



## Amanda Waller

Manager of Case Management

*Former position:*  
Nurse Case Manager

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*At the end of it all, I found everything was for the better. It's still very much the SSM Health culture here at the hospital, but I realized that Optum has our back and is ultimately driving our success as a department.*

Beginning in 2022, SSM Health and Optum entered a long-term, strategic partnership to enhance SSM Health's clinical and operational performance, leverage technology and expand access to health care across the Midwest. This is one employee's story about her transition to becoming an Optum employee.

### Before the partnership

Prior to the partnership with Optum, I worked for SSM Health as a nurse case manager overseeing the quality of care patients received during their stay at our hospital.

Across my nearly 12-year career at SSM Health, I've found that it really is a great place to work. I left briefly once to explore another opportunity, but I was only gone a couple of months before I came back. I realized SSM Health, the culture, everything about it was for me. I didn't want to lose this under the new partnership.

### Transition

The time leading up to the partnership was strenuous to say the least. The day it was announced, SSM Health leadership brought us all to a room one morning to tell us the news. It was incredibly nerve-wracking because I had been with the hospital for so long and I can be resistant to change.

I was not especially familiar with Optum, and that added to my apprehension. Outside of my personal experience with the pharmacy program, I really had no idea what Optum had to offer. Given this limited initial knowledge, I wasn't sure what the transition would look like. But as I navigated through the process, attended meetings and consulted the onboarding website, I was able to get the information I needed.



### Why I value working for Optum

- Involvement in the People Leader Forum
- Access to new growth opportunities
- Health and wellness tools and resources

## After the transition

At the onset of the new Optum and SSM Health partnership, I initially remained in the same role I had with the hospital. However, something I immediately noticed was how many more opportunities there were to grow in my career with Optum. A couple months in, our regional director encouraged me to apply for a management position and I did. Now, as the manager of case management, I manage the day-to-day functions of the entire department. I'm also here as support for the team. Whether it's following up on referrals, discharge planning or throughput of our hospital patients, I do whatever I can to make sure that my team and our patients feels supported.

Outside of growth opportunities, the partnership offered other benefits, too. I signed up for Rally Rewards and downloaded the Rally app to try out a couple online wellness classes. It was great to find some tips and tricks to live a healthier, more mindful life. I also got invited to the People Leader Forum for training on how to grow as a leader and how to help cultivate a strong team, which has been incredibly beneficial as a new manager.

## Advice for employees going through the transition

Now that I'm through the transition, I feel very confident it was the right decision for SSM Health. My biggest piece of advice is to be patient and open minded. The transition process will be a little difficult at first. There are going to be unknowns, and you will have a lot of questions. Just know that Optum and your company have partnered together for a reason. They are there to support you, so be patient and see it through.

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*I'm really looking forward to digging my feet in and growing this department, and that is my main focus right now – do the best that I can in this role for this hospital.*

**Amanda Waller**



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