



**BlueCross BlueShield
of Texas**

Experience. Wellness. Everywhere.™

Bridges to Excellence Diabetes Care Link Provider Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Bridges to Excellence Diabetes Care Link Program?



Founded in 2002, Bridges to Excellence (BTE) is a not-for-profit company whose mission is to create significant progress in the quality of care in a variety of areas. This is achieved by recognizing and financially rewarding physicians who demonstrate that they provide quality care that meets established guidelines.

BCBSTX has collaborated with BTE to implement the Diabetes Care Link (DCL) program. Additional details are available on BTE's Web site at www.bridgestoexcellence.org

Is BTE a national program?

BTE is a national program offered in more than 20 states and recognizes thousands of physicians across the United States. Please refer to BTE's Web site for additional details on all programs offered at www.bridgestoexcellence.org

Why should I become a BTE DCL-recognized physician?

BCBSTX's DCL program offers you the opportunity to evaluate and demonstrate the level of quality of care you deliver. Participating in the program gives you tools to continuously improve your practice, receive national recognition and positive incentives. In addition, your patients will know that they are receiving care from a physician that has demonstrated he or she delivers a superior level of care. Being BTE DCL recognized automatically ensures your participation in the BCBSTX diabetes program.

Does obtaining BTE recognition improve the quality of health care?

The program is designed with an understanding that patients may seek the care of various types of primary care physicians (PCPs) and endocrinologists (Endos) for treatment and management of their diabetes.

BTE's DCL requirements assess process measures and outcomes representing high standards of care for patients with diabetes. BTE believes that the DCL program has the potential to significantly improve the quality of care experienced by many patients with diabetes and to reduce the financial and human burden of unnecessary hospitalizations and complications.

As seen in historical results, BTE believes that if physicians participate in programs where they follow proven, evidence based guidelines and submit data

to validate performance, the quality of care of patients with chronic disease states will improve.

What is the eligibility criterion to become BTE recognized?

1. Physicians must execute a data use agreement with the data aggregator partner through which they plan to submit data for BTE's automated performance assessment process (see additional information on submitting data below).
2. The BTE physician eligibility requirements are:
 - ✓ Must be licensed as medical doctor (MD) or doctor of osteopathy (DO)
 - ✓ Must provide continuing care for people with the condition of measurement and be able to meet the minimum patient sample sizes
 - ✓ Must submit the required data documenting their delivery of care for all eligible patients in their full patient panel, when available otherwise for a specified sample of eligible patients with the condition of measurement
 - ✓ Applicants must use PAO-supplied or approved methods for submitting data electronically
3. Learn the specifications and BTE measures
4. Determine whether to apply as an individual physician or physician group

What are the differences between applying as an individual physician or physician group?

An individual physician applicant represents one licensed physician practicing in any setting who provides continuing care for patients with diabetes (or the condition of measurement). A physician group applicant represents any group with three or more licensed for a common panel of patients and practice at the same site, defined as a physical location.

Are there any payout incentives differences if you are BTE recognized as an individual or physician group?

Physicians are eligible to receive \$100 per patient, per physician OR group, per program year, up to 150 patients or \$15,000. BSBCTX strongly encourages physicians to become BTE recognized as individual physicians in order to receive the individual maximum benefits and to allow the claims to identified in our processes.

How do I become BTE DCL recognized?

To attain recognition in the BTE DCL program, eligible physicians voluntarily submit medical record data demonstrating that they provide high levels of

diabetes care. There are three different paths available to physicians for DCL recognition:

- 1) NCQA: Physicians or practices that qualify for NCQA's Diabetes Provider Recognition Program (DPRP) assessment program will be recognized by BTE for the Diabetes Care Link (DCL) program at the corresponding level (i.e. DPRP Level I= DCL Level I). To achieve DPRP Recognition, physicians submit data on outcome and process measures for a sample of their patients with diabetes.
- 2) Automated Performance Assessment System: Physicians or practices connected to a BTE-participating data aggregator (i.e., EMR vendor, Health Information Exchange, Care Management Software) may have their data submitted on their behalf to an independent Performance Assessment Organization (PAO) for an automated evaluation of their diabetes care. Physicians or practices who demonstrate that they provide high levels of diabetes care are recognized in the BTE Diabetes Care Link (DCL) program at Levels I-III.
- 3) American Board of Internal Medicine – Physicians can elect to supplement sample for Performance Improvement Module (PIM) data for submission through IPRO portal.

