

# BLUE REVIEW<sup>SM</sup>

A Provider Publication

September 2022

## ■ What's New

### ***Blue Review* Readership Survey 2022: Your Voice Matters**

The 2022 *Blue Review* Readership survey is open now to collect your feedback. Your input will inform our plans to enhance the *Blue Review* and other provider communications in 2023.

[Read More](#)

## ■ Wellness and Member Education

### **Help Your Patients Stay on Track With Childhood Immunizations**

You play a vital role in educating parents to vaccinate their children aged 0 to 2 years and adolescents aged 9 to 13 years, about the importance of getting caught up with scheduled immunizations.

[Read More](#)

### **The Connection Between COVID-19 and Childhood Obesity**

According to a new study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the overweight and obesity rate in children and teenagers has increased at an alarming rate since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

[Read More](#)

## ■ Pharmacy Program

### **Avoiding Antibiotics for Acute Bronchitis and Other Viruses**

With the start of flu and cold season, we encourage you to talk with our members about taking

antibiotics only when needed.

[Read More](#)

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### **Pharmacy Program Updates: Quarterly Pharmacy Changes Effective Oct. 1, 2022 – Part 1**

Based on the availability of new prescription medications and Prime's National Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee's review of changes in the pharmaceuticals market, some additions, revisions (drugs still covered but moved to a higher out-of-pocket payment level) and/or exclusions (drugs no longer covered) were made to the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) drug lists. Changes effective on or after **Oct. 1, 2022**, are outlined [here](#).

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### **Quality Improvement and Reporting**

#### **We're Piloting a Remote Patient Monitoring Program To Improve Health Outcomes**

BCBSIL is piloting a remote patient monitoring program that uses state of the art technology to monitor physiologic data trends for select patients following discharge.

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### **Focus on Behavioral Health**

#### **Behavioral Health Support Resources: New Videos to Share With Your Patients**

We're spotlighting some short videos we've created for our members about behavioral health care and support.

[Read More](#)

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### **Community Involvement**

#### **Fall Into Autumn at Blue Door Neighborhood Center<sup>SM</sup> (BDNC<sup>SM</sup>)**

September is **National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month**, and BCBSIL wants to help educate the community about this serious medical condition.

[Read More](#)

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#### **MMAI and BCCHP<sup>SM</sup> Providers: Join Our Community Stakeholder Committee**

We're hosting quarterly Community Stakeholder Committee meetings to find ways to better serve our Blue Cross Community MMAI (Medicare-Medicaid Plan)<sup>SM</sup> and Blue Cross Community Health Plans<sup>SM</sup> (BCCHP) members.

[Read More](#)

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## ■ Clinical Updates, Reminders and Resources

### **Help Close Diabetes Disparity Gaps**

Diabetes is one of the most common chronic conditions in the U.S. You and your staff may play an important role in supporting our members with diabetes or at risk of developing the disease.

[Read More](#)

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### **Coming Soon: Use Our Automated Phone System to Request Prior Authorization for FEP® Members**

Starting **Oct. 15, 2022**, the BCBSIL interactive voice response (IVR) system will offer the option to request prior authorization for some services for Federal Employee Program® (FEP) members.

[Read More](#)

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## ■ Provider Education

### **Webinars on Cross-cultural Care Offer Continuing Education Credit**

We're pleased to offer several webinars at no cost through Quality Interactions, a separate company that provides cultural awareness training to health care professionals.

[Read More](#)

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### **Provider Learning Opportunities**

BCBSIL offers free webinars and workshops for the independently contracted providers who work with us. A preview of upcoming training sessions is included in this month's issue.

[Read More](#)

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## ■ Claims and Coding

### **New Laboratory Benefit Management Program To Begin Nov. 1, 2022: Join Us for a Refresher Webinar To Prepare**

BCBSIL will implement its new program with Avalon Healthcare Solutions for claims for certain outpatient laboratory services provided to many of our commercial, non-HMO members beginning **Nov. 1, 2022**.

[Read More](#)

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## ■ Electronic Options

### New 'Message This Payer' Option via Availity® Essentials

We're launching a new digital *Message This Payer* option for you to resolve your claim inquiries online.

[Read More](#)

## ■ Notification and Disclosure

### Verify Your Directory Details Every 90 Days

As a reminder, the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) of 2021 requires that certain directory information be verified every 90 days. [Read more on News and Updates.](#)

### Help Close Gaps in Care for Group Medicare Advantage Members

If we need medical records for Blue Cross Group Medicare Advantage (PPO)<sup>SM</sup> members, you'll receive requests only from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) or our vendor, Change Healthcare. This is part of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) National Coordination of Care program so that you won't receive requests from multiple BCBS plans or their vendors. Please respond quickly to our requests, including requests related to risk adjustment gaps and Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) measures. [Read more on News and Updates.](#)



## Quick Reminders

### Stay informed!

Watch the [News and Updates](#) on our Provider website for important announcements.

### Verify and Update Your Information

Verify your directory information every 90 days. Use the [Availity® Provider Data Management](#) feature or our Demographic Change Form. **Facilities** may only use the [Demographic Change Form](#).

### Provider Training

For dates, times and online registration, visit the [Webinars and Workshops](#) page.



## Contact Us

Questions? Comments? [Send an email to our editorial staff.](#)

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## ***Blue Review* Readership Survey 2022: Your Voice Matters**

As we mentioned in [last month's \*Blue Review\*](#), we appreciated your feedback in response to our 2021 annual readership survey. Your ratings helped us gauge what's working in general. Your comments gave us more detail, with specific requests on what we can do to improve.

The [Blue Review](#) is one of our key communication channels. As we move into the final months of 2022, it's time to check in with our readers once again to make sure the newsletter is serving its purpose.

- Are we delivering content that's clear, concise and compelling?
- Is the information relevant to the needs of your practice?
- Do you look forward to receiving the newsletter each month?

**The 2022 *Blue Review* Readership survey is open to collect your feedback.** Your input will inform our plans to enhance the *Blue Review* and other provider communications in 2023. We look forward to hearing from you!

[Take the 2022 survey now.](#)

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## Help Your Patients Stay on Track With Childhood Immunizations

In August, as part of our Wellness Can't Wait campaign, we recognized National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) by highlighting facts about the importance of immunizations. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted routine well-child visits, resulting in many children falling behind on receiving recommended vaccines. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported a lower percentage of kindergartners received required vaccines for the 2020-2021 school year.<sup>1</sup>

National Awareness Month may be over, but the importance of staying on top of scheduled immunizations continues throughout the year. You play a vital role in educating parents about the importance of getting caught up with scheduled immunizations and encouraging them to vaccinate children aged 0 to 2 years and adolescents aged 9 to 13 years.

To help children and adolescents catch up on all needed vaccines, the CDC recommends that providers:

- Identify families whose children have missed vaccinations and contact them to schedule appointments
- Check at each visit for any missing immunizations and deliver vaccines that are due
- Let families know what precautions are in place for safe delivery of in-person services

We encourage you to refer to [NIAM tools and resources on the CDC website](#) for up-to-date year-round information on immunizations. [Preventive care guidelines](#) on immunization schedules are available on our Provider website.

### BCBSIL Resources

BCBSIL promotes preventive health through [Wellness Can't Wait](#) materials and resources for our members.

Thank you for helping the families in your care get caught up with vaccinations now so they are better prepared for the school year and months ahead.

