

March 20, 2020

Members, we have an important addition below to our March 19 email about expanded telehealth services for your Medicare Advantage plan during the coronavirus pandemic.

We promise to keep you updated as we have more information to share.

Thank you for being a valued Medicare Advantage member.



March 20, 2020

Dear Member,

Our commitment to you and your health and safety is one of our top priorities. We know our Medicare members are more at risk during the coronavirus pandemic and we are committed to supporting you. While uncertainty and even anxiety are common right now, we want you to know that we are working to provide you with all of the resources and information you need to stay healthy and have as much peace of mind as possible during these unprecedented times. We continue to expand access to care while removing financial barriers to help you, our valued members, overcome the coronavirus pandemic.

[Here are the steps we are taking to support our Medicare Advantage members as the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic is evolving:](#)

Waiving cost sharing for doctor's office and urgent care visits related to testing for COVID-19

This step is in addition to waiving all cost sharing for the diagnostic test for COVID-19.

Waiving of cost sharing will apply to medically necessary COVID-19 testing and the related office or urgent care visit, regardless of the outcome of the test. Visits to the ER will not have cost sharing waived.

Expanding access to telehealth services for *all* of our members

We are now expanding telehealth services for Medicare Advantage members through the end of July. Our expansion of access to telehealth includes waiving all member cost sharing for such services through the end of July as well. Members will pay nothing out of pocket for access to these services.

There are two telehealth options:

1) In-Network Providers: We are expanding coverage to include telehealth services for all in-network providers. We will now process claims for telehealth services by live video or telephone from any in-network provider.

2) MDLIVE: Members interested in using MDLIVE may use the following directions:

- Visit MDLive.com/BCImedicare or call 844-296-8784 (TTY: 711) to log-in or activate your account. You will need your Blue Cross of Idaho member ID number as part of the activation process.
- You can also access MDLIVE by using your smartphone, just text “bcimed” to MDLIVE (635483).
- Be aware that wait times for telehealth services are likely to be longer than normal due to high demand.
- If you are on the St. Luke's Health Partners plan, you didn't have access to the MDLIVE telehealth benefit. We are now expanding telehealth services for St. Luke's Health Partners through the end of 2020.

Removing barriers to access to medications for our members

We are working diligently to improve access to medications as daily life changes with coronavirus, including:

- Approving early refills for members who request them, except for controlled substances (such as opioids).
 - Providing members with 30-day maintenance medications approval for a 90-day supply, regardless of their benefits.
 - Encouraging members to take advantage of their ability to get a 90-day prescription supply by mail order or approved retail pharmacies.
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We are continually evaluating our options for decisions like these to support our members in these unprecedented times.

Steps Blue Cross of Idaho has taken to continue to serve its members

We are continually adapting our own operations and business to make sure we can serve our members well.

- We have expanded work from home capabilities for our employees and adapted other resources to make sure we can meet the needs of our members.
- Our focus is on the safety and well-being of our employees as well as being able to continue to serve our members.

Next steps

We are closely monitoring the coronavirus situation and continue to encourage members to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. The CDC is still your best source for up-to-date information, including specific public health information on coronavirus. In addition to following CDC guidelines, the best advice to the general public is to wash your hands, cover your cough and get your flu vaccine if you haven't already.

We continue to work with the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association to support national readiness for our customers.

You should also be mindful of guidance from state and local public health authorities. In Idaho we are communicating with Gov. Brad Little's office and coordinating with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Division of Public Health. The Governor [has a website](#) tracking the issue in Idaho.

We will continue to provide information to our members on the coronavirus pandemic at bcidaho.com/coronavirus, including [tips](#) to help prevent the spread of the virus.

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