



BLUE REVIEWSM

A Provider Publication

September 2023

Wellness and Member Education

Talk to Parents About Getting Their Children Immunized

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported on drops in routine immunization rates among children and adolescents over the past few years. According to the CDC, routine vaccination/immunization numbers are starting to rebound, but some groups are behind.

[Read More](#)

Illinois Medicaid Provider Alert: Help Your Patients Get Ready for Redetermination

Some of your patients could lose their Illinois Medicaid benefits if they don't complete their redetermination paperwork on time. You can help by reminding your patients to update their information and watch for a letter from the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services. [See what you can do to help.](#)

Provider Education

BCCHPSM and MMAI Provider Alert: Mandatory Annual Training Must Be Completed by Dec. 31, 2023

This reminder applies to all providers that are independently contracted with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) to provide care and services to the following government programs members: Blue Cross Community MMAI (Medicare-Medicaid Plan)SM and/or Blue Cross Community Health PlansSM (BCCHP).

[Read More](#)

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](#)

■ What's New

Blue Review Readership Survey: Your Ideas and Input in Action

We're grateful to all providers who responded to last year's *Blue Review* survey. Before we launch this year's survey, we wanted to share our "report card" – how we did in 2022 and what we've done to improve this year, based on your ratings and feedback.

[Read More](#)

■ Focus on Behavioral Health

See New Enhancements for Behavioral Health Pre-service Review Requests

BCBSIL is continuing to make enhancements to its Behavioral Health (BH) pre-service request and review process for some **commercial** members. When submitting pre-service review requests for BH services, the best method is to submit your request electronically using our BlueApprovRSM tool. [Read more on News and Updates.](#)

■ Claims and Coding

Claim Editing Changes for Emergency Department Services Coming Nov. 1, 2023

We're enhancing our claims editing and review process with Cotiviti for emergency department evaluation and management services for some of our **commercial** members. Editing changes for applicable facility and professional claims will take effect **beginning Nov. 1, 2023**, to help ensure accurate billing and proper reimbursement. [Read more on News and Updates.](#)

Submitting Claims for Infertility Services

Coverage for surrogates and donors may vary by plan. Inclusion of the recipient information on submitted claims will help BCBSIL expedite proper processing of claims for these services. [Read more on News and Updates.](#)

■ Electronic Options

'Reporting On-Demand via Availity® Essentials' Is Now 'Provider Claim Summary'

BCBSIL has changed the name of its long-standing Reporting On-Demand tool to Provider Claim Summary. The tool remains available in the BCBSIL-branded Payer Spaces section via Availity and allows users to readily view, download, save and/or print their claim summaries online.

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

■ Pharmacy Program

Pharmacy Program Quarterly Update: Changes Effective Oct. 1, 2023 – 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 BCBSIL drug lists. Changes effective **on or after Oct. 1, 2023**, are outlined [here](#).

Pharmacy Program Updates: Prior Authorization Changes Effective Oct. 1, 2023

The BCBSIL pharmacy PA program encourages safe, cost effective medication use by allowing coverage when certain conditions are met. A clinical team of physicians and pharmacists develops and approves the clinical programs and criteria for medications that are appropriate for PA by reviewing U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved labeling, scientific literature, and nationally recognized guidelines. [Read more on News and Updates.](#)

■ Clinical Updates, Reminders and Resources

Are you using these shared decision-making aids?

Shared decision-making is a communications process. It's a way for providers and patients to make informed health care decisions that align with what matters most to patients.

[Read More](#)

■ Quality Improvement and Reporting

Help Close Gaps in Care for Group Medicare Advantage Members: Medical Records and Vendor Reminders

If we need medical records for **Blue Cross Group Medicare Advantage (PPO)SM** members, you'll receive requests from BCBSIL or our vendor, **Change Healthcare**, as part of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield [National Coordination of Care program](#). Please respond quickly to our requests, including requests related to risk adjustment gaps and Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS[®]) measures.

■ Notification and Disclosure

Medical Policy Updates

Approved, new or revised BCBSIL Medical Policies and their effective dates are usually posted on our Provider website the first day of each month.

[Read More](#)

Procedure Code and Fee Schedule Updates

As part of our commitment to help inform our independently contracted providers of certain developments, BCBSIL has designated a specific section in the *Blue Review* to notify you of any significant changes to the physician fee schedules.

[Read More](#)



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 Essentials 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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Talk to Parents About Getting Their Children Immunized

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) has reported on drops in routine immunization rates among children and adolescents over the past few years. According to the CDC, routine vaccination/immunization numbers are starting to rebound, but some groups are behind.¹

During August, with back-to-school and flu season approaching, we recognized National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) through increased communication, education and outreach in the communities we serve.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) also works to involve providers and gain their valuable input and support. Immunization was the discussion topic at our 3rd Quarter Community Stakeholder Committee Meeting on August 17. This committee includes providers, faith leaders, advocacy groups and other community-based organizations. Committee meetings are a forum for networking and sharing ideas and information on preventive care resources for Medicaid members.