<sup>1</sup>CDC, Childhood Vaccination Toolkit for Clinicians (May 6, 2022). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/childhood-vaccination-toolkit.html>

The above material is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be a substitute for the independent medical judgment of a physician. Physicians and other health care providers are encouraged to use their own best medical judgment based upon all available information and the condition of the patient in determining the best course of treatment.

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# BLUE REVIEW<sup>SM</sup>

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## The Connection Between COVID-19 and Childhood Obesity

According to a new study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the overweight and obesity rate in children and teenagers has increased at an alarming rate since the COVID-19 pandemic began. In the [CDC study](#) of 432,302 children ages 2 to 19 years, the rate of body mass index (BMI) increase nearly doubled during the pandemic compared to a pre-pandemic period.<sup>1</sup>

School closures, disrupted routines, more screen time, increased stress and less opportunity for physical activity and proper nutrition all played a role in this unfortunate upturn.<sup>1</sup>

During September, our Wellness Can't Wait campaign is spotlighting **National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month**. In 2017–2018, obesity affected 19.3% of children between the ages of 2 and 19, amounting to about 14.4 million children and adolescents. Based on the study's results, obesity now affects 22%, and there were notable racial and ethnic differences in rates of obesity as well: 25.6% among Hispanic children, 24.2% among non-Hispanic Black children, 16.1% among non-Hispanic White children, and 8.7% among non-Hispanic Asian children.<sup>1</sup>

Children with obesity are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes and risk factors for heart disease such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol, muscle and joint problems, and fatty liver disease. They may also have worse outcomes from COVID-19.<sup>1</sup> People under 18 years old with obesity had a 3.1 times higher risk of hospitalization and a 1.4 times higher risk of severe illness when hospitalized.<sup>1</sup>

### Free Vaccine Clinics in the Community

You may want to let your patients know that we're hosting a series of free family vaccination clinics at our Blue Door Neighborhood Center<sup>SM</sup> (BDNC<sup>SM</sup>) locations. These clinics are organized by the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and offer **COVID-19 immunizations for children 6 months and older**. The clinics will continue to offer these immunizations through October 2022. Your patients can call 773-253-0900 or check the calendars at [BDNC at Morgan Park](#), [BDNC at Pullman](#) and [BDNC at South Lawndale](#) for details, dates and registration.

<sup>1</sup>CDC, Children, Obesity, and COVID-19, June 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/children-obesity-COVID-19.html>



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# BLUE REVIEW<sup>SM</sup>

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## Avoiding Antibiotics for Acute Bronchitis and Other Viruses

With the start of flu and cold season, we encourage you to talk with our members about taking antibiotics only when needed. **Antibiotics don't work against viruses, which are often the cause of acute bronchitis, colds and flu.** They only treat certain bacterial infections.

### Why It Matters

- At least 28% of antibiotics prescribed each year in doctor's offices and emergency departments aren't needed, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).
- Antibiotics can cause [side effects](#) ranging from minor to severe, including rash, diarrhea, yeast infections and allergic reactions.
- Antibiotics also give bacteria a chance to become more resistant to them, making future infections harder to treat. More than 35,000 people die each year in the U.S. because of [antibiotic-resistant infections](#).

### Closing Care Gaps

We track [Avoidance of Antibiotic Treatment for Acute Bronchitis/Bronchiolitis \(AAB\)](#) to help monitor and improve our members' care. AAB is a Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS<sup>®</sup>) measure from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). It measures the appropriate treatment for acute bronchitis/bronchiolitis, meaning antibiotics weren't prescribed.

### Tips to Consider

The CDC suggests [alternatives to antibiotics](#) for acute bronchitis and other conditions, including:

- Adequate rest and increased fluids
- Using a clean humidifier or cool mist vaporizer
- Inhaling hot shower steam or other sources of hot vapor
- Throat lozenges for adults and children ages 5 years and older
- Over-the-counter medications to treat symptoms

Consider sharing resources with our members, such as [these materials from the CDC](#).

care providers are encouraged to use their own medical judgment based upon all available information and the condition of the patient in determining the appropriate course of treatment. References to other third party sources or organizations are not a representation, warranty or endorsement of such organization. The fact that a service or treatment is described in this material is not a guarantee that the service or treatment is a covered benefit and members should refer to their certificate of coverage for more details, including benefits, limitations and exclusions. Regardless of benefits, the final decision about any service or treatment is between the member and their health care provider.

HEDIS is a registered trademark of NCQA.

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# BLUE REVIEW<sup>SM</sup>

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## We're Piloting a Remote Patient Monitoring Program To Improve Health Outcomes

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) is piloting a remote patient monitoring program that uses state of the art technology to monitor physiologic data trends for select patients following discharge. Three Illinois hospitals are participating so far, two in Chicago and one in Springfield. The program is available to some of our commercial non-HMO, Illinois Medicaid, and Medicare Advantage PPO members.

### How does the program work?

Upon discharge, eligible members receive a remote patient monitoring kit, which includes a wearable biosensor and other components. During the first 24-48 hours after discharge, physiological data for normalization (such as heart and respiratory rate, temperature and physical activity) is collected.

A baseline physiological profile is established using cloud-based analytics, and continuous monitoring populates a cloud-based dashboard. BCBSIL care coordinators periodically monitor dashboard trend indicators, which may predict declines in health status. The care coordinators respond to key changes in physiological data – which provide opportunities for intervention – over a 30-day period.

BCBSIL case managers may engage the member's physician or specialist for a virtual or in-person visit to evaluate and adjust treatment regimens, where appropriate. Working in conjunction with the member's health care team, BCBSIL case managers offer education and support to graduate the member out of the monitoring program.

### Member Success Story

Pilot results to date have shown that remote patient monitoring can be effective in supporting improving patient outcomes and avoiding hospital readmissions. Here's an example of one member's experience:

- A 35-year-old female patient was discharged in stable condition with a congestive heart failure diagnosis.
- During the monitoring period, several trend alerts triggered signaling changes in activity level, respiratory rate, and other parameters
- BCBSIL care coordinators contacted the patient for interpersonal engagement.
- A discussion with the patient revealed that she hadn't filled her prescription and ran out of Lasix.
- BCBSIL care coordinators contacted the member's physician and arranged for auto-shipment of her medications.
- The member's physician increased Lasix for one dose, then had the patient return to her original dose.

- BCBSIL care coordinators followed up with educational resources to reinforce the importance of diet restrictions and medication adherence.
- The patient was successfully managed at home without an additional M.D. or ER visit, and without the need for hospitalization.

### **What's next?**

This program creates the opportunity to evaluate the clinical/medical benefits of remote patient monitoring on specific diagnoses to yield decreases in hospitalizations, readmissions, ER visits, and poor health outcomes related to delays in care interventions.

BCBSIL will be contacting additional hospitals to participate, based on their interest in innovative approaches to post-discharge patient management and their volume of BCBSIL members.

More information may be published as the remote patient monitoring program is expanded. Continue to watch the *Blue Review* for updates on BCBSIL programs and initiatives.

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## Behavioral Health Support Resources: New Videos to Share With Your Patients

In August, we began an article series to raise awareness of behavioral health resources that are available to our members. Last month's article focused on Special Beginnings® – our [Maternity Program for Blue Cross Community Health Plan<sup>SM</sup> \(BCCHP<sup>SM</sup>\)](#) and other members.

