

Patient Report

Central Region

Information about your patients who are Pennsylvania Blue Shield customers

April 1998

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BlueCard reminders

- In the past few years, numerous Blue Cross Blue Shield Plans have undergone name changes, mergers and business alliances to better compete and serve in an evolving marketplace. These changes usually result in confusion when it comes to determining where a patient's claim should be submitted. Even though some plan names may have changed, i.e., Regence Life and Health Insurance Co., the subscribers' identification cards still carry the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association's names and marks.

When a patient's identification card includes a Blue Cross Blue Shield service mark, regardless of the plan name, submit the claim to Pennsylvania Blue Shield. Submitting claims to the patient's Home Plan causes delays in the processing of claims.

- Call (800) 676-BLUE (2583) if you need membership and coverage information for any out-of-area (BlueCard) Blue Shield patient visiting your office. BlueCard *Eligibility*, is part of the BlueCard Information Network at this number. As of Oct. 15, 1997, all calls are now routed to operators who will connect your call to the appropriate Home Plan Service Unit. Be sure to have the member's identification card in hand before calling as you will be asked to give the three-character alpha prefix noted on the card. You no longer need to enter the alpha prefix from your telephone keypad.
- BlueCard *Access* is a voice response unit (VRU) designed to give BlueCard PPO and BlueCard traditional members traveling or living outside their Home Plan service area easy access to information on conveniently-located Host Plan BlueCard PPO and traditional providers and hospitals. If any of your patients ask your staff how to locate a PPO or Participating Providers in another Plan's service area, please instruct them to call (800) 810-BLUE (2583) to obtain the needed provider names and locations.



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Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission adds new benefit

Effective Jan. 1, 1998, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission added a new benefit to its traditional indemnity program, which uses the Participating Provider network.

They've added home and office benefits with a \$10 office visit copayment. The maximum is 25 visits per calendar year.

The group numbers in the Central Region impacted by this change are:

- 020978000
- 003622000
- 009548000

Blair Mill Administrators changes name

In the near future, Blair Mill Administrators will change its name to AmeriHealth Administrators.

Blair Mill Administrators is a third-party administrator (TPA) that provides self-funded managed care plans and other health care benefits programs to more than 250,000 members nationwide, including Inter-County Health Plan in Pennsylvania. Since 1995, Blair Mill Administrators' members in Central and Western Pennsylvania have used the PremierBlue network.

As AmeriHealth Administrators, Blair Mill will continue to use the PremierBlue network for its members in Central and Western Pennsylvania. Your offices will continue to work with the same staff at its headquarters in Horsham. Keep in mind, only the Blair Mill name is changing — not your patients' benefit program.

Your patients who now carry Blair Mill identification cards will receive new cards with the new AmeriHealth Administrators' name and logo. You will also see the new name and logo on checks, EOBs and other correspondence.

If you require additional information, please call Blair Mill Administrators' Provider Relations department at (800) 841-5328.

Berks County Consortium adds preventive benefits

Beginning Jan. 1, 1998, school districts in the Berks County Consortium will have two benefit options. The current traditional program will be offered in addition to a traditional program that uses the PremierBlue network and includes Pennsylvania Blue Shield's standard adult and pediatric preventive benefits. There is no copayment requirement for preventive services.

Berks County Consortium School Districts that offer traditional programs are:

- Antietam School District
- Berks Career & Technology Center
- Berks County Intermediate Unit #14
- Berks Earned Income Tax
- Boyertown Area School District
- Brandywine Heights Area School District
- Daniel Boone Area School District

- Exeter Township Schools
- Fleetwood Area School District
- Governor Mifflin School District
- Hamburg Area School District
- Kutztown Area School District
- Muhlenberg School District
- Oley Valley School District
- Reading Muhlenberg Area Vo Tech School
- Schuylkill Valley School District
- Tulpehocken Area School District
- Wyomissing Area School District

Berks County Consortium preventive program enrollees carry identification cards specifying PremierBlue coverage and a nine-digit group number ending in “1.”

Groups require diagnostic precertification

Diagnostic precertification is a requirement for several groups with traditional and/or comprehensive major medical coverage. The types of diagnostic services requiring precertification and associated penalties, when applicable, vary among the groups. These diagnostic services typically include MRIs, myelograms, upper GIs, endoscopies, colonoscopies and CAT scans. We encourage you to contact The Precertification Center before performing diagnostic procedures for members in the groups listed below:

- Bethlehem Steel Corp.
- C-Cor Electronics, Inc.
- East Penn Manufacturing
- Grove North America
- Hair International
- HARSCO
- Ironworkers
- Lehigh Berks Cosmetology
- Local 6 BCT
- Masland Industries
- Paris Accessories
- Pennsylvania AAA
- Pennsylvania Power & Light Co.
- QVC
- Rite Aid Corp.
- Sheet Metal Workers
- Stroehmann Bakeries Inc.
- The Bachman Co.

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- The Fuller Co.
- United Defense LP
- United Parcel Service

To obtain precertification or to verify what diagnostic services require precertification for a particular group, call The Precertification Center, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., at (800) 441-2333 or (717) 760-9990.

Wet chemistry (dip stick) laboratory testing

“Wet chemistry” dip stick testing is not a covered service under Pennsylvania Blue Shield programs, including the HealthStyle program. Before performing this test, please advise your patient that Blue Shield does not pay for these services.

Visually read “wet chemistry” dip stick tests performed on chemically impregnated paper provide only semi-quantitative results based on color comparisons. The accuracy of this type of test depends on the reader’s ability to detect color differences and interpret values.

Turkey Hill Minit Markets select CustomBlue

Turkey Hill Minit Markets selected CustomBlue coverage using the PremierBlue network, effective Jan. 1, 1998. The PremierBlue network affiliation appears on the subscribers’ identification cards.

CustomBlue covers adult and pediatric preventive services. As a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) product, CustomBlue typically pays a greater amount for services performed by network providers.

There are 600 subscribers in the program, under group number 003628000. The program includes a \$10 copayment for office visits and a \$35 copayment on an emergency room charge.