



April 8, 2020

Dear Providers:

Blue Advantage continues to monitor developments related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and make necessary adjustments to ensure our members are receiving quality care. As a result of the recent state of emergency declaration due to COVID-19 and mandates released by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), we are implementing temporary changes to our authorization requirements.

Skilled Nursing Facilities

(Effective March 6 to May 31, 2020)

- Waived the three-day hospitalization authorization requirement for coverage of a skilled nursing facility (SNF) stay.
 - This provides temporary emergency coverage of SNF services without a qualifying hospital stay for members who need to be transferred to a SNF from an inpatient setting, for a COVID-19-related reason or clinical indication.
 - This waiver applies to the SNF care and not necessarily to the transportation of the member to the SNF.
 - In addition, for members who have exhausted their SNF benefits, renewed SNF coverage will be authorized. Members do not have to wait for a new benefit period.

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Acute Care Hospitals

(Effective March 6 to May 31, 2020)

- Waived requirements to allow acute-care hospitals to transfer patients in inpatient settings to excluded Distinct Part Units when these units are appropriate for inpatient acute care.
- Waived authorization requirements for relocating patients to different bed types (acute rehabilitation units, long-term acute care, SNF, etc.), to accommodate bed availability.

Emergency Hospitalization

(Effective March 6 to May 31, 2020)

- Waived authorization requirements for emergency hospitalization; however, concurrent reviews will still take place.

The transferring facility must still submit notification of the facility the member is being admitted to, along with clinical documentation supporting the reason for transfer. We will apply our normal concurrent review process and continue to follow our members' progress for discharge planning needs. Submit notification of admission to the Blue Advantage Authorizations department:

- Phone: 1-866-445-8416
- Fax: 1-877-528-5818

Contact Us

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please email Provider Relations at provider.relations@bcbsla.com. Please put "Blue Advantage COVID-19 Authorizations" in the subject line.

Sincerely,



Hiral Arges
VP, Provider Relations and Contracting
Network Administration

HA/bp