



101 Huntington Avenue  
Suite 1300  
Boston, MA 02199-7611

PRESORTED  
STANDARD MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
BCBSMA  
BOSTON, MA  
PERMIT NO. 56717

# IAI | IMPORTANT ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION



## **Prefer to receive the IAI via email?**

Contact your Account Service Consultant and update your email and communication preference. We'll send the next edition to your email address.

December 2021



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts is an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Dear Valued Customer:

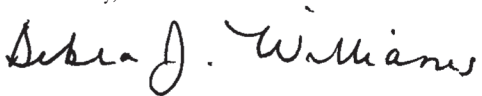
Welcome to our *Important Administrative Information* December 2021 newsletter, with the latest health care industry news that affects you. This edition's topics are:

- Announcing Upcoming Webinars
- Let's Beat Flu. Again!
- Improving Care and Quality of Life for Select Members with Chronic Kidney Disease
- ASC Accounts 500+ Can Now Offer Members Access to Virtual Second Opinions
- Expanding Outreach to Collect Member Race, Ethnicity, and Preferred Language Information
- Making Primary and Mental Health Care More Accessible
- We're Decreasing the Bill Lead-Time for Fully Insured Accounts
- Update on Coverage Change for Infused, Injectable Medications Under the Medical Benefit, Effective January 1, 2022
- Transparency in Coverage Rule (TCR) and Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA)

As always, if you have any questions, please contact your account executive.

Thank you for your continued partnership.

Sincerely,



Debra J. Williams  
Senior Vice President and Chief Sales & Marketing Officer

## [IAI December 2021]

### Announcing Upcoming Webinars

- ✔ Small accounts (50 or fewer enrolled)
- ✔ Mid-size (51–99 enrolled)
- ✔ Large (100 or more enrolled)
- ✔ Municipal
- ✔ MIIA

We're excited to announce upcoming webinars in our account webinar series. These webinars allow your organization's leadership and human resources teams to learn more about your health plan benefits from our subject matter experts, so you can make the best possible decisions on behalf of your employees. Upcoming topics include:

- State Legislative Update
- Federal Legislative Update
- Countdown to 65

Presentations last approximately one hour. You can submit your own questions either when you register, or during the webinar. You'll receive additional details in our monthly webinar emails.

Register for an upcoming webinar at  
**[employer.bluecrossma.com/whats-new/account-webinars](https://employer.bluecrossma.com/whats-new/account-webinars)**.



If you have any questions, please contact your account executive.

## Let's Beat Flu. Again!

- ✔ Small accounts (50 or fewer enrolled)
- ✔ Mid-size (51–99 enrolled)
- ✔ Large (100 or more enrolled)
- ✔ Municipal
- ✔ MIIA

If your employees haven't gotten their flu shot yet, now's the time. It will help protect them and everyone around them from getting sick, especially young children and the elderly, who are the most at risk. All the work that we put in during the last flu season—record-high flu shots, hand-washing, social distancing, and mask-wearing—really paid off, resulting in the fewest flu cases ever. Let's keep this going! Encourage your employees to get vaccinated.

### Find Help on the Employer Portal

One of the best ways to encourage vaccination is through education. Visit the Employer Portal for informative resources such as fact sheets, brochures, *Coverage* articles, and FAQs. All are easy to download and share with your employees. Simply go to **Flu Information and Resources** under **Member Tools and Resources**.

### The Flu Shot Is Safe,<sup>1</sup> Effective, and No Cost<sup>2</sup> for Members

The flu vaccine is available to members at no additional cost from in-network providers like pharmacies, limited service clinics, and community health centers. Members can also get the vaccine at no additional cost from their doctor if they have an upcoming appointment. To find out where and why to get a flu shot, members should visit [bluecrossma.org/flu](https://bluecrossma.org/flu).

If you have any questions, please contact your account executive.



1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Influenza (Flu) Vaccine Safety," August 26, 2021; [cdc.gov/flu/prevent/vaccinesafety.htm](https://cdc.gov/flu/prevent/vaccinesafety.htm).
2. CDC-recommended flu vaccines are covered in full when administered by an in-network provider. Exceptions may apply. Members should check their plan materials for details.

