

As Spirit progresses with the implementation of the Solidaritus direct primary care centers, many people are wondering, what exactly is direct primary care? Is it something new? Are other companies in Oklahoma participating in this type of primary care model? Here is some information which will shed some light on these questions.

Direct primary care is access to high-quality health care that promotes:

- Better health outcomes through an authentic patient-doctor relationship,
- Lower costs due to the lack of third party service fees, and
- Enhanced patient experiences through extraordinary access to physicians, with little to no wait times for an appointment.

Think about your car insurance for a moment. You don't use your car insurance to cover small things such as oil changes, but it is there for you if you get in a car accident. Likewise, instead of utilizing insurance for routine visits and drugs, direct primary care providers are paid a set fee that covers the patient's primary care, including visits, in-clinic lab work, and some drugs. If major medical events or conditions occur that require specialty visits and hospitalizations, your United Health Care benefits will be utilized.

Direct primary care has been in existence since the late 1990's. However, the recent increase in direct primary care facilities is due to private and public health insurance programs becoming increasingly complex and costly, and less transparent and economically efficient. Both patient and physician benefit from direct primary care because the model eliminates all the pay-per-service paperwork and claim filing, and allows the doctor to focus solely on the patient. This in turn results in better quality care for employees and their families.

Direct primary care is being implemented by employers, including major union employers, across the country. Local companies such as Quick Trip, Ameristar, BAMA, Tulsa Police and Fire Departments, Quality Aircraft Accessories, and American Waste Control have all implemented forms of the direct primary care model with great success and employee satisfaction.

We know that there are still many questions about how this will all work. We will continue to keep you informed as we go.