What can providers do?

Our members look to you for guidance concerning their health and wellness. Physicians and other health care practitioners play a vital role in educating parents on the importance of scheduling all immunizations for their children (ages 0 to 2) and adolescents (ages 9 to 13).

Below are a few tips to consider:

- Contact parents and remind them about their child's upcoming immunization.
- Talk with parents about the benefits of age-appropriate childhood and adolescent immunization.
- Check at each visit for any missing immunizations and administer vaccines that are due.
- Listen to parents and guide them to additional resources if they have concerns.

We encourage you and your patients to refer to the CDC website for [NIAM tools and resources](#) that may be helpful year-round.

What's BCBSIL doing to help?

For members: Each year, the **BCBSIL Care Van® Program** helps build healthy communities by providing more than 10,000 immunizations.

- Our Care Vans visit schools, churches, public housing, and many more locations across the state.
- In addition to no-cost immunizations, the Care Van Program works with clinical community partners to offer dental services, health literacy education, HIV and COVID-19 testing.
- The **September schedule for Chicago and throughout Illinois** and other information is available on our [Care Van Program page](#).

For providers: As part of our health equity strategy, BCBSIL is sponsoring a **webinar series on ways providers can help address patient concerns**.

- There's still time to [sign up for the next webinar](#) – Strategies to Help Build Vaccine Confidence – on **Sept. 7, 2023**, starting at noon.
- This free, 45-minute webinar is led by Merck & Co., Inc., with a presentation by a Regional Medical Director with expertise on the topic.
- Contracted providers working with Blue Cross Community Health PlansSM (BCCHPSM) and Blue Cross Community MMAI (Medicare-Medicaid Plan)SM members are encouraged to attend.

For additional information on recommended immunization schedules for children and adolescents, review the [BCBSIL Preventive Care Guidelines](#) and [CDC website](#).

¹CDC, Childhood Vaccination Resources for Healthcare Providers (March 21, 2023). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/childhood-vaccination-toolkit.html>

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BCCHPSM and MMAI Provider Alert: Mandatory Annual Training Must Be Completed by Dec. 31, 2023

This reminder applies to all providers that are independently contracted with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) to provide care and services to the following government programs members: Blue Cross Community MMAI (Medicare-Medicaid Plan)SM and/or Blue Cross Community Health PlansSM (BCCHP).

It's a Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and/or Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services requirement for BCBSIL to make available provider training on specific topics related to MMAI and BCCHP. Annual completion of all required training modules is mandatory for all MMAI and BCCHP contracted providers.

There are six required training modules and one required survey:

- Model of Care/Medical Home (Person Centered Practice)
- Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA)
- Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation (Critical Incidents)
- Cultural Competency
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/Independent Living
- Medicare Parts C and D General Compliance Training (MMAI only)
- ADA Site Compliance Survey

For more information on the required training modules, see our [Provider Training Requirements and Resources](#) page.

BCCHP and MMAI Required Provider Training Webinar Sessions

Please join us for guided webinars that will review all the required provider trainings and allow you to complete an attestation for your facility, group and/or individual providers. Use the links below to sign up now:

- [Sept. 12, 2023 – 1 to 3 p.m.](#)
- [Sept. 19, 2023 – 10 a.m. to noon](#)

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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](#).

BCBSIL WEBINARS

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

Descriptions:

Dates:

Session Times:

Availity[®] Essentials Prior Authorizations and BlueApprovRSM Tools

Learn how to electronically submit inpatient and outpatient prior authorization handled by BCBSIL using the Availity Authorizations and BlueApprovR tools. You'll also learn how to access and submit inpatient and/or outpatient medical/surgical, behavioral health and specialty pharmacy drug prior authorization requests online through BlueApprovR.

[Sept. 6, 2023](#)
[Sept. 13, 2023](#)
[Sept. 20, 2023](#)
[Sept. 27, 2023](#)

11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Availity Claim Status, Clinical Claim Appeals and Message This Payer

Learn how to verify claim status, submit and monitor clinical claim appeals online and Message This Payer using the Availity Essentials Portal.

[Sept. 7, 2023](#)
[Sept. 14, 2023](#)
[Sept. 21, 2023](#)
[Sept. 28, 2023](#)

11 a.m. to noon

Availity Essentials Instructor-Led Training

Register for this session to better understand how electronic transactions can work for your organization. You'll learn the

[Sept. 5, 2023](#)
[Sept. 12, 2023](#)
[Sept. 19, 2023](#)

11 a.m. to noon

importance of Manage My Organization, how to use the Patient ID Finder, instruction on the newly updated Eligibility and Benefits capability and more.

