

# CHANGE HEALTHCARE EVENT

## OVERVIEW AND FAQ

Change Healthcare, owned by UnitedHealth Group, a key player in health care that processes vast amounts of patient data and financial transactions, experienced a network interruption related to a cybersecurity incident on February 21, 2024. Many providers and health care companies, including Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, use Change Healthcare for various business functions, such as claims submission and confirmation of health care coverage and benefits.

Change Healthcare stated on its website that it took immediate action to disconnect its systems to prevent further impact. We immediately took precautionary measures to disconnect our networks from Change Healthcare and secure our systems. We have no indication that any of our systems have been compromised.

On April 22, 2024, UnitedHealth Group announced that preliminary sampling of the data involved found protected health information or personally identifiable information, "which could cover a substantial proportion of people in America." It further stated that its investigation is ongoing and they are committed to continuing to provide updates.

The privacy of our members and the security of their data is one of our highest priorities.

Unfortunately, we don't know if any of our members' data was impacted by this event, nor do we know the specific type of data that was exposed. UnitedHealth Group has said that it'll "likely take several months of continued analysis before it has enough information to be able to identify those customers and individuals affected by this privacy incident and provide notice."



## MASSACHUSETTS

UnitedHealth Group has created a website to support those concerned they may be affected by this event at [change.cybersupport.com](https://change.cybersupport.com). They also established a dedicated call center, which can be reached at 1-866-262-5342.

UnitedHealth Group is offering two years of free credit monitoring services and identity theft protections.

Blue Cross is committed to ensuring our members continue to have access to health care services, and we're supporting our provider partners during this event. Members experiencing any difficulties should call the number on the back of their ID card for support. Providers should visit Provider Central for the latest information and resources.

### **Is this a data security breach, and is member data compromised?**

The security of our members' personal information is a top priority. On April 22, 2024, United Health Group announced that preliminary sampling of the data involved found protected health information or personally identifiable information, "which could cover a substantial proportion of people in America."

We don't know if our members' data was impacted. UnitedHealth Group has said that it'll "likely take several months of continued analysis before it has enough information to be able to identify those customers and individuals affected by this privacy incident and provide notice." We continue to monitor this situation closely.

### **Is there anything people concerned about this event can do?**

UnitedHealth Group has created a website to support those concerned they may be affected by this event, [change.cybersupport.com](https://change.cybersupport.com). They also established a dedicated call center, which can be reached at 1-866-262-5342, to offer free credit monitoring and identity theft protections for two years.

### **Are Blue Cross systems impacted by this event?**

Change Healthcare severed its connection with its clients when it learned of this event. We ensured those connections were severed and assessed our systems for impacts. We haven't found any intrusion or compromise to our systems. We continue to monitor this situation very closely.

### **When will Change Healthcare systems be back up and running?**

We don't know. While Change Healthcare is working to restore its systems and services, we expect there could be an extended disruption to some impacted Change Healthcare services.



MASSACHUSETTS

### **Change Healthcare says it will soon re-establish its services. Will Blue Cross reconnect?**

The privacy and security of our members' data is one of our highest priorities. We won't reconnect to Change Healthcare's claims clearinghouse systems until a rigorous security and risk assessment is completed and we're satisfied that doing so won't put our systems, as well as our member and provider data, at risk. Completing this assessment is a priority, and our teams are working diligently to ensure the proper safeguards are in place.

### **What is Blue Cross doing to ensure their vendors have high levels of security?**

We're careful about entrusting data to service providers. The company's contracts with vendors have always required strict confidentiality and security to minimize data security incidents. You can learn more about our information security practices [here](#).

### **How is Blue Cross supporting providers?**

We have created an online resource center on Provider Central with the latest information, advice, and guidance for providers. Additionally, we have:

- ☐ Provided our clinical partners with a list of alternative ways to submit claims, eligibility, and benefit checks to us.
- ☐ Reminded providers that they can submit claims directly to Blue Cross at no cost.
- ☐ Temporarily waived our 90-day claim filing limit and our one-year appeal filing limit for impacted network providers.

### **Can you share any quantifiable impact to claims volume during February, March and April?**

We've seen a reduction in claims submitted electronically from a small percentage of our contracted medical and dental providers. We've worked diligently to help those impacted providers submit claims via alternative channels. As a result, we're seeing our claims volume increase as many providers return to normal claims submission via alternative pathways.

### **Will Blue Cross be issuing new ID numbers to members impacted by this event?**

We don't know yet that any members are impacted by this event and, if they are, what data may have been affected. In general, issuing new member ID cards would cause more disruption for our members and may affect their access to care.



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The health care system is complex and fragmented. Our member's ID number is used by any number of providers using a variety of different systems. There's no guarantee that if we change a member's ID number that change will make it throughout the various systems physicians, hospitals, pharmacists, dentists and other health care providers use. That could lead to claims not processing correctly, or even being denied.

### **Is there any direct impact on services you provide our employee members?**

Our Cost Estimator tool, telehealth provider, Well Connection, and our Sempre Health medication adherence program are affected:

#### COST ESTIMATION TOOL

The cost estimator tool has been unavailable due to the outage at Change Healthcare. An interim solution was put in place on April 17, 2024, It provides total cost estimates but doesn't include member co-payment, co-insurance and/or deductible information. We apologize for the inconvenience. Members can research their cost share by logging in to MyBlue and then clicking on **My Plan & Claims** and then selecting their health plan. Members can still use our Find A Doctor tool to locate a provider.

#### SMARTSHOPPER

For accounts offering the SmartShopper program, the cost estimator tool has been unavailable due to the outage at Change Healthcare. An interim solution was put in place on April 17, 2024, It provides total cost estimates but doesn't include member co-payment, co-insurance and/or deductible information. We apologize for the inconvenience. Members can research their cost share by logging in to MyBlue and then clicking on **My Plan & Claims** and then on their health plan. Members can still use Find A Doctor to locate a provider.

#### WELL CONNECTION

Well Connection is unable to conduct benefit and eligibility checks for patients. Effective March 8, Blue Cross members won't be charged any cost at the time of a Well Connection visit. Once claims and eligibility checks resume and claims are processed for these visits by Blue Cross, the member's applicable copayment, coinsurance, and/or deductible will be charged to their card on file with Well Connection. Members can call Well Connection at 855-292-6355 for further assistance.



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Before March 8, our members were charged for the full cost of the visit. Well Connection has informed us that those members who paid for services up front will be reimbursed less any applicable co-pay, co-insurance and/or deductible as outlined in their health plan once claims and eligibility checks are turned back on, and claims are processed for these visits by Blue Cross.

#### SEMPRE HEALTH MEDICATION ADHERENCE PROGRAM

Sempre health is currently unable to process discounts. The program has suspended enrolling new members and has paused sending refill reminders to enrolled members.

#### **What should my employees do to protect against health care fraud?**

We ask all our members to carefully examine claims on MyBlue, their explanation of benefits, and other claims related documents. If they see a charge for health care services they didn't receive, they should contact our Fraud Hotline right away by phone at 1-900-992-4100 or by emailing [FraudHotline@bcbsma.com](mailto:FraudHotline@bcbsma.com)