This month, we're spotlighting some short videos we've created for our members about behavioral health care and support. We're making these videos available to you to show to patients in your waiting rooms, or to share the links in your patient portals or discharge paperwork. Spanish captions are available.

- [Reach Out for Help with Drug or Alcohol Problems](#) – Encourages members to speak up if they're struggling or feeling out of control.
- [Talk to Your Doctor About Your Mental Health Medications](#) – Suggests ways our members can work with you to better understand their medications, and why it's important follow prescribed treatment regimens.
- [Continue Your Care after a Hospital or Emergency Room \(ER\) Visit](#) – Talks about taking steps toward wellness after a hospital or ER visit for a mental health or substance use concern.
- [Don't Let Your Mental Health Care End When You Leave the Hospital](#) – Uses animation to describe treatment options that may be offered after an ER or inpatient hospital visit for a mental health or substance use concern.

Thank you for helping us help our members by encouraging them to talk about behavioral health and by directing them to educational materials and programs.

We want to do our part to reduce social stigma, promote health equity and emphasize holistic approaches to member health and wellness. We hope you find this information useful when talking with your patients.

The Behavioral Health program is available only to those members whose health plans include behavioral health benefits through BCBSIL. Some members may not have outpatient behavioral health management. All behavioral health benefits are subject to the terms and conditions as listed in the member's benefit plan. The information in this article is being provided for educational purposes only and is not the provision of medical care or advice. Physicians and other health care providers are to their own best medical judgment based upon all available information and the condition of the patient in determining the best course of treatment. The fact that a service or treatment is described in this material is not a guarantee that the service or treatment is a covered benefit and members should refer to their certificate of coverage for more details, including benefits, limitations, and exclusions. Regardless of benefits, the final decision about any service or treatment is between the member and their health care provider.

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## Fall Into Autumn at Blue Door Neighborhood Center<sup>SM</sup> (BDNC<sup>SM</sup>)

September is **National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month**, and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) wants to help educate the community about this serious medical condition. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), five things your patients can do to prevent childhood obesity are eat more fruits and vegetables, move more, slow down on sugar, reduce screen time and sleep well. Your patients may be interested in our Ask-A-Doc series when we'll have a pediatrician available to answer questions.

The **BDNC in South Lawndale** is hosting a family-centered block party **on Saturday, September 24, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.** We've planned a full day of fun activities for the whole family. The block party will feature:

- Music and food;
- BCBSIL Care Van<sup>®</sup>;
- Health information;
- Low-impact fitness demos and much more!

You may want to encourage your patients to join the BDNC's American Heart Association (AHA) Heart Walk team. We'll provide lunch and shirts for all who join our team. Walk with our [South Lawndale](#) center on Friday, September 16 and walk with our [Morgan Park and Pullman](#) centers on Saturday, September 17.

We're also offering a series of free family vaccination clinics at all of our BDNC locations. In addition to flu shots, COVID-19 vaccinations are available, including COVID-19 vaccines for children ages 6 months and older.

These are a few of the programs that will be offered at our BDNC locations in August. Your patients can check the calendars at [BDNC at Morgan Park](#), [BDNC at Pullman](#) and [BDNC at South Lawndale](#) the [BDNC Facebook page](#) for details, dates and online registration. They can visit any time to find out about other events and happenings at all three BDNC locations.

All programming – in person and virtual – at BDNC locations is **free and open to everyone**. If you or your patients have questions, [email the BDNC](#) or call 773-253-0900.

Supporting our members on their health education journeys and increasing access to health care where our members live,



work and play is an ongoing priority at BCBSIL. We're committed to strengthening the health of communities across the state.

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BDNC locations are not medical facilities, do not have medical providers on staff, do not offer medical advice, and do not provide health care or mental health services.

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## MMAI and BCCHP<sup>SM</sup> Providers: Join Our Community Stakeholder Committee

We're hosting quarterly Community Stakeholder Committee meetings to find ways to better serve our Blue Cross Community MMAI (Medicare-Medicaid Plan)<sup>SM</sup> and Blue Cross Community Health Plans<sup>SM</sup> (BCCHP) members.

**Help us help our members.** It's a great chance to work with faith leaders, advocacy groups and other community-based organizations that support our members' health and well-being. Your feedback is vital to improving the care and services these members receive.

**Sign up in advance to attend.** Each quarter, watch the [News and Updates](#) for dates, times and early registration. We'll also include reminders in the *Blue Review*.

### Q3 MMAI and BCCHP Community Stakeholder Committee Meeting

Our next meeting is Thursday, **Sept. 15, 2022**, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Join us **in-person** at the Illinois Central College (ICC), 5407 N. University Street Peoria, IL 61635. There's also a **virtual** meeting option. [Register now!](#)

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# Pharmacy Program Updates: Quarterly Pharmacy Changes Effective Oct. 1, 2022 – Part 1

August 5, 2022

## **IMPORTANT PHARMACY BENEFIT REMINDERS**

Jan. 1, 2022 is the start of a new year and renewed or new health insurance benefits for most Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) members. As you see your patients, please consider the following reminders:

- Members' benefits may be based on a new drug list when their plans renew in 2022.
- Discuss your patients' benefits during an office visit or confirm their benefits by calling the number on their ID cards.
- Review the prescription drug list before prescribing medications.
- If your patients need a coverage exception or prior authorization request in order to take a medicine that may be excluded from coverage or included in a utilization management program, please visit the Prior Authorization/Step Therapy Programs section of our provider website at [bcbsil.com/provider](http://bcbsil.com/provider) for the form and more information.

Treatment decisions are *always* between you and your patients. Coverage is subject to the terms and limits of your patients' benefit plans. Please advise them to review their benefit materials for details.

## **DRUG LIST CHANGES**

Based on the availability of new prescription medications and Prime's National Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee's review of changes in the pharmaceuticals market, some revisions (drugs still covered but moved to a higher out-of-pocket payment level) and/or exclusions (drugs no longer covered) will be made to the BCBSIL drug lists. Your patient(s) may ask you about therapeutic or lower cost alternatives if their medication is affected by one of these changes. **Changes effective Oct. 1, 2022 are outlined below.**

The October Quarterly Pharmacy Changes Part 2 article with more recent coverage additions will also be published closer to the October 1 effective date.