See the chart below for more information:

Performance Assessment Organization (PAO)	Level of Assessment	Mode of data Submission/cycle of submission	Cost
NCQA	Level I and II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCQA workbook/July via NCQA portal • 1 time submission – sample of 25 patients 	\$400.00 per physician
BTE Automated System - EMR	Level I, II and III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct electronic submission • Submissions sent quarterly – all patients • Limited effort on behalf of physician to submit 	No BTE fee
BTE Automated System – Direct Submission Portal ABIM (available 7/1/09)	Level I, II and III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downloadable template from website • Can either submit automatically or manually complete template • Training will be available 	\$95.00 Performance Assessment Organization transaction fee

What is the duration of BTE recognition?

For DCL recognitions achieved on or before Dec. 31, 2009, recognition status remains in effect for three years from the date on which a Performance Assessment Organization (PAO) awards recognition. Beginning Jan. 1, 2010, the

DCL recognition duration will be shortened to two years from the date on which a PAO awards recognition.

What are the plans to grow the number of physicians that are BTE DCL recognized?

BCBSTX will identify physicians that treat our diabetic members and encourage those physicians to become BTE DCL recognized so they can receive rewards through this program.

How does the BCBSTX BTE program work?

Once a physician becomes BTE DCL recognized, BCBSTX will identify our diabetic members that the physician manages. Communications will be sent to the physician to obtain biometric information about the member. When that information is received at BCBSTX, the physician will be advised that he/she can submit a claim with a specific code for reimbursement.

Are members assigned to multiple physicians during a program year?

No, a members is assigned to only one physician during a program year.

How much is the physician incentivized for the BCBSTX diabetic program?

Physicians are eligible to receive \$100 per patient, per physician or group, per program year, up to 150 patients or \$15,000.

Are Blue Card members included in BCBSTX' diabetic program?

Blue Card members are not included in the program at this time.

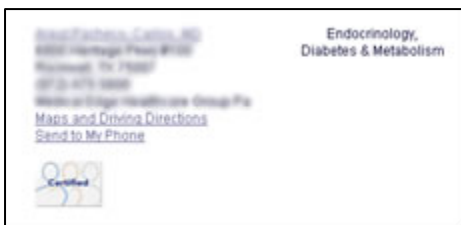
How often will BCBSTX acknowledge new BTE DCL recognized physicians and include them in the program?

BTE will send BCBSTX a file on a monthly basis of the newly recognized physicians. BCBSTX will identify the patients for these physicians and send communications to the physician to initiate the process for this program.

Who should I contact for additional information about BCBSTX' BTE diabetic program?

Additional information can be obtained by contacting your PPN Network Representative or by contacting Jill Brooks, RN, Medical Program Specialist at 972-766-6397, Jill_Brooks@bcbstx.com, or Rebecca Ford, RHIA, Senior Manager, Texas Health Information, 972-766-8234, Rebecca_Ford@bcbstx.com.

How do BCBSTX members know if a physician is BTE recognized?



When members use the Physician Finder tool on the BCBSTX Web site, BTE-recognized physicians are indicated with the BTE logo beneath their 'certifications and recognitions' listing.

Additionally, all BTE recognized physicians are promoted on BTE's physicians list on the [HealthGrades Physician Quality Ratings Web site](#). Physicians who completed NCQA's Diabetes Physician Recognition Program (DPRP) are promoted as recognized practices and physicians through [NCQA's Recognized Physician Directory](#).