

Ventricular Assist Device Program



For individuals with a weakened heart, cardiologists can recommend a ventricular assist device (VAD) as a short-term solution before a heart transplant or as a long-term destination therapy. But this small, lifesaving device comes with a hefty price tag. Between 2014 and 2020, the average billed charges for the implantation and first-year maintenance of a VAD were over \$1 million, with each succeeding year billing up to \$500,000 in post-implantation charges¹

Organizations covering the cost of VAD procedures and post-implant device maintenance face high and volatile expenses² However, the Optum® Ventricular Assist Device Program can help control cost variation and ensure individuals get the right care.

What is a VAD?

A VAD is a mechanical pump that helps pump blood from ventricles – the lower chambers of the heart – to the body, just as a healthy heart does. It does not replace the heart, but does help it function better. VADs may be used as a “bridge to transplant” (BTT) for patients awaiting a heart transplant. It may also be used as a “destination therapy” (DT) for those who are not transplant candidates. In rare circumstances, a heart may recover after being supported by a VAD, a scenario called “bridge to recovery.”

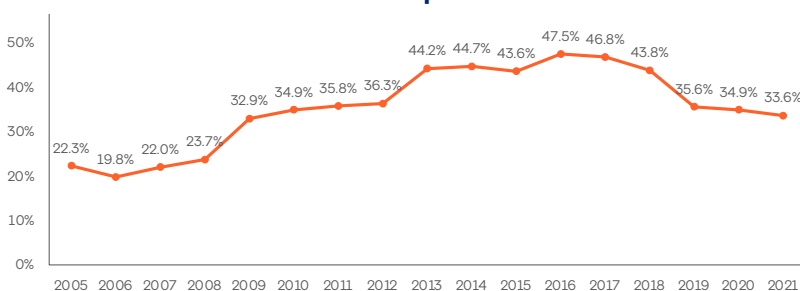
Thoratec HeartMate 3™*



Analysts expect the global VAD market to increase at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 17.6% from 2021 to 2028³ However, the majority of growth is now being driven by destination therapy. This is especially apparent since UNOS implemented extensive changes to their heart allocation policy in October 2018, impacting the medical urgency status of transplant-eligible patients.

*Image provided courtesy of Abbott.

VAD utilization in U.S. heart transplants



Ventricular Assist Device Program

Since VAD implantation procedures are relatively infrequent, few facilities capture enough volume to gain the experience required to consistently deliver superior outcomes. This is why it is important to work with partners that identify and qualify hospitals that perform VAD procedures. With a focus on superior management with top providers and improving outcomes, Optum has developed the innovative VAD Program to:

- Identify and qualify 60+ quality VAD providers nationwide
- Control cost variation and mitigate financial risk through strategic contracting with these VAD providers and equipment vendors

The Ventricular Assist Device Program is available to all individuals who have our Transplant Resource Services product.

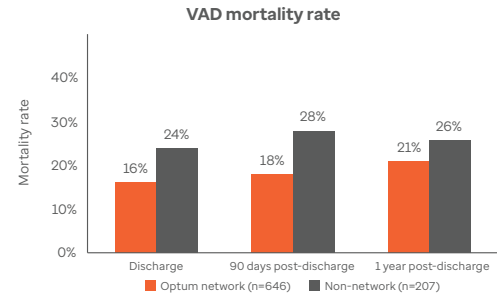
Preferred VAD vendors

Post-implant VAD charges are a major cost driver for VAD care due to vendor rates for VAD equipment and supplies. Additional costs are incurred through complications, follow-up medical services and medications. To minimize cost variation and secure the best rates for our clients, we partner with preferred VAD vendors.

Our clients typically save \$69,000 in equipment maintenance and supply costs in an average year by choosing our preferred VAD vendors rather than other vendors.⁴ The VAD Program enables our clients to access our preferred vendor contracts regardless of the facility performing the member's VAD implant.

The VAD Program is a comprehensive solution that spans the continuum of VAD care. First, we provide our clients with network access yielding 50%–55% average savings on billed charges from Optum VAD network centers.⁵ Second, we protect clients from high durable medical equipment (DME) costs. And third, we provide support for coordinating the multiple steps in caring for VAD patients.

Mortality with Optum VAD network programs lower than non-network VAD mortality.⁶



To learn more,
contact your Optum
sales representative.

1-866-427-6845

engage@optum.com

optum.com

1. UnitedHealth Group Claims Database 2014–2020. Commercial cases. Implant only N=1,405; VAD implant + 1 year N=765.
2. Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network. optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/data/view-data-reports/build-advanced/. Transplant Year by VAD at Heart Transplant. 2005-2021. Accessed September 12, 2022.
3. Chen M. UnitedHealth Group paid claims 2009–2016 and Optum preferred vendor contract terms. Accessed June 2017.
4. Chen. VAD contract comparison tool. Commercial reconciled cases, hospital only, 2014-2017. Accessed February 27, 2018.
5. UnitedHealth Group Claims Database 2014–2020.
6. Grand View Research. Ventricular Assist Device Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report By Product, By Type Of Flow (Pulsatile Flow, Continuous Flow), By Application, By Design, By Region, And Segment Forecasts, 2021 - 2028. 2020. grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/ventricular-assist-devices-market. Accessed September 12, 2022.



optum.com

Optum is a registered trademark of Optum, Inc. in the U.S. and other jurisdictions. All other brand or product names are the property of their respective owners. Because we are continuously improving our products and services, Optum reserves the right to change specifications without prior notice. Optum is an equal opportunity employer. Stock photo used.

© 2022 Optum, Inc. All rights reserved. WF8465914 09/22