***Please note: The drug list changes below do not apply to BCBSIL members on the Basic Annual, Multi-Tier Basic Annual, Enhanced Annual, Multi-Tier Enhanced Annual or Performance Annual Drug Lists. These drug lists will have the revisions and/or exclusions applied on or after Jan. 1, 2023.***

***If you have patients with an HMO Illinois® or Blue Advantage HMO<sup>SM</sup> plan, these drug list revisions/exclusions may not apply to their pharmacy benefits, administered through Prime Therapeutics, until on or after Jan. 1, 2023.***

## **Drug List Updates (Revisions/Exclusions) – As of Oct. 1, 2022**

Non-Preferred Brand <sup>1</sup>	Drug Class/ Condition Used For	Preferred Generic Alternative(s) <sup>2</sup>	Preferred Brand Alternative(s) <sup>1, 2</sup>
<b>Basic, Multi-Tier Basic, Enhanced and Multi-Tier Enhanced Drug Lists Revisions</b>			
CYSTADANE (betaine powder for oral solution)	Homocystinuria	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
VIMPAT (lacosamide tab 50 mg, 100 mg, 150 mg, 200, mg)	Seizures	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	

<b>Multi-Tier Basic and Multi-Tier Enhanced Drug Lists Revisions</b>			
DEXAMETHASONE (dexamethasone tab 0.5 mg, 0.75 mg)	Inflammatory Conditions	methylprednisolone tablets, prednisone tablets	
<b>Drug<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Drug Class/ Condition Used For</b>	<b>Generic Alternatives<sup>1,2</sup></b>	<b>Brand Alternatives<sup>1,2</sup></b>
<b>Balanced, Performance and Performance Select Drug Lists Revisions</b>			
DEXAMETHASONE (dexamethasone tab 0.5 mg, 0.75 mg)	Inflammatory Conditions	methylprednisolone tablets, prednisone tablets	
MORPHINE SULFATE (morphine sulfate oral soln 20 mg/5 ml)	Pain	morphine sulfate solution 10 mg/5 ml	
MORPHINE SULFATE ER (morphine sulfate cap er 24hr 10 mg, 20 mg, 30 mg, 50 mg, 60 mg, 80 mg, 100 mg)	Pain	<i>Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
QUINIDINE SULFATE (quinidine sulfate tab 200 mg, 300 mg)	Arrhythmia	<i>Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
SULFADIAZINE (sulfadiazine tab 500 mg)	Infections	<i>Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
TRAMADOL HCL ER (tramadol hcl tab er 24hr biphasic release 100 mg, 200 mg, 300 mg)	Pain	<i>Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
TRIHEXYPHENIDYL HCL (trihexyphenidyl hcl oral soln 0.4 mg/ml)	Parkinson's Disease, Extrapyramidal Disorders	<i>Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
VANDAZOLE (metronidazole vaginal gel 0.75%)	Bacterial Vaginosis	metronidazole vaginal gel 0.75%	
<b>Balanced and Performance Select Drug Lists Revisions</b>			
MOXIFLOXACIN HYDROCHLORIDE (moxifloxacin hcl ophth soln 0.5% (base eq) (2 times daily))	Antibacterial- Ophthalmic	ciprofloxacin ophthalmic solution, gatifloxacin ophthalmic solution, ofloxacin ophthalmic solution, moxifloxacin ophthalmic solution	
<b>Balanced Drug List Revisions</b>			
ZOLPIDEM TARTRATE (zolpidem tartrate sl tab 1.75 mg, 3.5 mg)	Insomnia	eszopiclone tablets, zaleplon capsules, zolpidem tablets	
<b>Health Insurance Marketplace (HIM) Drug List Revisions [IL PPO]</b>			
DEXAMETHASONE - dexamethasone tab 0.5 mg, 0.75 mg	Inflammatory Conditions	methylprednisolone tablets, prednisone tablets	

MORPHINE SULFATE - morphine sulfate oral soln 20 mg/5 ml	Pain	morphine sulfate solution 10 mg/5 ml	
QUINIDINE SULFATE - quinidine sulfate tab 200 mg, 300 mg	Arrhythmia	<i>Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
SULFADIAZINE - sulfadiazine tab 500 mg	Infections	<i>Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
TRIHEXYPHENIDYL HCL (trihexyphenidyl hcl oral soln 0.4 mg/ml)	Parkinson's Disease, Extrapyramidal Disorders	<i>Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
<b>Balanced, Performance and Performance Select Drug Lists Exclusions</b>			
BIDIL (isosorbide dinitrate-hydralazine hcl tab 20-37.5 mg)	Heart Failure	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
CONTRAVE (naltrexone hcl-bupropion hcl tab er 12hr 8-90 mg)	Weight Loss	Qsymia, Saxenda, Wegovy	
ESBRIET (pirfenidone tab 267 mg, 801 mg)	Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
FERRIPROX (deferiprone tab 1000 mg)	Transfusional Iron Overload	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
K-PHOS (potassium phosphate monobasic tab 500 mg)	Urinary Acidification	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
SAMSCA (tolvaptan tab 15 mg)	Hyponatremia	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
STALEVO 50 (carbidopa-levodopa-entacapone tabs 12.5-50-200 mg)	Parkinson's Disease	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
STALEVO 75 (carbidopa-levodopa-entacapone tabs 18.75-75-200 mg)	Parkinson's Disease	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
STALEVO 100 (carbidopa-levodopa-entacapone tabs 25-100-200 mg)	Parkinson's Disease	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
STALEVO 125 (carbidopa-levodopa-entacapone tabs 31.25-125-200 mg)	Parkinson's Disease	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
STALEVO 150 (carbidopa-levodopa-entacapone tabs 37.5-150-200 mg)	Parkinson's Disease	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
STALEVO 200 (carbidopa-levodopa-entacapone tabs 50-200-200 mg)	Parkinson's Disease	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
UKONIQ (umbralisib tosylate tab 200 mg)	Cancer	<i>Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
VIMPAT (lacosamide tab 50 mg, 100 mg, 150 mg, 200 mg)	Seizures	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	

<b>Performance and Performance Select Drug Lists Exclusions</b>			
metronidazole lotion 0.75%	Rosacea	metronidazole cream 0.75%, metronidazole gel 0.75%	
testosterone td gel 20.25 mg/1.25 gm (1.62%), 40.5 mg/2.5 gm (1.62%)	Hypogonadism	testosterone gel pump 1.62%	
tretinoin gel 0.025%	Acne	tretinoin cream 0.025%	
<b>Balanced Drug List Exclusions</b>			
ACZONE (dapsone gel 7.5%)	Acne	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
COMBIGAN (brimonidine tartrate-timolol maleate ophth soln 0.2-0.5%)	Glaucoma, Ocular Hypertension	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
ZIPSOR (diclofenac potassium cap 25 mg)	Pain/ Inflammation	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
<b>Performance Select Drug List Exclusions</b>			
adapalene-benzoyl peroxide gel 0.3-2.5%	Acne	tretinoin cream 0.1%	
<b>Health Insurance Marketplace (HIM) Drug List Exclusions [IL PPO]</b>			
COMBIGAN - brimonidine tartrate-timolol maleate ophth soln 0.2-0.5%	Glaucoma, Ocular Hypertension	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
ESBRIET - pirfenidone tab 267 mg, 801 mg	Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
FERRIPROX - deferiprone tab 1000 mg	Iron Overload	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
K-PHOS - potassium phosphate monobasic tab 500 mg	Hypophosphatemia	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
SAMSCA - tolvaptan tab 15 mg	Hyponatremia	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
testosterone td gel 20.25 mg/1.25 gm (1.62%), 40.5 mg/2.5 gm (1.62%)	Hypogonadism	testosterone gel pump 1.62%	
Ukoniq - umbralisib tosylate tab 200 mg	Cancer	<i>Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
VIMPAT - lacosamide oral solution 10 mg/mL	Seizures	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	
VIMPAT - lacosamide tab 50 mg, 100 mg, 150 mg, 200 mg	Seizures	<i>There is a generic equivalent available. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about other medication(s) available for your condition.</i>	

<sup>1</sup>Third-party brand names are the property of their respective owner.

<sup>2</sup>This list is not all inclusive. Other medicines may be available in this drug class.