## Improving Care and Quality of Life for Select Members with Chronic Kidney Disease

- ✔ Small accounts (50 or fewer enrolled)
- ✔ Mid-size (51–99 enrolled)
- ✔ Large (100 or more enrolled)
- ✔ Municipal
- ✔ MIIA

We're launching two new programs in early 2022 to improve the care and quality of life for select members diagnosed with chronic kidney disease.

### Cricket Health for Fully Insured Commercial Members

We're partnering with Cricket Health, an independent company that provides personalized kidney care services, to coordinate an extra layer of support for select, fully insured commercial members in Massachusetts diagnosed with chronic kidney disease stage 3b or higher. Cricket Health will help these members learn more about their condition and how to manage its progression, and they'll support members' day-to-day needs between medical appointments. Each enrolled member will have a dedicated Cricket Health care team consisting of a nurse, pharmacist, social worker, dietitian, and trained peer mentor they can chat with by phone or online through Cricket Health's digital platform, all at no additional cost.

### Square Knot Health for Medicare Advantage Members

We're partnering with Square Knot Health, an independent company that provides education and mentorship to those with chronic kidney disease, to work with select Medicare Advantage members in Massachusetts whose chronic kidney disease has progressed to stage 4 or higher. Square Knot Health will educate, assess, and mentor enrolled members as they consider treatment options, including transplantation.



We'll contact eligible members with more details and information about how to get started. If you have any questions, please contact your account executive.

## ASC Accounts 500+ Can Now Offer Members Access to Virtual Second Opinions

- ✓ Large (100 or more enrolled)
- ✓ Municipal
- ✓ MIIA

A second doctor's opinion can make a big difference when you're dealing with a serious health concern. That's why we're collaborating with 2nd.MD, an independent company that provides members with a virtual second opinion. ASC accounts 500+ can add 2nd.MD for a fee.

Once members enroll in 2nd.MD, they can meet with high-quality medical specialists by video or phone within five days of requesting help. Members receive peace of mind when they need it most, allowing them to make better informed health decisions. Specific benefits include:

- Access to 900 doctors, representing all specialties and subspecialties
- Administrative support from nurses, who collect medical records, schedule appointments, arrange local doctor follow-up care
- Convenient consultations at home or wherever they're most comfortable

According to 2nd.MD, 60 percent of employers now offer second-opinion programs. Employers report savings related to visits for complex—and often costly—conditions, such as cancer and cardiac issues.



If you have any questions, please contact your account executive.

## Expanding Outreach to Collect Member Race, Ethnicity, and Preferred Language Information

- ✓ Small accounts (50 or fewer enrolled)
- ✓ Mid-size (51–99 enrolled)
- ✓ Large (100 or more enrolled)
- ✓ Municipal
- ✓ MIIA

As part of our ongoing efforts to address inequities in health care, we've expanded our race, ethnicity, and language data collection outreach to include a comprehensive mailed survey. This survey is in addition to our existing MyBlue data collection initiative and will serve to engage even more members. Increasing our data collection efforts will allow us to develop a fuller picture of disparities and advance our efforts to address health care equity.

### Who will receive the survey?

We'll send this mailing to subscribers in our commercial health plans. We're asking subscribers to complete the survey for themselves as well as others on their health plan.

### When will Blue Cross mail the survey?

From December 2021 to February 2022.

### How will Blue Cross use the data?

This information will help us work toward our goal of improving the quality and efficiency of care, access to services, and health outcomes for all of our members.

Sharing this information is voluntary. Choosing not to participate won't affect members' coverage from Blue Cross.



If you have any questions, please contact your account executive.

## Making Primary and Mental Health Care More Accessible

- ✓ Small accounts (50 or fewer enrolled)
- ✓ Mid-size (51–99 enrolled)
- ✓ Large (100 or more enrolled)
- ✓ Municipal
- ✓ MIIA

As part of our ongoing commitment to creating an unparalleled consumer experience, we're collaborating with innovative providers that offer expanded models of care and simpler, more consumer-focused care delivery. By collaborating with Firefly Health and Brightline, two companies that offer virtual services, we're increasing member access to convenient and affordable care in Massachusetts. Integrating Firefly Health and Brightline into the MyBlue experience will make it even easier for members to learn about and access these innovative care providers.

