

News You Can Use

March 2010

Vol. 3, Issue 3

Enhancements to BlueCard Eligibility® Telephone Line Allow Easier Access for Out-of-Area Blue Members

Beginning April 1, 2010, you will notice changes to the BlueCard Eligibility® telephone line. These changes will improve your experience in verifying eligibility and obtaining pre-certification/pre-authorization information for your out-of-area Blue patients.

The changes include:

When calling 1.800.676-BLUE (2583) to obtain pre-certification/pre-authorization only:

When pre-certifications/pre-authorizations for a specific member are handled separately from eligibility verifications, your call will be routed directly to the area that handles pre-certifications/pre-authorizations. You will choose from four options regarding the type of service for which you are calling:

- Medical/surgical
- Behavioral health
- Diagnostic imaging/radiology
- Durable medical equipment (DME)

Upon making your selection, you will be transferred to the appropriate area of the member's Plan to service your specific request.

When calling 1.800.676-BLUE (2583) to obtain eligibility only or if you need both eligibility and pre-certification/pre-authorization:

Your calling process will not change. Select the option to obtain eligibility and pre-certification/pre-authorization information. Your eligibility inquiry will be addressed and you will then be transferred to the appropriate pre-certification/pre-authorization area.

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Policy Reversal for Hearing Aid Devices (Non-FEP Business Only)

CareFirst and CareFirst BlueChoice, Inc. are returning to the hearing aid device policy that was in effect prior to January 1, 2010 for all non-Federal Employee Program (FEP) business members.

Key Policy Points:

- This change is retroactive to January 1, 2010.
- Reinstates the provider's ability to balance bill the member up to the charge for a hearing aid device for non-FEP business only.
- Providers must accept CareFirst's allowed benefit as payment in full (no balance billing), for all FEP members.
- FEP business requirements preclude CareFirst and CareFirst BlueChoice from extending this change to FEP members. Balance billing "waivers" are not permitted for the hearing aid devices for FEP members.

We will continue to work collaboratively with professional audiology and ENT provider societies as we give further consideration to our coverage for hearing aid devices. If you have questions regarding this policy change, please contact your Provider Relations Representative.

Migration Updates

On January 1, 2009 CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield began migrating accounts to the Facets or the NASCO processing systems. The migration is approximately 66% complete and will continue to the end of this year. Groups with fewer than 200 members and the Individual Market Division will be housed on the Facets system, and groups with over 200 members will be housed on the NASCO system.

Please be aware that the checks issued from the Facets system will be divided into separate checks for BlueChoice, CareFirst of Maryland (CFMI), and District of Columbia (GHMSI) memberships.

To determine which system the membership is processed on, please use CareFirst Direct.

Reminder: BlueLink has gone green and is available exclusively online. Register your e-mail address at www.carefirst.com > *Providers & Physicians > Electronic Services > e-mail registration* and continue receiving information regarding updates to our administrative policies, seminars and other valuable information to help you do business with us.