

RE: Temporary Authorization Requirements Policy

Dear Provider:

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana, in consideration of the ever-growing need for medical services as a result of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis, is assisting with relieving the administrative burden on hospitals. We have made the decision to implement temporary authorization requirement changes for our credentialed Louisiana, participating facilities for emergent care as outlined below.

The updated authorization provisions do not apply for non-participating and/or out-of-state facilities. For these providers, our usual processes will apply.

We are allowing in-network level benefits to apply for credentialed Louisiana participating facilities for our Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana and HMO Louisiana, Inc. members, even if the facility is not specifically in the member's network.

Emergent Hospitalization

(effective for dates of service March 16 to April 30, 2020)

For initial inpatient admissions and acute hospital to acute hospital transfers:

- Continue to notify Blue Cross—upon admission—of basic patient information using the normal process you use today (BCBSLA Authorizations tool, authorizations number on the Member ID card or via fax)
- Blue Cross' Utilization Management staff will enter information into the system and authorize all admissions for 7 (seven) days without a medical review.
- At the end of 7 (seven) days we will verify continued hospital stay and authorize additional days through discharge date without a medical review.
- We are suspending concurrent record review, including for patients admitted prior to March 16, 2020.

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Transfers from an Acute Care Hospital to an LTACH, SNF or Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility
(effective for dates of service March 16 to April 30, 2020)

- Blue Cross is temporarily suspending the requirement to obtain authorization to move patients from an acute care inpatient setting to a credentialed Louisiana participating LTACH, SNF or inpatient rehabilitation facility setting. The following applies:
 - a. The receiving facility should notify Blue Cross of the admission within 24 hours. We will automatically approve a 3-day stay for the receiving facility.
 - b. Blue Cross will work with the receiving facility to perform a concurrent review by day four (4) and authorize appropriate continued stay based on medical necessity.

Non-Emergent Hospitalization

Authorizations for non-emergent hospitalization (scheduled admissions for elective procedures) must be prior authorized.

Behavioral Health Authorizations

Authorizations for behavioral health services (inpatient admissions, IOP, PHP, RTC and ABA services) must be prior authorized.

Transplant Services

Authorizations for transplant services must be prior authorized.

Blue Cross will continue to notify providers of updated authorization and billing guidelines as new developments occur. Thank you for working with us to serve our members, especially during this time of uncertainty. Please continue to communicate with Blue Cross as your needs change to meet the COVID-19 crisis. We value you as a key part of our provider networks and the services you bring to our members—your patients.

Be sure to visit our COVID-19 Provider Resources page, where you can easily access our latest provider communications like this one. Go to www.BCBSLA.com/providers, then click on the “COVID-19 Provider Resources” link at the top of the page. We will continue to add updated information to this page as it develops.

Contact Us

If you have questions about the billing of COVID-19, you may send an email to our Provider Relations department at provider.relations@bcbsla.com. Please put “COVID-19 Billing” in the subject line.

Sincerely,



Hiral Arges
VP, Provider Relations and Contracting
Network Administration