

Blue Cross Centennial CommunitySM (New Mexico Medicaid)

MSK Therapies (Rehab) Program Update FAQ

Dear Provider,

Carelon Medical Benefits Management currently manages the MSK Therapies (Rehab) program for BCCC (NM Medicaid) members. We wanted to ensure your facility is aware of two program updates for requests for authorization **March 13, 2022** and later.

What changes can providers expect within the Carelon MSK Therapies (Rehab) program update for BCCC (NM Medicaid) therapy requests?

- Beginning **March 13, 2022**, BCCC NM Medicaid members 21 years of age and under participating in an EPSDT program (i.e. habilitative therapy services-physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy) will require authorization through Carelon.
- Carelon will authorize Medicaid member therapy requests in a quantity of visits (dates of service) to review for medical necessity in intervals throughout the episode of care, aligning with Carelon's standard MSK Therapies (Rehab) program.

What does this update mean for BCCC NM Medicaid providers treating members participating in an EPSDT program?

- Prior to **March 13, 2022**, BCCC NM Medicaid members 21 years of age and under participating in an EPSDT program were out of scope for the Carelon MSK Therapies (Rehab) program and did not require an authorization through Carelon.
- Medicaid members participating in an EPSDT program with a current therapy authorization from Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Mexico will **not** require authorization through Carelon until the currently authorized timeframe expires or visit allocation has been rendered.
- Previously, if a provider attempted authorization through the Carelon *ProviderPortalSM* or via the call center and the provider identified that the member (under 21 years of age) was participating in an EPSDT program, the provider received messaging that an authorization was not required and then was referred to the health plan.
- Beginning on **March 13, 2022**, requests for members participating in EPSDT program should select Habilitation as the primary purpose of therapy if appropriate. These request types will no longer receive messaging that an authorization is not required, as BCCC NM Medicaid members under 21 years of age and in an EPSDT program will now require authorization through Carelon for outpatient MSK Therapies services.

What does this program update mean for providers treating BCCC NM Medicaid members?

- Prior to **March 13, 2022** BCCC NM Medicaid therapy requests received visit allocations out of alignment with those which are deemed medically necessary (for the request stage) per Carelon's standard MSK Therapies (Rehab) program. That program approach offered a one-size-fits all approach to therapy requests, with a standard number of visits upfront.
- Beginning on **March 13, 2022**, Carelon's standard program approach will take individual clinical details into account in order to titrate the number of authorized visits on a request. We measure progress based on condition management and patient outcomes with additional visits approved as clinically appropriate.

- Visit allocations are based on the individual clinical details entered by the provider for the request and will be approved in increments throughout the member's episode of care as long as medical necessity is met.
- We ask that providers enter the authorization request as completely and accurately as possible to ensure that Carelon receives the most up-to-date clinical information to determine medical necessity.

Will the benefit restriction (two 2-month episodes of care) still apply to ABP-100 member therapy requests?

- Requests for ABP-100 adult members (ages 21+) with a primary purpose of rehabilitation and habilitation therapy will still be subject to the limit of two 2-month episodes of care for the same condition.
- Requests for ABP-100 pediatric members (ages 0-20) with a primary purpose of rehabilitation and habilitation therapy will not be subject to the limit of two 2-month episodes of care for the same condition.

Where can providers find medical necessity criteria (medical policies) for each of the care categories?

- Carelon clinical guidelines are available [here](#). Carelon clinical guidelines are developed through a rigorous process integrating evidence-based literature with expert therapist and physician review.

How do providers answer the clinical questions asked during the request process?

- For most therapy services, answers to clinical questions allow Carelon to capture the relevant information needed to make a medical necessity determination on the request. Please answer the clinical questions as completely and accurately as possible to ensure that Carelon receives the most recent medical necessity criteria for the request. If a non-clinical staff member needs assistance completing the clinical questions, please consult your facility's clinical staff. They should be able to assist in where to find information in the patient's medical chart. Providers are responsible for ensuring that the necessary clinical information is entered accurately. Please also visit Carelon's website [here](#) for checklists to help gather all the clinical information necessary to submit a prior authorization request.

What clinical information will play a role in determining visit allocation and medical necessity for MSK Therapies (Rehab) requests with a primary purpose of Rehabilitation?

- For initial requests Carelon may ask for providers to document the following clinical details;
 - Primary treatment diagnosis and whether treatment relates to an Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis
 - Functional outcome tool(s) and initial or baseline score(s)
 - Conditions that may impact therapy or comorbidities (i.e., diabetes, social determinants of health, musculoskeletal disorders and cognitive impairment)
 - Recent surgery
- For subsequent requests Carelon may ask for providers to document the following clinical details;
 - Functional outcome tool and updated score
 - Response to treatment or mitigating factors if there is a poor/limited response to treatment.
 - In addition, changes to the treatment plan if there is a poor/limited response to treatment
 - Attainment or objective progression on plan of care functional goals
 - We may also request a clinical documentation upload (i.e., initial evaluation, progress notes and daily notes) for review by an Carelon clinician.

What clinical information will play a role in determining visit allocation and medical necessity for MSK Therapies (Rehab) requests with a primary purpose of Habilitation (e.g., members participating in an EPSDT program)?

- For initial requests Carelon may ask for providers to document the following clinical details;
 - Primary treatment diagnosis and whether treatment relates to an Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis
 - Confirmation of developmental delay or other chronic disability (per physician diagnosis or therapist evaluation using standardized assessments) if applicable
 - Pediatric functional outcome tool(s) or milestone assessment and initial/baseline score(s)
 - Conditions that may impact therapy or comorbidities (i.e., diabetes, social determinants of health, musculoskeletal disorders and cognitive impairment)
 - Recent surgery

- For subsequent requests Carelon may ask for providers to document the following clinical details;
 - Confirmation of level of severity
 - Pediatric functional outcome tool(s) or milestone assessment updated score
 - Response to treatment or mitigating factors if there is a poor/limited response to treatment. In addition, changes to the treatment plan if there is a poor/limited response to treatment
 - Attainment or objective progression on plan of care functional goals, with the understanding that progress will often be different than in a Rehabilitative episode of care.
 - We may also request a clinical documentation upload (i.e., initial evaluation, progress notes and daily notes) for review by an Carelon clinician.

To help assist your facility with any outstanding Carelon MSK Therapies (Rehab) program update questions, Carelon will host three provider training webinars. Providers can register for these upcoming sessions using the below registration links.

Solution	Type of Training	Date	Registration Link
MSK Therapies (Rehab)	Live Webinar Session with Q& A	Tuesday, February 22, 2022 @ 2:00 pm CST	February 22, 2022 Registration Link
MSK Therapies (Rehab)	Live Webinar Session with Q& A	Tuesday, March 8, 2022 @ 2:00 pm CST	March 8, 2022 Registration Link
MSK Therapies (Rehab)	Q & A Only Session	Tuesday, March 22, 2022 @ 2:00 pm CST	March 22, 2022 Registration Link

We look forward to continuing to work with you!

The Carelon MSK Therapies (Rehab) Team