### Firefly Health

With Firefly Health, an independent health care provider, members in Massachusetts can access primary care through app-based video and chat. Members are assigned an experienced care team led by a doctor, which also includes a nurse practitioner, health guide, and mental health specialist. When members need to be seen in person, Firefly Health will get them the care they need.

### Brightline

Brightline is an independent behavioral health provider that offers a suite of mental health resources for kids, teens, and their families. We recently added Brightline to our provider network. Brightline will be an important part of our ongoing work to expand members' access to mental health care when mental health needs are rising. For our members residing in Massachusetts, we now cover virtual therapy visits with Brightline's licensed mental health clinicians.



If you have any questions, please contact your account executive.

## We're Decreasing the Bill Lead-Time for Fully Insured Accounts

- ✓ Small accounts (50 or fewer enrolled)
- ✓ Mid-size (51–99 enrolled)
- ✓ Large (100 or more enrolled)
- ✓ Municipal
- ✓ MIIA

Effective January 2022, you'll have 10 more days to make changes to your account, since we'll be generating invoices 15 days prior to their due date, instead of the current 25 days. With this change, which is consistent with the industry standard, you'll benefit from:

- Having 10 more days to make enrollment changes and for changes to be reflected on the next invoice
- Having 10 more days for payments to post and be reflected on your next invoice
- An enhanced customer experience, since monthly invoices will include more up-to-date information

Your bill will still be due on the same day each month. You can view and pay your premium invoices with our paperless eBilling system. With it, you can also:

- Schedule recurring payments
- Create reports on subscriber lists, payments, and outstanding invoices
- Access your payment history 24/7



If you have any questions or would like to be set up for eBilling, call our Customer Financial Management department at **1-888-751-5607**, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, or email [payment.inquiry@bcbsma.com](mailto:payment.inquiry@bcbsma.com).

## Update on Coverage Change for Infused, Injectable Medications Under the Medical Benefit, Effective January 1, 2022

- ✓ Small accounts (50 or fewer enrolled)
- ✓ Mid-size (51–99 enrolled)
- ✓ Large (100 or more enrolled)
- ✓ Municipal
- ✓ MIIA

In June's *IAI* newsletter we notified you that we planned to change the covered sites of service where members can have their infused or injectable medications administered. We've decided to make Site of Care a voluntary program rather than a requirement.

### Voluntary Site of Care Program

The Voluntary Site of Care Program is designed to promote the use of infused and injected medications in the most cost-effective, clinically appropriate setting. Making this a voluntary program gives members a choice of where they receive their care. We believe that our Voluntary Site of Care Program is clinically sound, safe, and cost-effective for most of our members, and that other health risks are mitigated when care is provided at alternate sites.

### What This Means for Your Employees' Coverage

- Members will continue to need authorization for the medications listed on our website. These already required authorization when covered under the members' medical benefits.
- Members who wish to switch to an alternate site of service can work with their physicians and clinicians to transfer their care to a home infusion therapy provider in our network, if the care is clinically appropriate and with an approved authorization. We're working with our network home infusion therapy providers to make this a smooth transition for members.

The Voluntary Site of Care Program will not apply to the following medical plans:

- » Federal Employee Program
- » Indemnity
- » Managed Blue for Seniors
- » Medex®
- » Medicare Advantage



To learn more, and to see the list of infused or injectable medications that already require prior authorization, read the full article at [bluecrossma.com/employer](https://bluecrossma.com/employer) in the **Plan Updates** section under **What's New**.

## Transparency in Coverage Rule (TCR) and Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA)

- ✓ Small accounts (50 or fewer enrolled)
- ✓ Mid-size (51–99 enrolled)
- ✓ Large (100 or more enrolled)
- ✓ Municipal
- ✓ MIIA

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts continues to actively plan our support of and compliance with the required capabilities for applicable provisions in both the Transparency in Coverage Rule and the Consolidated Appropriations Act. We've made significant operational progress and we're implementing a good-faith response as we strive towards meeting compliance standards. We'll adjust our approach as we receive further clarification and/or changes to the regulations from the federal government.



Complete details about these updates are available at [bluecrossma.com/employer](https://bluecrossma.com/employer) in the **Regulatory Updates** section under **What's New**.