## **DISPENSING LIMIT CHANGES**

The BCBSIL prescription drug benefit program includes coverage limits on certain medications and drug categories. Dispensing limits are based on U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved dosage regimens and product labeling. **Changes by drug list are listed on the charts below.**

**Please note:** The dispensing limits listed below do not apply to BCBSIL members on the Basic Annual or Enhanced Annual Drug Lists. Dispensing limits will be applied to these drug lists on or after Jan. 1, 2023. They also may not apply to BCBSIL HMO members on the 2021 or 2022 Health Insurance Marketplace (HIM) Drug Lists until on or after Jan. 1, 2023.

BCBSIL letters all members with a claim for a drug included in the Dispensing Limit Program, regardless of the prescribed dosage. This means members may receive a letter even though their prescribed dosage doesn't meet or exceed the dispensing limit.

### **Effective June 15, 2022:**

<b>Drug Class and Medication(s)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Dispensing Limit(s)</b>
<b>2021 Health Insurance Marketplace (HIM), 2022 HIM, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists</b>	
<b>Oxbryta</b>	
Oxbryta (voxelotor)*	90 tablets per 30 days

<sup>1</sup>Third-party brand names are the property of their respective owner.

\* Not all members may have been notified due to limited utilization.

### **Effective Sept. 1, 2022:**

<b>Drug Class and Medication(s)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Dispensing Limit(s)</b>
<b>2021 Health Insurance Marketplace (HIM), 2022 HIM, Balanced, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists</b>	
<b>IL-13 Antagonist</b>	
Adbry (tralokinumab-ldrm)*	4 mL per 30 days

<sup>1</sup>Third-party brand names are the property of their respective owner.

\* Not all members may have been notified due to limited utilization.

### **Effective Oct. 1, 2022:**

<b>Drug Class and Medication(s)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Dispensing Limit(s)</b>
<b>Basic, Enhanced, Balanced, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists</b>	
<b>Alternative Dosage Form</b>	
Dartisla ODT*	120 tablets per 30 days
Lyvispah (baclofen) 5 mg Granule packet <sup>2</sup>	120 packets per 30 days
Lyvispah (baclofen) 10 mg Granule packet <sup>2</sup>	120 packets per 30 days
Lyvispah (baclofen) 20 mg Granule packet <sup>2</sup>	120 packets per 30 days
Valsartan oral solution*	2400 mL per 30 days
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
Emla (lidocaine-prilocaine) 2.5%-2.5%	60 grams per 30 days
<b>Therapeutic Alternatives</b>	
METAXALONE TAB 400 MG*	240 tablets per 30 days
PHOSPHOLINE SOL 0.125%OP*	5 mL per 30 days



<b>Basic, Enhanced, 2021 HIM, 2022 HIM, Balanced, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists</b>	
<b>Cibingo</b>	
Cibingo (abrocitinib) 50 mg tablets*	30 tablets per 30 days
Cibingo (abrocitinib) 100 mg tablets*	30 tablets per 30 days
Cibingo (abrocitinib) 200 mg tablets*	30 tablets per 30 days
<b>Insulin Pumps</b>	
Omnipod DASH kit/Omnipod 5 kit*	1 kit per 720 days
<b>Pyrukynd</b>	
Pyrukynd (mitapivat) Therapy Pack 5 MG*	7 tablets per 365 days
Pyrukynd (mitapivat) Therapy Pack 7 x 20 MG & 7 x 5 MG*	14 tablets per 365 days
Pyrukynd (mitapivat) Therapy Pack 7 x 50 MG & 7 x 20 MG*	14 tablets per 365 days
Pyrukynd (mitapivat) 5 mg tablets*	56 tablets per 28 days
Pyrukynd (mitapivat) 20 mg tablets*	56 tablets per 28 days
Pyrukynd (mitapivat) 50 mg tablets*	56 tablets per 28 days
<b>Recorlev</b>	
Recorlev (levoketoconazole)*	240 tablets per 30 days
<b>Tarpeyo</b>	
TARPEYO (budesonide)*	120 capsules per 30 days
<b>Basic, Enhanced and Balanced Drug Lists</b>	
<b>Oxbryta</b>	
Oxbryta (voxelotor)	90 tablets per 30 days
<b>Basic and Enhanced Drug Lists</b>	
<b>IL-13 Antagonist</b>	
Adbry (tralokinumab-ldrm)	4 mL per 30 days
<b>Vuity</b>	
Vuity (pilocarpine HCL) ophthalmic solution	2.5 mL per 30 days

<sup>1</sup>Third-party brand names are the property of their respective owner.

\* Not all members may have been notified due to limited utilization.

<sup>2</sup> The target drug Lyvispah is misspelled on the dispensing limits letter for Basic and Enhanced Drug Lists.

### **Clarification to the July 2022 Quarterly Changes Dispensing Limit Letter**

The dispensing limit letter incorrectly listed Edarbi, Edarbyclor and Soolantra as target drugs included in the Therapeutic Alternatives program. **These target drugs belong to the Miscellaneous program, effective July 1, 2022.**

Letters mailed in late April to impacted members on the Basic, Enhanced, Balanced, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists. Clarification letters will not be sent to members because the dispensing limits are accurate on the letter and both programs apply to the drug lists mentioned above.

### **UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM CHANGES**

#### **New Target Drugs Added to Existing PA Programs**

Effective **Oct. 1, 2022**, the following changes will be applied:

- Target drugs Dartisla ODT, Valsartan oral solution and Lyvispah (baclofen) granule packet will be added to the Alternative Dosage Form PA program. This change applies to the Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists.\*



- Target drug Omnipod DASH kit/Omnipod 5 kit will be added to the Insulin Pumps PA program. This change applies to the 2021 HIM, 2022 HIM, Balanced, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists.\*

**New Programs Added to Select Drug Lists**

- Effective **Sept. 1, 2022**, the Interleukin-13 (IL-13) Antagonist Specialty PA program and target drug Adbry (tralokinumab-ldrm) will be added to the 2021 HIM, 2022 HIM, Balanced, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists.\*
- Effective **Oct. 1, 2022**, the following changes will be applied:
  - The Cibinqo Specialty PA program and target drug Cibinqo will be added to the 2021 HIM, 2022 HIM, Balanced, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists.\*
  - The Pyrukynd Specialty PA program and target drug Pyrukynd (mitapivat) will be added to the 2021 HIM, 2022 HIM, Balanced, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists.\*
  - The Recorlev Specialty PA program and target drug Recorlev (levoketoconazole) will be added to the 2021 HIM, 2022 HIM, Balanced, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists.\*
  - The Tarpeyo PA program and target drug TARPEYO (budesonide) will be added to the 2021 HIM, 2022 HIM, Balanced, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists.\*

Members were notified about the PA standard program changes listed in the tables below.

**Drug categories added to current pharmacy PA standard programs, effective July 1, 2022:**

Drug Category	Targeted Medication(s) <sup>1</sup>
<b>Basic, Basic Annual, Enhanced and Enhanced Annual Drug Lists</b>	
Cibinqo	Cibinqo (abrocitinib) <sup>2*</sup>
IL-13 Antagonist	Adbry (tralokinumab-ldrm) <sup>2*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Third-party brand names are the property of their respective owner.

<sup>2</sup>Member level PAs were entered through Oct. 1, 2022, for Basic and Enhanced Drug Lists and Jan. 1, 2023, for Basic Annual and Enhanced Annual Drug Lists.

\* Not all members may have been notified due to limited utilization.

