



HMO Blue® Texas Support Services: Overview

Commitment

HMO Blue Texas is dedicated to serving our customers through the financing of health care and related benefit services. Our mission calls for us to respond to our customers with promptness, sensitivity, respect and integrity.

HMO Blue Texas encourages appropriate utilization decisions; it does not sanction or encourage decisions based on inappropriate compensation. Physicians, providers or HMO Blue Texas staff do not receive compensation or anything of value based on the amount of adverse determinations, reductions or limitations of length of stay, benefits, services or charges. Any person(s) making utilization decisions must be especially aware of possible underutilization of services and the associated risks.

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HMO Blue Texas Support Services: Overview,

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Introduction

HMO Blue Texas provides support to its physicians and other providers through:

- Provider Customer Service Departments
- Local Professional Provider Network Management Representatives
- Provider Automation Representatives
- Medical Directors
- Utilization Management Department
- Behavioral Health Services — for any mental health/chemical dependency
- Care management or quality improvement issue.

You and your staff are encouraged to contact these sources when you have questions or need assistance.

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Products

Products and Benefit Plans

HMO Blue Texas offers or administers a variety of products and benefit plans:

- HMO Blue Texas is offered to groups and has traditional HMO features.
- HMO Blue Texas may also provide administrative services to self-funded group health plans (administrative services only).

Professional Provider Network Department

**Professional
Provider
Network
Department
Objective**

The major objective of HMO Blue Texas Professional Provider Network Department is to develop and support relationships between Physicians/Providers and HMO Blue Texas to allow our members access to cost-efficient medical care.

Representatives

HMO Blue Texas Professional Provider Network Representatives are available to provide information, answer questions, address concerns and offer assistance in resolving any issues you or your staff may have. You may contact them by telephone or in writing.

**Medical
Director
and Medical
Advisory
Committee**

The HMO Blue Texas Medical Director and Medical Advisory Committee serve as liaisons between HMO Blue Texas Physicians/Providers and HMO Blue Texas.

The Medical Director and Medical Advisory Committee make recommendations for credentialing and recredentialing of physicians and providers. They also serve as consultants in developing medical policy and addressing quality management issues.

Limited Provider Network Selection

Limited Provider Network Selection

Limited Provider Networks are interrelated medical professionals and facilities working together as a group to provide HMO Blue Texas members health care services in a coordinated, timely, efficient and cost-effective manner. Within a Limited Provider Network, each member will select a Primary Care Physician who will coordinate all the member's health care needs and act as the gatekeeper to services within the same Limited Provider Network of specialty providers and facilities.

Selection of a Primary Care Physician

To enroll in HMO Blue Texas and receive eligible health care services, the member must select a pediatrician, internist, family physician, or general physician to be listed as his/her Primary Care Physician. The selected Primary Care Physician will be responsible for managing all of the member's health care needs within the Primary Care Physician's Provider Network.

Each member will select the physician of his/her choice from the list of those participating in the HMO Blue Texas Provider Network. Each eligible family member may choose a different Primary Care Physician.

The HMO Blue Texas member must complete the Enrollment Application correctly and submit it to his/her employer for processing.

Physicians who are not accepting new patients are not eligible for selection, unless the member is an existing patient. If the selected physician is not accepting new patients the member is notified and provided with a list of participating physicians who are accepting new patients.

Referrals

Primary Care Physicians (PCPs) must refer HMO Blue Texas members to Physicians/Providers who are in the same Limited Provider Network as the HMO Blue Texas member's PCP. An alpha/numeric "PORG Code" is used by HMO Blue Texas to identify the PCP's Limited Provider Network. Any referral to a Physician/Provider outside of the member's Limited Provider Network requires prior authorization by HMO Blue Texas (or applicable IPA/Medical Group). The PORG code appears on the HMO Blue Texas membership ID card to the right of the PCP's name.

Example: PCP Paul Smith

XXXX (XXX) XXX-XXXX
(PORG) (PCP's phone #)

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Limited Provider Network Selection, Continued

Changing Primary Care Physicians

The HMO Blue Texas member may change Primary Care Physicians by calling or writing the Customer Service Department for HMO Blue Texas members or by obtaining a Change Request Form from his/her employer. The member completes the Change Request Form and sends it to the HMO Blue Texas Customer Service Department for processing.

After the Change Request Form is processed, the member is sent a new member ID card showing the name of the new Primary Care Physician.

The change is effective the first day of the month following receipt of the Change Request Form.

The HMO Blue Texas member may not select or change a Primary Care Physician more than once in any 30-day period.

Away From Home Care

The following information defines Away From Home Care:

- Away From Home Care (AFHC) is an out-of-area program sponsored by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association that is available to members of participating Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) sponsored HMOs. The program enables members to receive Guest Membership benefits from other participating BCBS HMOs while traveling outside of their HMO service area.
- Guest Membership is defined as courtesy membership for members who are temporarily residing outside of the Home HMO service area. Members receive a courtesy enrollment in a participating Host HMO and have access to a comprehensive range of benefits, including routine and preventive services.
- AFHC is reimbursed on a fee-for-service basis.
- The AFHC Program remains committed to serving BCBS HMOs by providing members with access to quality care whenever they area away from home.

Training and Orientation

**Emphasis on
Training**

Employer/employee training is emphasized in the HMO Blue Texas network. HMO Blue Texas provides employers and employees with educational materials and training to better understand the program and the benefits of seeking care from HMO Blue Texas Physician/Provider(s).

**Orientation/
Training**

HMO Blue Texas provides a Welcome Letter to each HMO Blue Texas provider participating in the HMO Blue Texas Network. The welcome letter includes the participating HMO Blue provider's effective date, as well as the name and phone number of the local Professional Provider Network office.

HMO Blue Texas recommends that all Physicians/Providers and their office personnel become familiar with each section of this Provider Manual.

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Training and Orientation, Continued

**How to
Obtain a
Provider
Directory**

HMO Blue Texas provider directories are provided initially at orientation and upon request by contacting the local Network Management area office.

**Online
Provider
Directory/
Web site
Information**

HMO Blue Texas participating providers can be identified through the Internet on the Online Provider Directory. The Online Provider Directory is updated monthly. To view the Online Provider Directory, visit the Web site at www.bcbstx.com.

Newsletters

HMO Blue Texas Physicians/Providers receive periodic newsletters. Information passed on via the *Blue Review* newsletter can include clinical guidelines, operational/procedural updates, provider changes, etc. Physicians/Providers are encouraged to submit articles or suggestions for future issues.

**Training
Seminars**

HMO Blue Texas hosts training seminars at locations across the State of Texas. Notification of these seminars is sent to your office in advance.