

# PROVIDER QUICK POINTS

## PROVIDER INFORMATION



August 14, 2018

### **Action Required: Apply for Designation as a Blue Distinction® Center for Spine Surgery**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota in coordination with Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (BCBSA), invites providers to participate in the application process, which will begin in **September 2018**, for a nationwide designation as a **Blue Distinction Center for Spine Surgery**.

#### About Blue Distinction

Blue Distinction is a national designation awarded by Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) Plans to recognize providers that demonstrate expertise in delivering quality specialty care – safely, effectively, and cost efficiently. The goal of the Program is to help consumers find both quality and value for their specialty care needs, while providing a credible foundation for local Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield Plans to design benefits tailored to meet employers' quality and cost objectives<sup>1</sup>. The Blue Distinction Specialty Care Program includes two levels of designation:

- **Blue Distinction Centers (BDC):** Healthcare providers recognized for their expertise in delivering specialty care.
- **Blue Distinction Centers+ (BDC+):** Healthcare providers recognized for their expertise and cost-efficiency in delivering specialty care.

**Quality is key:** only those providers that first meet nationally established, objective quality measures for Blue Distinction Centers will be considered for designation as a Blue Distinction Center+.

#### Value of the Spine Surgery Program

This highly respected Program affirms that designated providers demonstrate expertise in delivering elective cervical and lumbar spine procedures for degenerative diseases (i.e., primary lumbar fusion +/- decompression for spondylolisthesis, primary anterior cervical fusion procedures). Providers designated as BDC or BDC+ for Spine Surgery can differentiate themselves from other spine surgery providers, within their own community as well as nationally.

Spine Surgery procedures are moving out of the inpatient hospital setting and into the outpatient setting. To keep track with the changing market, designations for the BDC Spine Surgery Program will now be available to Hospitals (with or without an Intensive Care Unit [ICU]) and Ambulatory Surgery Centers (ASC). Beginning mid-year 2019, each eligible provider can achieve designation as BDC or BDC+, as either a Hospital or ASC.

As an added advantage of participating in the evaluation process, every provider will receive a confidential report providing useful and constructive critical insights into its own performance. This report can provide a foundation for

<sup>1</sup> Benefit design is determined independently by the local Blue Plan and is not a feature of any Blue Distinction Program.  
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internal discussions with your executive management or medical staff to assess and improve your program's quality and cost performance through comparisons to national benchmarks.

### [Application Process](#)

The application process to be evaluated for nationwide designation as a Blue Distinction Center for Spine Surgery will begin in **September 2018**.

**All providers seeking new designation, or seeking to maintain their current designation under the Blue Distinction Centers for Spine Surgery Program, must complete a Provider Survey.** This process allows all providers to be evaluated against the same national selection criteria that will be used for the upcoming designation process. The Provider Survey is administered through Blue Distinction Portal<sup>SM</sup> (BD Portal<sup>SM</sup>), a web-based application that makes it easy for you to respond and track your application from start to finish.

If you wish to receive an invitation to apply for this Program, by **Wednesday, August 22, 2018** please email:

[Blue.Distinction.Centers@bluecrossmn.com](mailto:Blue.Distinction.Centers@bluecrossmn.com)

Include the following information in your email:

- First and last name of contact to complete Provider Survey
- Email address and phone number of contact who will be completing the Provider Survey
- List of hospitals / ASCs that will be applying the designation via the Provider Survey including:
  - Facility Address
  - Facility NPI

We look forward to your participation in the Blue Distinction Centers for Spine Surgery evaluation process.