[Sept. 26, 2023](#)

Availity Remittance Viewer and Provider Claim Summary

These online tools give providers and billing services a convenient way to view claim detail information from the 835 Electronic Remittance Advice and the Provider Claim Summary. 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. 7, 2023](#)

1 to 2 p.m.

[Sept. 14, 2023](#)

[Sept. 21, 2023](#)

[Sept. 28, 2023](#)

BlueApprovR: Prior Authorization Process

Learn how to access and use BlueApprovR via Availity Essentials to submit and secure real-time approvals for specialty pharmacy drug, behavioral health clinical evaluation and medical surgical prior authorization requests for many BCBSIL commercial members.

[Sept. 7, 2023](#)

10 to 11 a.m.

[Sept. 14, 2023](#)

[Sept. 21, 2023](#)

[Sept. 28, 2023](#)

BCCHPSM and MMAI Required Provider Training Webinars

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

[Sept. 12, 2023](#)

1 to 3 p.m.

[Sept. 19, 2023](#)

10 a.m. to noon

Coding for Severe Obesity

Join our Coding Compliance team for a webinar on coding for morbid and severe obesity.

[Sept. 15, 2023](#)

Noon to 12:30 p.m.

Monthly Provider Hot Topics Webinar

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

[Sept. 14, 2023](#)

10 to 11:30 a.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 required provider training.

[Sept. 12, 2023](#)

10 to 11 a.m.

Orientation Webinars for New BCCHP and/or MMAI 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 network participation and benefits, claims, post-processing claim inquiries, supplemental resources, credentialing and contracting.

[Sept. 14, 2023](#)

1 to 2 p.m.

Provider Resource Webinar

This webinar will provide additional information and resources to help

[Sept. 27, 2023](#)

1 to 3 p.m.

BCBSIL providers resolve common topics of concern.

Website Review Webinar

[Sept. 28, 2023](#)

10 a.m. to noon

Join us for a tour of the BCBSIL Provider website. The information covered will include both government and commercial lines of business.

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 provided by third party vendors and the products and services they offer.

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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***Blue Review* Readership Survey: Your Ideas and Input in Action**

We're grateful to all providers who responded to last year's *Blue Review* survey. Before we launch this year's survey, we wanted to share our "report card" – how we did in 2022 and what we've done to improve in 2023, based on your feedback.

2022 Results Summary

The survey asked readers to rate how well the newsletter performed in general. Most participants said they look forward to receiving the newsletter each month. The *Blue Review* keeps readers informed of important dates and upcoming changes. Readers agree it's typically easy to find articles that are relevant to their practice, and they often share content with their colleagues.

How We Used Your Feedback

Many survey participants included helpful write-in comments. Your ratings, ideas and input helped us identify areas for improvement in 2023. Here are some examples:

- We added more claims and coding content to focus on electronic options, prior authorization and behavioral health.
- We published more articles to help with onboarding/orientation questions, such as how to make demographic changes.
- We highlighted provider training resources, including opportunities to earn continuing education credits.
- We continued to publish the quarterly Provider Network Consultant Hot Topics Summary, which recaps questions, answers and discussion points from monthly meetings.
- We updated our Provider website with a new page: [Welcome to BCBSIL!](#) We're also streamlining Credentialing information on the web.

We hope these changes improve your experience as a participating provider.

Watch for the 2023 *Blue Review* Readership Survey

Did you miss the opportunity to respond last year? The 2023 *Blue Review* readership survey will be open soon. Please watch the [News and Updates](#) for the survey link. Thank you in advance for your participation. Your feedback makes a difference!

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‘Reporting On-Demand via Availity[®] Essentials’ Is Now ‘Provider Claim Summary’

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) has changed the name of its long-standing Reporting On-Demand tool to Provider Claim Summary (PCS). The tool remains available in the BCBSIL-branded Payer Spaces section via Availity and allows users to readily view, download, save and/or print Provider Claim Summaries online. The tool also offers you the opportunity to obtain claim outcome results for multiple patients, in one central location.

As a reminder, PCS reports are available in this tool for commercial claims processed after Dec. 1, 2016, and for Medicare Advantage and Illinois Medicaid claims processed after April 12, 2019.

Providers currently enrolled to receive the Electronic Remittance Advice (ERA) from BCBSIL will continue to receive the Electronic Payment Summary (EPS), but with the additional opportunity to access the PCS as a complimentary option. If you currently rely on paper claim summaries, Availity Essentials registration is strongly recommended to gain access to the PCS.

Join Us For A Webinar

BCBSIL hosts instructor-led educational **Obtaining Provider Claim Summaries Online** webinars for you to learn more about the application. New and existing Availity Essentials users are highly encouraged to attend. To register for a complimentary training session, select your preferred date and time below.

