

## Coronavirus Update

We're providing answers and updates to questions our providers are asking. We'll keep updating this list as we learn more in this changing situation.

### TESTING

#### **Q. Will COVID-19 testing be covered for my patients?**

Yes. We'll cover our members' copay and waive their cost-share for any appropriate FDA-approved tests and those currently pending FDA approval you order at this time. This applies for testing through providers outside our network.

#### **Q. Will I have to get a prior authorization for testing or treatment of COVID-19?**

No. Prior authorization won't be required.

#### **Q: Will BlueCross suspend prior authorization requirements for admissions during this time?**

No. We aren't suspending prior authorization requirements for admissions. We are waiving prior authorization requirements for the testing and treatment of coronavirus. We have prior authorizations in place for several reasons, but mainly to manage claims payments, and allow our nurse case managers to perform transition of care and discharge planning with our members.

#### **Q: How will I be reimbursed for COVID-19 testing?**

From now until Dec. 31, we'll reimburse at 100% of Medicare for COVID-19 FDA-approved tests (as well as those currently pending FDA approval). The following codes are billable for all labs and providers across all BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee product lines\*:

- U0001 - \$35.91 (CDC)
- U0002 - \$51.31 (Commercial Labs)
- CPT® code (87635) to be priced at the U0002 payment of \$51.31 or the lesser of billed charges once physicians can do their own testing.

#### **Q: Can I offer my patients drive-thru testing services for COVID-19?**

Yes. We'll cover our members' swabs and test results in a drive-thru setting as part of the lab payment. Please note that the test code includes both the swab and the results. You should use place of service code 99 when billing and all reimbursement will be based on the testing code.

#### **Q: Does drive-thru testing apply to screening services?**

No. We'll only reimburse for our member's COVID-19 swabs and test results in drive-thru testing.

\*Codes included on preferred lab exclusion list for BlueCare<sup>SM</sup>, TennCareSelect and CoverKids.

#### **Q. Do you have a list of testing sites?**

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The CDC has linked to each state's department of health contact information for testing. You can view it here: <https://www.cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/healthdirectories/healthdepartments.html>

## **TELEHEALTH**

### **Q. Will BlueCross cover telehealth (telephonic or virtual) consultations with my patients?**

Yes. At least through June 30, you may bill for telehealth in the following ways:

- CPT® codes 99441 – 99443 for telephonic provider-to-member consultations for all lines of business' PCP or specialist benefits.
- E&M codes 99201–99215 for virtual and telephonic consults with your patients.
- CPT® codes 90791, 90792, 90832, 90834 and 90837 for behavioral health consultations.

Please use place of service 02 for all of these options. Pricing for these services would be consistent with your BlueCross fee schedule.

### **Q: Is BlueCross removing the geographic restrictions on your Medicare Advantage plans to cover live, interactive, audio and visual consultations?**

Yes. We're relaxing the originating site and geographic requirements for all Medicare Advantage plans during this time of emergency.

### **Q: Can I perform telehealth visits with my patients via Facebook?**

We don't recommend using Facebook for telehealth services because it isn't a secure platform.

### **Q: May I use telehealth to treat new and existing patients?**

Yes. You can use CPT® codes 99201 – 99215 to bill for telehealth with both new and existing patients.

### **Q: Will BlueCross waive the copay for telehealth?**

No. We aren't waiving the cost-share for telehealth services performed by network providers.

### **Q: Can I use telehealth for chiropractic services?**

No. We don't cover chiropractic services for telehealth.

### **Q: Can home health agencies conduct visits via telehealth and bill with CPT® code 99211?**

No. Home health can't be performed through telehealth.

### **Q: Will BlueCare and TennCareSelect temporarily waive PCP assignment for telehealth?**

Yes. We are waiving PCP lock-in processes during this time.

### **Q. Can I refer patients to use telehealth services to protect them and others from transmission of disease during a possible outbreak?**

Yes. We encourage our patients to use their PhysicianNow powered by MDLive® telehealth benefits, if they have them. We also encourage patients to avoid using the emergency room, except in a true medical emergency, to prevent the spread of illness.

## TREATMENT

**Q. Once available, will a COVID-19 vaccine be covered for my patients?**

Yes. We'll cover vaccines developed and approved to treat COVID-19 when available. Member cost-sharing may apply based on benefit plan.

**Q. Will my recommended treatments for symptoms of COVID-19 be covered for my patients?**

Yes. We'll cover the care you order for members with COVID-19 to help relieve symptoms, just as we would with any other viral respiratory infection. Your patients' care will be covered under their usual benefit with the same cost-share.

**Q. Will BlueCross cover a hospital quarantine stay for a patient diagnosed with COVID-19?**

Yes. If you order a patient be admitted to the hospital and quarantined, we'll cover it under their usual inpatient benefits with the same cost-share.

## GENERAL

**Q: Will BlueCross call centers be open for claims payment and follow-up during this time?**

Yes. We continue to be committed to serving our members and providers in this time of emergency. We acted quickly to make sure our employees could work effectively from home while practicing social distancing. At the same time, we've prioritized our claims, customer service and clinical operations. We're monitoring the situation and our service metrics, and will revisit as needed.

**Q: Will BlueCross continue to recoup funds from overpayments during this time?**

No. In light of COVID-19, we are temporarily delaying recoupments. We'll also temporarily suspend any collections agency activity. In this time of emergency, we want to support our provider partners so they can focus on dealing with this health crisis.

**Q: Will BlueCross consider advanced payment or other financial support for individual health systems?**

No. Our priority right now is to support our members by temporarily relaxing or suspending clinical and administrative policies, and offering premium extensions. We're also focusing on supporting our community at large. For example, the BlueCross Foundation recently donated \$3.25 million in emergency grants to food banks across the state.

**Q: Will BlueCare and TennCareSelect temporarily waive PCP assignment?**

Yes. We are waiving PCP lock-in processes during this time.

**Q. Can I bill BlueCross for medical supplies such as masks, gloves and disinfectant given to my patient?**

No. We don't cover these supplies under our health plans.

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**Q. Can my patients stock up on prescriptions to avoid increased risk of exposure with multiple trips to the pharmacy?**

Yes. For members who have BlueCross pharmacy benefits, we're allowing early refills on most medications, and we also encourage 90-day fills for chronic medications. Controlled substances, such as opioids, and some specialty drugs are excluded from this change. Some members may have a mail-order benefit, if they want to avoid going to the pharmacy.

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