

PROVIDER BULLETIN

PROVIDER INFORMATION



November 1, 2022

Medicare Advantage Behavioral Health Claims Update

Medicare does not currently cover behavioral health services (mental health and substance abuse services) unless they are provided by eligible providers.

The following provider specialties are Medicare eligible:

- Physicians (MD, DO)
- Clinical Psychologists (PhD and PsyD)
- Psychiatrists (MD, MB)
- Clinical Social Workers (CSW or LICSW)
- Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS)
- Clinical Nurse Practitioners (NP)
- Physician Assistant (PA)

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (Blue Cross) recently determined that it has paid for these services performed by non-eligible providers for their Medicare Advantage plans.

The following provider specialties are non-eligible, consistent with CMS requirements:

- Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)
- Licensed Alcohol & Drug Counselor
- Behavior Therapist Practitioner
- Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
- Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC)
- Certified Professional Counselor
- Chemical Dependency Assessor
- Masters Level Psychologist (MA or MS)
- Licensed Masters Social Worker (LMSW)

In July, a system update was made, and Blue Cross began denying Medicare Advantage behavioral health claims provided by non-eligible providers with dates of service starting 7/1/22.

In order to allow members an opportunity to find an eligible provider, Blue Cross will not deny Medicare Advantage claims solely based on provider eligibility or ineligibility as determined from the categories of non-eligible behavioral health providers listed above for dates of service prior to 1/1/23. In October, Blue Cross will start reprocessing the claims with dates of service of 7/1/22 and after that were denied due to using a non-eligible provider.

Services from non-eligible providers with dates of service on or after 1/1/23 will be denied and the Medicare Advantage member will be responsible for the full cost of the service(s). Blue Cross will be sending letters to impacted members.

Note: Blue Cross is aware that CMS' proposed Physician Payment Rule includes a proposal to expand the behavioral health practitioners that are allowed to provide behavioral health services under Medicare. If this rule is finalized with these changes, Blue Cross will update processing edits accordingly.

Medicare Products Excluded

Platinum Blue, Medigap.

Questions?

Please contact provider services at **(651) 662-5200** or **1-800-262-0820**.