

PROVIDER BULLETIN

PROVIDER INFORMATION



October 2, 2023

Expansion of the Peer Specialist Benefit

Effective January 1, 2024, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (Blue Cross) is expanding the benefit set for commercial and Medicare Advantage subscribers to include a Peer Specialist benefit for members with a behavioral health diagnosis.

Peer Specialists have prior experience receiving mental health or substance use disorder (SUD) care and have completed training and certification exam specified by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS).

Certified peer specialists, under treatment supervision of a mental health professional or certified rehabilitation specialist, must:

- Provide individualized peer support to the member.
- Promote member's recovery goals, self-sufficiency, self-advocacy, and development of natural supports.
- Support the member's maintenance of skills learned from other services.

Blue Cross will be offering this benefit to subscribers with qualifying diagnoses at a \$0 cost share for services provided by in-network providers. No age limit will be applied. This benefit will be applicable to any outpatient facility and provider who offers peer services for SUD or MH support. Services are not covered while a member is admitted to an inpatient or residential facility.

Additional Contracting for Expansion of Benefits

Recovery Community Organization (RCO) providers with a Blue Plus-only contract will receive an Aware Provider Service Agreement and Medicare Amendment that must be signed and executed prior to 12/1/23. Claims for peer services must be submitted in 837P format for dates of service on or after January 1, 2024. Outpatient Substance use disorder facilities that want to provide peer recovery services must request an additional professional Peer Recovery Services specialty contract at the following link: <https://www.bluecrossmn.com/providers/network-participation/join-our-network/contracting-behavioral-health-or-substance-use>

Service Types include certified family peer specialists, certified peer specialist and peer recovery specialists.

Products Impacted

- Fully Insured Commercial
- Self-Insured Commercial (must opt-in to include the benefit)
- Medicare Advantage

For further information, please see the **Provider Reference Guide** at the following link:

<https://www.bluecrossmn.com/sites/default/files/DAM/2023-08/peer-specialist-benefit-commercial-mapd-provider-reference-guide.pdf>

Questions?

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

P67-23

Distribution: [bluecrossmn.com/providers/forms-and-publications](https://www.bluecrossmn.com/providers/forms-and-publications)