Choosing group coverage that includes a care transition intervention (CTI) program benefits you and your employees. They’ll have peace of mind knowing they can get support from a knowledgeable case manager after a stay in the hospital or an acute care center. Plus, a CTI program helps your employees get the right care at the right time to recover as quickly as possible, which can help them get back to work in a timely manner and potentially avoid another hospital stay.
Being in the hospital or an acute care center can be hard, but sometimes transitioning back to home is equally tough. Leaving the nurses and doctors and their constant supervision behind, trying to follow discharge instructions, scheduling follow-up appointments and learning self-care skills can lead to a bumpy recovery and possibly even a hospital readmission.

CTI programs exist to help make this adjustment smoother and safer.
CTI programs help patients transition from the hospital or an acute care center back to their homes. Case managers, who are often registered nurses, provide resources and offer support, either in person or over the phone. Many CTI programs work with members for about a month after they’re discharged, but the time frame can vary.

The main goals of CTI programs usually include:

- Preventing or reducing hospital readmissions
- Facilitating safe care transitions
- Improving care coordination and continuity of care during transition
- Reducing costs
- Improving exchange of information between care teams

Case managers discuss many aspects of care with CTI program participants, including:

- Discharge instructions
- Medications
- Follow-up appointments
- Warning signs
- Any potential setbacks
- Available resources

Reducing Readmissions

CTI programs focus on reducing avoidable hospital readmissions, which drive up healthcare costs for everyone. In the Medicare population, one in five patients discharged from the hospital—about 2.6 million people—are readmitted within 30 days. The annual cost of these readmissions is more than $26 billion, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Good-to-Know Terms

**Care coordination** results in the patients’ needs and preferences being known and communicated to the right people at the right time. That information is then used to guide the delivery of appropriate, safe and effective care.

**Continuity of care** focuses on the quality of health care over time. The goal is seamless service and high-quality care for the patient through care coordination and information-sharing between different healthcare providers.
CTI Program Facilitators
CTI programs are usually run by health insurance companies, sometimes at no extra cost to their members. Some hospitals and other healthcare facilities have CTI programs in place as well. If a patient has access to two CTI programs, the programs work together to avoid duplicating services and to collaborate when possible.

Heath Alliance started its CTI program in 2012. Clay Johnson, a senior CTI case manager at Health Alliance, says the program has been a success thus far.

“Our members are usually very appreciative of the call after they’re discharged and for the case manager’s help, whether it’s dealing with a prescription issue or setting up follow-up appointments,” he says. “We want to ensure that everyone has a comprehensive care team working together to support them, and the response has been very positive from our members.”

Some CTI programs, like Health Alliance’s, are available to any member being discharged from an inpatient setting, while others might only work with patients who meet certain criteria.

Even the programs available to anyone tend to focus most of their outreach efforts on people with certain types of injuries or illnesses that put them at a higher risk of readmission, like:

- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Diabetes with complications
- Pneumonia
- Infections
- Tumors
Add Value to Your Group Health Plan
These days, healthcare coverage does much more than just pay claims. There is an ever-growing focus on care coordination and health management, which includes programs like CTI.

When choosing a health plan to offer your employees, look at the wellness programs included in the coverage. Having a plan that includes a CTI program and other care coordination services at no extra cost is a big perk, and it may help employees get back on their feet faster.

Also consider offering a group Medicare Advantage plan to your retirees that includes a CTI program. This is a valuable asset, as CTI programs are not included in Original Medicare plans run by the government or in Medicare Supplement plans. If you don’t currently offer your retirees a group Medicare Advantage plan, learn why it’s a good idea.

If you’re looking for group coverage that includes a CTI program and a host of other care coordination services and wellness perks, consider Health Alliance. We’ve partnered with employers for more than 35 years to bring innovative, comprehensive healthcare coverage to the market.

To learn more or get started, go to HealthAlliance.org or call 1-800-851-3379.