



IMPROVING HEALTH CARE QUALITY

Comprehensive Diabetes Care – Retinal Eye Exam

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX) collects quality data from our providers to measure and improve the quality of care our members receive. Comprehensive Diabetes Care (CDC) – Retinal Eye Exam is one aspect of care we measure in our quality programs.*

What We Measure

This measure screens or monitors members with evidence of any type of retinopathy annually. Screen or monitor those who remain free of retinopathy every other year.

CDC is a Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) measure. See the [National Committee for Quality Assurance \(NCQA\)](#) website for more details.

Why it Matters

If left unmanaged, diabetes can lead to serious complications, including heart disease, stroke, hypertension, blindness, kidney disease, diseases of the nervous system, amputations and premature death.

With support from health care providers, patients can manage their diabetes by taking medications as instructed, eating a healthy diet, being physically active and quitting tobacco products. Learn more from [NCQA](#).

Eligible Population

Members ages 18–75 years as of December 31 of the measurement year are included in this measure.

Note: Blindness is not an exclusion for diabetic eye exam because it is difficult to distinguish between individuals who are legally blind but require a retinal exam and those who are completely blind and do not require an exam.



Ways to Improve

- Consider the use of a retinal imaging device in your practice (results must be interpreted by an optometrist or ophthalmologist)
- Build care gap “alerts” in your electronic medical records
- Consider referring members to an optometrist or ophthalmologist for an annual retinal eye exam at checkout

How to Document

DRE data is collected through claims data. Document results and date of the retinal or dilated eye exam, by an eye care professional (Optometrist or Ophthalmologist), but if negative the exam must clearly note retinopathy was not present in the medical record. This requirement is satisfied when a diabetic has one of the following documented:¹

- Negative retinal or dilated eye exam by an optometrist or ophthalmologist in either current or prior calendar year that clearly notes retinopathy was not present
 - “Diabetes without complications” does not meet criteria
- Retinal or dilated eye exam performed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist with all the following documented:
 - Specialty of optometrist or ophthalmologist
 - Date of service
 - Exam results on a note or letter prepared by an eye care professional, primary care physician or other health care professional
- Chart or photograph with date fundus photograph was taken and evidence that the results were reviewed by either an:
 - Eye care professional, or
 - Qualified reading center whose medical director is a retinal specialist
- Bilateral eye enucleation or acquired absence of both eyes (Note: “blindness” does not adequately distinguish between the legally blind who require an eye exam from those who are completely blind and do not require an eye exam)

For more information, see [NCQA's HEDIS Measures and Technical Resources](#).



Questions?

Contact your BCBSTX Network Representative.



* Quality measures evaluate a prior calendar year performance. Measure specifications are from the National Quality Forum (NQF) and/or National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

¹ NCQA HEDIS 2020 Technical specifications for health plans, volume 2, Washington DC, 2020

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