**Drug categories added to current pharmacy PA standard programs, effective Oct. 1, 2022:**

Drug Category	Targeted Medication(s) <sup>1</sup>
<b>Basic and Enhanced Drug Lists</b>	
Pyrukynd	Pyrukynd (mitapivat) Therapy Pack 5 MG*, Pyrukynd (mitapivat) Therapy Pack 7 x 20 MG & 7 x 5 MG*, Pyrukynd (mitapivat) Therapy Pack 7 x 50 MG & 7 x 20 MG*, Pyrukynd (mitapivat) 5 mg tablets*, Pyrukynd (mitapivat) 20 mg tablets*, Pyrukynd (mitapivat) 50 mg tablets*
Recorlev	Recorlev (levoketoconazole)*
Tarpeyo	TARPEYO (budesonide)*

<sup>1</sup>Third-party brand names are the property of their respective owner.  
 \* Not all members may have been notified due to limited utilization.

**Targeted drugs added to current pharmacy PA standard programs, effective Oct. 1, 2022:**

Drug Category	Targeted Medication(s) <sup>1</sup>
<b>Basic, Enhanced and Balanced Drug Lists</b>	
Alternative Dosage Form	Dartisla ODT*, Lyvispah (baclofen) 5 mg Granule packet*, Lyvispah (baclofen) 10 mg Granule packet*, Lyvispah (baclofen) 20 mg Granule packet*, Valsartan oral solution*
<b>Basic and Enhanced Drug Lists</b>	
Insulin Pumps	Omnipod DASH kit/Omnipod 5 kit*
<b>Basic, Enhanced, Balanced, Performance, Performance Annual and Performance Select Drug Lists</b>	
Therapeutic Alternatives	METAXALONE TAB 400 MG*, METFORMIN TAB 625 MG*, PHOSPHOLINE SOL 0.125% OP*, PREDNISOLONE SOD PHOSPHATE ORAL SOLN 10 MG/5 ML (BASE EQUIV)*, VTAMA (tapinarof) 1% CREAM*

<sup>1</sup>Third-party brand names are the property of their respective owner.  
 \* Not all members may have been notified due to limited utilization.

Per our usual process of member notification prior to implementation, targeted mailings were sent to members affected by drug list revisions and/or exclusions, dispensing limit and prior authorization program changes. For the most up-to-date drug list and list of drug dispensing limits, visit the Pharmacy Program section of our Provider website.

If your patients have any questions about their pharmacy benefits, please advise them to contact the number on their member ID card. Members may also visit [bcbsil.com](http://bcbsil.com) and log in to Blue Access for Members<sup>SM</sup> (BAM<sup>SM</sup>) or MyPrime.com for a variety of online resources.

### Change in Benefit Coverage for Select High Cost Products

Several high cost products with available lower cost alternatives will be excluded on the pharmacy benefit for select drug lists. This change impacts BCBSIL members who have prescription drug benefits administered by Prime Therapeutics. This change is part of an ongoing effort to make sure our members and employer groups have access to safe, cost-effective medications.

High cost products that either are new to market or have therapeutic equivalents available have also been excluded. Please note: Members were not notified of these changes because there is no utilization or the pharmacist can easily fill a member's prescription with the equivalent without needing a new prescription from the doctor. The following drugs are excluded on select drug lists:

Product(s) No Longer Covered <sup>1*</sup>	Condition Used For	Covered Alternative(s) <sup>1,2</sup>
DICLOFENAC TAB 25 MG	PAIN	DICLOFENAC POT 50 MG, MELOXICAM, IBUPROFEN, NAPROXEN
METFORMIN TAB 625 MG	DIABETES	METFORMIN 500 MG TABS
ORPHENADRINE W/ ASPIRIN & CAFFEINE TAB 25-385-30 MG	MUSCLE PAIN	CYCLOBENZAPRINE, ORPHENADRINE

<sup>1</sup> All brand names are the property of their respective owners.

<sup>2</sup> This list is not all-inclusive. Other products may be available.

\* This chart applies to members on the Basic, Basic Annual, Multi-Tier Basic, Multi-Tier Basic Annual, Enhanced, Enhanced Annual, Multi-Tier Enhanced and Multi-Tier Enhanced Annual Drug Lists.

### Split Fill Program Category Expansion

Starting on Jan. 1, 2023, the Split Fill Program will be expanded to include additional categories beyond oral oncology medications, such as multiple sclerosis and iron toxicity.

#### Reminder:

BCBSIL offers its members and groups a Split Fill Program to reduce waste and help avoid costs of select specialty medications that may go unused. Members new to therapy (or have not had claims history within the past 120 days for the drug) are provided partial, or “split,” prescription fills for up to three months.

The Split Fill Program applies to a specific list of drugs known to have early discontinuation or dose modification. You can view the current list of drugs and find more information on the [Split Fill Program](#) on our Provider website.

Please call the number on the member's ID card to verify coverage, or for further assistance or clarification on your patient's benefits.

### Self-Injectable Drug Member Cost Share Change for HMO Plans

**Upcoming change:** Member cost share for certain specialty and non-specialty self-injectable drugs will be based on applicable drug status, plan benefits and drug tier.

**Background:** Currently, member cost share for certain specialty and non-specialty self-injectable drugs is a flat \$50.

**Member notices:** Impacted members will receive a letter at least 60 days prior to the effective date.

**Reminder:** Please call the number on the member's ID card to verify coverage, or for further assistance or clarification on your patient's benefits.

Prime Therapeutics LLC is a pharmacy benefit management company. BCBSIL contracts with Prime to provide pharmacy benefit management and related other services. BCBSIL, as well as several independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans, has an ownership interest in Prime. MyPrime.com is an online resource offered by Prime Therapeutics.

The information mentioned here is for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for the independent medical judgment of a physician. Physicians are to exercise their own medical judgment. Pharmacy benefits and limits are subject to the terms set forth in the member's certificate of coverage which may vary from the limits set forth above. The listing of any particular drug or classification of drugs is not a guarantee of benefits. Members should refer to their certificate of coverage for more details, including benefits, limitations and exclusions. Regardless of benefits, the final decision about any medication is between the member and their health care provider.

# BLUE REVIEW<sup>SM</sup>

A Provider Publication

September 2022

## Help Close Diabetes Disparity Gaps

Diabetes is one of the most common chronic conditions in the U.S. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), more than 37 million Americans of all ages have diabetes. An estimated 96 million Americans have prediabetes or are at high risk for type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes has a disproportionate impact on certain populations:

- Racial and ethnic minorities have a higher risk of diabetes and higher rates of diabetes complications and mortality, according to the [American Diabetes Association](#).
- Adults with less than a high school education and with family income below the federal poverty level have higher rates of diabetes diagnoses, according to the [CDC](#).

For these and other populations affected by diabetes, non-medical drivers of health – or social determinants of health – impose barriers to health and wellness, according to the [National Institutes of Health](#). See our [Health Equity and Social Determinants of Health](#) page for more details and resources.

### How You Can Help

You and your staff may play an important role in supporting our members with diabetes or at risk of developing the disease.

To help remove barriers to health equity and close gaps in care, you can:

- Educate our members on the unique risks that affect racial and ethnic minorities and other populations
- Ask members about their needs related to social determinants of health, such as issues with transportation, food insecurity or housing.
- Discuss regular tests and screenings with our members. We've created [information that may help](#):
  - [Type 1](#) and [Type 2](#) symptoms
  - [Hemoglobin A1c and other tests](#)
  - Annual eye exams to avoid [vision loss](#), or diabetic retinopathy
  - Screenings for [kidney disease](#), or diabetic nephropathy
  - [Blood pressure control](#)
- Participate in [shared decision-making](#) to identify the best screening and treatment options for each member.

