicine has been unquestionably beneficial to patient care since its inception, but to a large degree those benefits have remained unrealized for those requiring specialized treatment for substance issues," said Demetrios Marousis, Director, Behavioral Health at Highmark. "Ria Health is not only offering an alternative but, in doing so, creating treatment accessibility. It offers our insured who might not otherwise seek treatment for AUD a measurable path to improved health and function."

For more information, visit Riahealth.com.

About Ria Health

Over their lifetime, one in 10 adults will struggle with alcohol use disorder, the third-leading cause of preventable death in the United States. At Ria Health, we envision a world with accessible, effective, and compassionate treatment for people who suffer from alcohol abuse. Ria Health is the first evidence-based telehealth alcohol treatment program for people who want to drink less and live better by changing their relationship with alcohol. We combine medical science, technology and human compassion to deliver a private, convenient and personalized treatment program that has helped thousands of members reduce their blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels by 75% over 12 months on

average. We state this three times - should we maybe eliminate one? For more information, visit www.riahealth.com or call 1-800-504-5360.