**Bridges to Excellence® Diabetes Care Recognition Program
Provider Frequently Asked Questions**

What is Bridges to Excellence?
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. The BTE programs are administered under the parent company of Health Care Incentives Improvement Institute (HCI3), a nonprofit, national organization.

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.hci3.org.

What is the BCBSTX Diabetes Care Recognition program?
BCBSTX has collaborated with BTE to implement the Diabetes Care Recognition program. BCBSTX has established a program in which BTE recognized physicians can be financially rewarded for excellent care provided to our members with diabetes.

Why should I become a BTE Diabetes Care recognized physician?
BCBSTX Diabetes Care Recognition 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 receive care from a physician who has demonstrated delivery of excellent care. Being BTE Diabetes Care recognized automatically ensures your participation in the BCBSTX Diabetes Care program and the potential to earn financial incentives.

Does obtaining BTE recognition improve the quality of health care?
The BTE Diabetes Care Recognition program is designed with an understanding that patients may seek the care of various types of primary care physicians (PCPs) and Endocrinologists for treatment and management of their diabetes

BTE's Diabetes Care Recognition requirements assess process measures and outcomes representing high standards of care for patients with diabetes. BTE believes that the Diabetes Care Recognition program has the potential to significantly improve the quality of care experienced by many patients with diabetes and to reduce the financial and patient 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 measures are evaluated to achieve BTE recognition in Diabetes Care?
To earn recognition, physicians must meet benchmarks on measures such as:
- Blood pressure
- LDL levels
- HgBA1c levels
- Ophthalmologic and podiatry exams
- Nephropathy assessment

What are the steps to becoming BTE recognized?
1. Register on the BTE Web site: www.hci3.org.
2. Choose the program
    a. BCBSTX currently has a Diabetic and a Cardiac Incentive Program
3. Choose performance assessment pathway that is best for you
4. Apply for Recognition with the pathway chosen
    a. Steps to become recognized varies depending on pathway chosen
    b. All BTE Recognitions are treated the same, regardless of which pathway you choose

For additional application information, see the Performance Assessment page on BTE's Web site at www.hci3.org.

How do I become BTE Diabetes Care recognized?
To attain recognition in the BTE Diabetes Care Recognition program, eligible physicians voluntarily submit medical record data demonstrating that they provide high levels of diabetes care. There are four different paths available to physicians for Diabetes Care Recognition. Additional details about these options are available at the HCI3 organization Web site at www.hci3.org.

Pathway	Quantity of Data Submitted	How data is extracted/submitted	Cost to Apply (Individual)	Cost to Apply (Group)
EMR/Registry System **www.hci3.org**	Full panel of patients with program condition	EMR or registry vendor will extract patient data from electronic medical record system and submit to MNCM or IPRO on their behalf	No BTE or PAO fee	No BTE or PAO fee
IPRO Direct Submission Portal **www.pao.ipro.org**	Full panel of patients with program condition when possible, otherwise sample of 25	Patient data is manually or electronically extracted into a standard file format and uploaded to the web portal for assessment	$95	$295 per practice of 3 or more clinicians
National Committee for Quality Assurance **www.ncqa.org**	Sample of 25 patients with program condition	Clinicians will extract data from patient charts and submit to NCQA for review	$80 Program Materials fee $500 Data Collection Fee ($400 after BCBSTX 20% discount)	$400 each with a maximum of $3,000 for groups of up to 100 For groups over 100, $10 surcharge for each clinician (Fees as of June 2010)
American Board of Internal Medicine **www.abim.org**	Submission of practice improvement module for program condition	Completion of diabetes module	Fee is included in the maintenance certification package – additional IPRO fee of $95	No group/practice option

What are the plans to grow the number of physicians that are BTE Diabetes Care recognized?
BCBSTX will identify physicians that treat our members with diabetes and encourage those physicians to become BTE Diabetes Care recognized so they can receive rewards through this program.

How does the BCBSTX BTE program work?
Once a physician becomes BTE Diabetes Care recognized, BCBSTX will identify our members with diabetes 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?
No, a member is assigned to only one physician during a rolling 12 month period.

How much is the physician incentive for the BCBSTX Diabetes Care Recognition program?
Physicians are eligible to receive $100 per selected patient per year.

Are Blue Card members included in BCBSTX diabetes program?
Blue Card members are not included in the program at this time.

How often will BCBSTX acknowledge new BTE Diabetes Care 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 Diabetes Care Recognition 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.