- For members who [need language assistance](#), let them know we offer help and information in their language at no cost. To speak to an interpreter, members may call the customer service number on their member ID card.
- Offer telehealth services when available and appropriate for preventive care appointments.
- Help members schedule appointments and follow up with them if they miss.
- Talk with members and other treating providers to ensure all tests are completed and results are documented in the medical record.

To help monitor and improve our members' care, we track quality measures developed by the National Committee for Quality Assurance related to diabetes care, including [Kidney Health Evaluation for Patients with Diabetes and Comprehensive Diabetes Care](#). See our [preventive care](#) and [clinical practice guidelines](#) on diabetes for more details.

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[bcbsil.com/provider](https://bcbsil.com/provider)

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# BLUE REVIEW<sup>SM</sup>

A Provider Publication

September 2022

## Coming Soon: Use Our Automated Phone System to Request Prior Authorization for FEP<sup>®</sup> Members

Starting **Oct. 15, 2022**, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) interactive voice response (IVR) system will offer the option to request prior authorization for some services for Federal Employee Program<sup>®</sup> (FEP) members.

Through our IVR, you'll be able to initiate the prior authorization process for some inpatient and outpatient services for FEP members.

You'll also be able to use the IVR to:

- Check the status of an existing prior authorization
- Get an extension for an existing prior authorization

**Exceptions:** Use your existing prior authorization request process for behavioral health and chemical dependency services for FEP members. The IVR will **not** accommodate prior authorization requests for these services for FEP members.

**Remember:** You can check eligibility and benefits first via [Availity<sup>®</sup> Essentials](#), before rendering care and services to BCBSIL members. This step confirms membership and other important details, such as prior authorization requirements. Not registered with Availity? [Sign up online now](#) at no cost. For more information, refer to the [Availity Eligibility and Benefits User Guide](#).

**To access the IVR system:** Call BCBSIL Provider Services at **800-972-8088**. For help navigating the IVR, refer to this [caller guide](#).

Checking eligibility and/or benefit information and/or obtaining prior authorization is not a guarantee of payment. Benefits will be determined once a claim is received and will be based upon, among other things, the member's eligibility, and the terms of the member's certificate of coverage, including, but not limited to, exclusions and limitations applicable on the date services were rendered. If you have any questions, call the number on the member's ID card.

Availity is a trademark of Availity, LLC, a separate company that operates a health information network to provide electronic information exchange services to medical professionals. Availity provides administrative services to BCBSIL. BCBSIL makes no endorsement, representations or warranties regarding third party vendors and the products and services offered by them.

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# BLUE REVIEW<sup>SM</sup>

A Provider Publication

September 2022

## Webinars on Cross-cultural Care Offer Continuing Education Credit

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) invites you to sign up for the courses listed below and earn continuing education credits. We're pleased to offer these webinars at no cost through Quality Interactions, a separate company that provides cultural awareness training to health care professionals.

### How to Attend

- Enter your email address and create a password on the [Quality Interactions website](#).
- Watch your email for a link to your new account profile.
- Complete your profile and enter **Learn2022** as your Org ID.

### Course Offerings

Select the link for accreditation information and course overviews:

- [Recognizing and Responding to Implicit Bias](#) (CME/CEU/CCM/CDE)
- [Cross-Cultural Care in Mental Health and Depression](#) (CME/CEU/CCM/LSW)
- [Culturally Competent Care for the Medicare Population](#) (CME/CEU/CCM)
- [Improving Adherence in Diverse Populations](#) (CME/CEU/CCM/LSW/ACPE)
- [Test Your Skills for Clinicians](#) (option A) (CME/CEU/CCM)
- [Test Your Skills for Clinicians](#) (option B) (CME/CEU)

Find [instructions](#) and get [help](#) online. Space is limited, so register soon.

Quality Interactions is a separate company that provides cultural competency training to health care professionals. BCBSIL makes no endorsement, representations or warranties regarding third party vendors and the products and services they offer.

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[bcbsil.com/provider](https://bcbsil.com/provider)

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# BLUE REVIEW<sup>SM</sup>

A Provider Publication

September 2022

## Provider Learning Opportunities

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) offers free workshops and webinars for the independently contracted providers who work with us. These trainings focus on electronic options and other helpful tools and resources. A preview of upcoming training sessions is included below. For more information, refer to our [Webinars and Workshops page](#). **Note: All times listed are Central Time (CT).**

### BCBSIL WEBINARS

*To register now for a webinar on the list below, click on your preferred session date.*

#### Descriptions:

#### Dates:

#### Session Times:

#### Availity® Essentials Authorizations Tool

*Learn how to electronically submit inpatient and outpatient prior authorization requests handled by BCBSIL.*

[Sept. 7, 2022](#)

[Sept. 14, 2022](#)

[Sept. 21, 2022](#)

[Sept. 28, 2022](#)

11 a.m. to noon

#### Availity Claim Status and Clinical Claim Appeals

*Learn how to verify detailed claim status and submit clinical claim appeals online using Availity's Claim Status tool.*

[Sept. 8, 2022](#)

[Sept. 15, 2022](#)

[Sept. 22, 2022](#)

[Sept. 29, 2022](#)

11 a.m. to noon

#### Availity Orientation: Save Time and Go Online

*Join us for a review of electronic transactions, provider tools and helpful online resources.*

[Sept. 13, 2022](#)

[Sept. 20, 2022](#)

[Sept. 27, 2022](#)

11 a.m. to noon

#### Availity 'Message This Payer' Application

*Learn how to use the Message This Payer application to send secure claim management questions to BCBSIL and follow along with the*

[Sept. 7, 2022](#)

[Sept. 7, 2022](#)

[Sept. 8, 2022](#)

10 to 10:30 a.m.

2 to 2:30 p.m.

10 to 10:30 a.m.

*conversation history.*

<a href="#">Sept. 8, 2022</a>	2 to 2:30 p.m.
<a href="#">Sept. 9, 2022</a>	10 to 10:30 a.m.
<a href="#">Sept. 9, 2022</a>	2 to 2:30 p.m.

**Availity Remittance Viewer and Reporting On-Demand**

*These online tools give providers and billing services a convenient way to view claim detail information from the 835 Electronic Remittance Advice (835 ERA) and the Provider Claim Summary (PCS). Attend a webinar to learn how to gain or grant access, conduct a search, view general and payer-specific information and save or print results.*

[Sept. 15, 2022](#) 1 to 2 p.m.

**BCCHP<sup>SM</sup> and MMAI Required Provider Training Webinars**

*If you provide care and services to our Blue Cross Community MMAI (Medicare-Medicaid Plan)<sup>SM</sup> and/or Blue Cross Community Health Plans<sup>SM</sup> (BCCHP) members, please join us for guided webinars that will review all the provider trainings required by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and/or Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS).*

[Sept. 13, 2022](#)  
[Sept. 20, 2022](#) 1 to 3 p.m.

