

# PPO

## Best Practices

Assuring Successful  
Bariatric Surgery  
Outcomes



## **PPO BEST PRACTICES FOR ASSURING SUCCESSFUL BARIATRIC SURGERY OUTCOMES**

### **ISSUE BRIEF**

### **CASE STUDY: HEALTHYROADS (AMERICAN SPECIALTY HEALTH)**

Healthroads, a subsidiary of American Specialty Health (ASH), contracts with health plans, disease management companies, and employer groups to provide wellness, health coaching, and prevention services. Healthroads is often used by plans and employers to engage patients through therapeutic use of interpersonal relationships and use of incentives. Wellness programs are designed to help people manage stress, lose weight, eat healthier, quit smoking, and lead more physically active lives. For general wellness customers Healthroads offers online tools and telephone coaching, including a personal health assessment and a customized exercise planning program. To support its roughly four million general wellness members, Healthroads has 150 full-time health coaches on staff.

Healthroads offers a specific wraparound program for pre and post operative coaching for patients undergoing bariatric surgery. Healthroads coaches work individually with bariatric surgery members to develop personalized approaches to weight loss pre- and post-operatively and track progress. The organization partners with insurers and plans to support patients in the bariatric surgery pre-certification process.

In the bariatric care program, Healthroads contracts with an insurance group and serves as a segment of the bariatric surgery process. A bariatric surgery patient works with a coach at Healthroads for eight weeks, including time both pre- and post-operation. During this period of coaching, the patient reviews information about nutrition, exercise, and stress management specifically related to the surgery. Coaches collaboratively set weekly goals to help prepare the patient for surgery. Goals can range from practicing chewing food thoroughly to incorporating five fruits and vegetables into a daily diet. Healthroads coaches are also in contact with the office of the patient's surgeon, to enhance communication and further support bariatric surgery patients.

Healthroads utilizes patient incentives to keep patients actively involved in their wellness programs. For engaging in encouraged behavior—in the case of bariatric surgery, successful dieting, exercise, and smoking cessation, among other things—patients may receive American Express-branded rewards or premium discounts. Healthroads tracks program data on program engagement and wellness results.

Website: <http://www.ashcompanies.com/aboutus/HealthyroadsWellness.aspx>

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