- [Sept. 7, 2023](#) – 1 to 2 p.m.
- [Sept. 14, 2023](#) – 1 to 2 p.m.
- [Sept. 21, 2023](#) – 1 to 2 p.m.
- [Sept. 28, 2023](#) – 1 to 2 p.m.

For more information, refer to the updated [Provider Claim Summary page](#) and [user guide](#) in the [Provider Tools section](#) of our website. In addition to the Provider Claim Summary tool, BCBSIL supports an array of online tools that are available to registered Availity Essentials users at no additional cost. To register, simply go to [Availity](#), select “Register,” and complete the online application today.

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Are you using these shared decision-making aids?

Shared decision-making is a communications process. It's a way for providers and patients to make informed health care decisions that align with what matters most to patients. Below are resources to help you involve your patients in shared decision-making.

These evidence-based aids provide information about treatment options, lifestyle changes and outcomes. They don't replace your guidance but can help your conversations with patients.

Why it's important: When patients help make decisions about their health care, it can lead to improved patient experience, better outcomes and quality of life.

Mayo Clinic Knowledge and Evaluation Research Unit [Care That Fits Tools:](#)

- [Acute Myocardial Infarction Choice](#)
- [Anticoagulation Choice](#)
- [Cardiovascular Primary Prevention Choice](#)
- [Chest Pain Choice](#)
- [Depression Medication Choice](#)
- [Diabetes Medication Choice](#)
- [Graves Disease Treatment Choice](#)
- [Head CT Choice](#)
- [Osteoporosis Choice](#)
- [Percutaneous Coronary Intervention Choice](#)
- [Rheumatoid Arthritis Choice](#)
- [Smoking Cessation Around the Time of Surgery](#)
- [Statin Choice](#)

This information is also on our [Clinical Practice Guidelines](#) page.

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. 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.

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Medical Policy Updates

Approved, new or revised Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) Medical Policies and their effective dates are usually posted on [our Provider website](#). Medical policies, both new and revised, are used as guidelines for benefit determinations in health care benefit programs for most BCBSIL members, unless otherwise indicated. These policies may affect your reimbursement and your patients' benefits.

Although medical policies can be used as a guide, providers serving HMO members should refer to the HMO Scope of Benefits in the [BCBSIL Provider Manual](#), located in the Standards and Requirements section.

You may view active, new, and revised policies, along with policies pending implementation, by visiting the [BCBSIL Medical Policy page](#). Select "View all Active and Pending Medical Policies." After confirming your agreement with the Medical Policies disclaimer, you will be directed to the Medical Policies homepage.

You also may view draft medical policies that are under development or are in the process of being revised by selecting "View and comment on Draft Medical Policies." After confirming your agreement with the Medical Policies disclaimer, you will be directed to the Draft Medical Policies page. Click on the title of the draft policy you wish to review, and then select "Comments" to submit your feedback to us.

Visit the Standards and Requirements section of our website for access to the most complete and up-to-date BCBSIL [Medical Policy](#) information. You'll find a [Recommended Clinical Review \(Predetermination\) Code List](#) in the Related Resources on our [Recommended Clinical Review \(Predetermination\) page](#) – this list is updated on a monthly basis. In addition to medical policies, other policies and information regarding payment can be found on the [Clinical Payment and Coding Policies](#) page.

The BCBSIL Medical Policies are for informational purposes only and are not a substitute for the independent medical judgment of health care providers. Providers are instructed to exercise their own clinical judgment based on each individual patient's health care needs. The fact that a service or treatment is described in a medical policy is not a guarantee that the service or treatment is a covered benefit under a health benefit plan. Some benefit plans administered by BCBSIL, such as some self-funded employer plans or governmental plans, may not utilize BCBSIL Medical Policies. Members should contact the customer service number on their member ID card for more specific coverage information.

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Procedure Code and Fee Schedule Updates

As part of our commitment to help inform our independently contracted providers of certain developments, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) has designated a specific section in the *Blue Review* to notify you of any significant changes to the physician fee schedules.

Effective Sept. 1, 2023, we will update select codes in the 90630-90756 and Q2034-Q2039 Current Procedural Terminology (CPT[®]) code ranges. Please note that not all CPT codes in this range will be affected.

The information above is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of all changes. For more information on the above change(s), use our Fee Schedule Request Form and specifically request the updates on the codes listed in the *Blue Review*. Annual and quarterly fee schedule updates may be requested by using the Fee Schedule Request Form. The downloadable form is available on the [Forms page](#) on our Provider website. Professional providers participating in our Preferred Provider Option (PPO) and Blue Choice PPOSM networks may use the [Fee Schedule Listing tool](#) on [Availity[®] Essentials](#) to submit electronic requests and receive the contracted price allowance for specific codes.

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