**Medicaid HEDIS<sup>®</sup> 102 Training – Adults**

*This training provides a deeper dive into the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measures and changes using National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) technical specifications for guidance on HEDIS measures. It will also provide an opportunity to connect with a point of contact at BCBSIL for Quality Improvement questions.*

[Sept. 14, 2022](#) Noon to 12:30 p.m.

**Medicaid HEDIS 102 Training – Pediatrics**

*This training provides a deeper dive into the HEDIS measures and changes using NCQA technical specifications for guidance on HEDIS measures. It will also provide an opportunity to connect with a point of contact at BCBSIL for Quality Improvement questions.*

[Sept. 14, 2022](#) 12:30 to 1 p.m.

**Monthly Provider Hot Topics Webinar**

*Stay up to date on the latest news from BCBSIL! Engage with our Provider Network Consultants (PNCs) to learn about upcoming initiatives, program changes and updates, as well as general network announcements.*

[Sept. 8, 2022](#) 10 to 11:30 a.m.

**New Laboratory Benefit Management Program Webinar**

*Attend a free webinar to learn more about the Laboratory Benefit Management Program. Our PNCs will give you an overview of the program, including a refresher on how to access and use the Trial Claim Advice Tool.*

[Sept. 27, 2022](#) 10 to 11:30 a.m.  
[Oct. 4, 2022](#) 1 to 2:30 p.m.

**Orientation Webinars for New Commercial Providers**

*Learn how we can best work together to improve the health of our members. Ask questions and engage with our PNCs on topics such as care coordination, third party vendors, claims, prior authorization and*

[Sept. 22, 2022](#) 10 to 11:30 a.m.

required provider training.

**Orientation Webinars for New MMAI and/or BCCHP Providers**

[Sept. 15, 2022](#)

3 to 4:30 p.m.

*Learn how we can best work together to improve the health of our members. Ask questions and engage with our PNCs on topics such as network participation and benefits, claims, post-processing claim inquiries, supplemental resources, credentialing and contracting.*

**Provider Resource Webinar**

[Sept. 28, 2022](#)

10 a.m. to noon

*This webinar will provide additional information and resources to help BCBSIL Commercial providers resolve common topics of concern.*

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HEDIS is a registered trademark of NCQA.

Checking eligibility and benefits and/or obtaining prior authorization is not a guarantee of payment of benefits. Payment of benefits is subject to several factors, including, but not limited to, eligibility at the time of service, payment of premiums/contributions, amounts allowable for services, supporting medical documentation, and other terms, conditions, limitations, and exclusions set forth in the member's policy certificate and/or benefits booklet and or summary plan description. Regardless of any prior authorization or benefit determination, the final decision regarding any treatment or service is between the patient and the health care provider. If you have any questions, call the number on the member's BCBSIL ID card.

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[bcbsil.com/provider](https://bcbsil.com/provider)

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# BLUE REVIEW<sup>SM</sup>

A Provider Publication

September 2022

## New Laboratory Benefit Management Program To Begin Nov. 1, 2022: Join Us for a Refresher Webinar To Prepare

As we announced on [Aug. 1, 2022](#), **beginning Nov. 1, 2022**, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) will implement its new program with Avalon Healthcare Solutions for claims for certain outpatient laboratory services provided to many of our **commercial, non-HMO** members. ***This program does not apply to government programs or any of our HMO members.***

We encourage you **attend a free webinar** to learn more about the Laboratory Benefit Management Program. These webinars will be conducted by the BCBSIL Provider Network Consultant (PNC) team. Our PNCs will give you an overview of the program, including a refresher on how to access and use the Trial Claim Advice Tool. To register now, select your preferred session date and time:

- [Sept. 27, 2022 – 10 to 11:30 a.m.](#)
- [Oct. 4, 2022 – 1 to 2:30 p.m.](#)

### Other Reminders and Resources

**Policy Updates** – The [Clinical Payment and Coding Policies](#) (CPCPs) page includes a link to view [Laboratory Benefit Management Program CPCPs](#) becoming effective on **Nov. 1, 2022**. Policies related to certain laboratory services, tests, and procedures will be implemented using a phased approach; effective dates are indicated on each CPCP.

**Affected Claims** – Our new program may include outpatient laboratory claims with dates of service beginning **Nov. 1, 2022**, for services performed in an outpatient setting (typically office, hospital outpatient or independent laboratory).

**Self-service Trial Claim Advice Tool via [Availity® Essentials](#)** – Since April 1, 2022, registered Availity users have had free access to Avalon's Trial Claim Advice Tool, which is available 24/7. This tool allows you to input laboratory procedure and diagnosis codes to better understand the potential outcome of claims. Not registered for Availity? [Sign up online today](#), at no cost.

Laboratory services provided in an emergency room, hospital observation or hospital inpatient setting are excluded from this program. Member coverage terms still apply. Additionally, claim edits will not initially apply to the rate at which tests have been ordered or with respect to the age or gender of a patient.

The Trial Claim Advice Tool does not guarantee approval, coverage, or reimbursement for health care services. Potential claim outcomes provided by Avalon's Trial Claim Advice Tool consider information entered in the tool for the date of service, claims finalized through the prior business day, and applicable policies and/or guidelines.

Avalon Health Solutions (Avalon) is an independent company that provides claims management services for members with coverage through BCBSIL. Availity is a trademark of Availity, LLC, a separate company that operates a health information network to provide electronic information exchange services to medical professionals. Availity provides administrative services to BCBSIL. BCBSIL makes no endorsement, representations or warranties regarding any products or services regarding third party vendors and the products and services they offer.

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# BLUE REVIEW<sup>SM</sup>

A Provider Publication

September 2022

## New 'Message This Payer' Option via Availity<sup>®</sup> Essentials

We're launching a new digital *Message This Payer* option for you to resolve your claim inquiries online. Starting **Sept. 6, 2022**, you can use this convenient electronic method to send secure messages to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) for claim management questions.

### How to Access *Message This Payer*:

- Log in to [Availity Essentials](#)
- Select Claims & Payments from the navigation menu
- Perform a Claim Status transaction using the *Member* or *Claim number* search options
- Click on *Message this Payer* at the top of the claim status results

**Note:** *The Availity Administrator must assign the 'Messaging App' role for users to gain access to this tool.*

### Using this option will allow you the opportunity to:

- Initiate a message to BCBSIL from the Claim Status tool
- Receive a response within two business days from a BCBSIL associate
- Monitor message status via a dashboard view
- View and print conversations

### Attend a Training Webinar

We encourage you to attend a free, instructor-led webinar session to learn how to access and use this new electronic option. To sign up, select your preferred date and time below. All times listed are Central Time (CT).

- [Sept. 7, 2022 – 10 to 10:30 a.m.](#)
- [Sept. 7, 2022 – 2 to 2:30 p.m.](#)
- [Sept. 8, 2022 – 10 to 10:30 a.m.](#)
- [Sept. 8, 2022 – 2 to 2:30 p.m.](#)
- [Sept. 9, 2022 – 10 to 10:30 a.m.](#)
- [Sept. 9, 2022 – 2 to 2:30 p.m.](#)

### For More Information

Refer to the instructional [Message This Payer User Guide](#) found in the [Provider Tools section](#) of our website. If you need further assistance, email our [Provider Education Consultants](#).

**Don't have an Availity Essentials account?**

You can register today by going to the [Availity website](#) or contact Availity Client Services at 800-282-4548.

***This information is not applicable to Medicare Advantage or Illinois Medicaid claims.***

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