

PROVIDER BULLETIN

PROVIDER INFORMATION



August 3, 2020

Prior Authorization Updates for Skilled Nursing Facility Admissions

Effective October 1, 2020, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and Blue Plus (Blue Cross) and eviCore will resume its prior authorization (PA) requirement for skilled nursing facility (SNF) admissions from the acute care setting for Medicare Advantage, commercial and Federal Employee Program (FEP) members.

This requirement was temporarily modified due to the COVID-19 pandemic to help free up hospital beds. Currently, providers are required to notify the plan of any SNF admission. Admissions from acute care facilities to skilled nursing facilities (SNF) for patients with and without COVID-19 diagnosis are automatically approved for the first 7 days. Current data shows adequate hospital capacity. We will continue to monitor hospital capacity and communicate future changes if/when it is warranted.

Products Impacted

This change applies only to Medicare Advantage, commercial and Federal Employee Program (FEP) members.

Submitting a PA Request for a Skilled Nursing Facility Admission

Starting October 1, 2020, SNF admissions from the acute care setting will once again require prior authorization. The prior authorization process ensures that the health service being proposed is medically necessary, and reflective of evidence-based medicine and industry standards, prior to treatment. This process helps us manage the cost and quality of care appropriately for our members.

- PA requests must be submitted online via our free Availity® provider portal
- SNF admissions for Medicare Advantage members are managed by eviCore healthcare
 - For members in an acute care facility, the hospital is responsible for submitting the initial request for SNF admissions
 - SNF facilities are required to submit concurrent review requests
 - SNF facilities are responsible to submit initial admission requests when a patient admits directly from the community
- SNF admissions for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota commercial and FEP members, request can be submitted by either the discharging hospital or the admitting skilled nursing facility
- PA requests submitted retrospectively must be submitted by the admitting facility as soon as possible after the admission, no later than the 14th day

Note: Home Health: Initial home health requests will continue to be approved for 60 days. Home health extension requests will be approved for 30 days at a time until the pandemic has passed.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information for Providers

Blue Cross created a Coronavirus website where providers can access all updates related to COVID-19. The website can be accessed by going to [bluecrossmn.com/providers](https://www.bluecrossmn.com/providers) and clicking 'see latest information' within the 'Coronavirus Info' box in the upper right-hand portion of the provider landing page.

The webpage includes a regularly updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document, along with all other provider communications related to COVID-19, including Provider Bulletins and Quick Points. Blue Cross encourages providers to access this website regularly for updates as additional information is published as it becomes available.

Questions?

If you have questions, please contact provider services at **(651) 662-5200** or **1-800-262-0820**.