

## Blue High Performance Network Frequently Asked Questions

This document addresses frequently asked questions about Blue Shield of California's participation in a new, national BlueCross BlueShield Association (BCBSA) plan that will be supported through Blue Shield of California network providers and other Blue Plans, beginning January 1, 2021. **Blue High Performance Network<sup>SM</sup>** will be available to patients in more than 58 major U.S. markets.

### General questions

#### 1. What is Blue High Performance Network (Blue HPN<sup>SM</sup>)?

Blue HPN is a nationally consistent Exclusive Provider Organization (EPO) alternative to the current standard BlueCard PPO network. It delivers lower cost of care while maintaining high-quality standards with national access. Blue HPN may be offered to self-funded commercial employer groups side by side with the broad PPO to lower healthcare costs.

It is important to note that because Blue HPN plan is an EPO model, members cannot use their Blue HPN benefits outside of the Blue HPN network for covered services, except urgent care and emergency care. If you refer Blue HPN members for specialty care, ensure they participate in Blue HPN so that members receive benefits.

#### 2. Why was Blue HPN created?

Blue HPN was created to support employer groups with their ongoing quest to improve health outcomes while keeping costs in check.

We view the long-term market potential for Blue HPN as a transformational and integral part of our ongoing collaboration with you to provide Californians with access to high-quality, affordable care, in addition to our offerings of Tandem PPO plans. BCBSA has been conducting a national awareness campaign about Blue HPN, and several national employers with employees located in California have already selected Blue HPN for enrollment beginning January 1, 2021.

#### 3. Where is Blue High Performance Network available?

The network is available in the top 58+ geographic markets nationally. While this covers most U.S. residents, it is a smaller footprint than the broad 100% geographic coverage of the BlueCard network. In California we will offer Blue HPN in 7 major geographic markets, covering 22 counties and 85% of the California population:

- Los Angeles/ Long Beach/ Anaheim
  - (LA, Orange Ventura counties)
- Modesto/ Lodi/ Stockton
  - (San Joaquin, Stanislaus counties)
- Riverside/ San Bernardino/ Ontario
  - (Riverside, San Bernardino counties)

- Sacramento/ Roseville/ Arden/ Arcade
  - (El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, and Yolo counties)
- San Diego/ Carlsbad
  - (San Diego county)
- San Francisco/ Oakland/ Hayward
  - (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma counties)
- San Jose/ Sunnyvale/ Santa Clara
  - (San Benito and Santa Clara counties)

## **Participation**

### **4. How do I know if I am a Blue HPN<sup>SM</sup> healthcare provider?**

Blue Shield of California (Blue Shield) sent participating providers a participation notification and fact sheet on October 22, 2020. You or your practice will appear as a participating provider for this plan in our Blue Shield [Find a Doctor](#) directory at [blueshieldca.com](https://blueshieldca.com), along with other Blue HPN participants within California. To check your participation using [Find a Doctor](#), search for yourself by entering your location and selecting the following:

- Plan year: 2021 plan year
- Plan Type: Blue High Performance Network
- Search by Doctor Type or Doctor Name

If your name appears in the search, you are participating in Blue HPN.

If you still have questions about your participation, please contact Blue Shield's Provider Information and Enrollment team at [BSCProviderInfo@blueshieldca.com](mailto:BSCProviderInfo@blueshieldca.com) or call (800) 258-3091.

### **5. Are all the healthcare providers in my practice also in Blue HPN?**

This will depend upon the contract with Blue Shield. The contract can be with individual physicians, healthcare professionals and hospitals, or with an entire health system. Please contact your office manager or contracting officer to confirm or refer to Question 4 above.

6. How many new patients can I expect to receive from this new network in 2021?

To date, 40 national accounts with nearly 340,000 members will be offered Blue HPN for 1/1/21. These accounts have members across all 58 HPN markets – but not all 40 accounts are offered in CA. Open enrollment for these accounts is currently underway and we will have more specific enrollment information for those employers with employees in CA in the January – February timeframe. We anticipate growth of Blue HPN over the next few years. The plan is directed to large, national, self-funded accounts where sales cycle is long. Due to the impact of COVID-19 there are currently fewer employers exploring major plan changes for this January 2021.

7. Do both Anthem and Blue Shield offer Blue HPN in California?

Yes, both Anthem and Blue Shield offer Blue HPN in California, but they are different networks. Both plans serve the same 6 markets covering 16 counties, but Blue Shield’s High Performance Network service areas include an additional 6 counties that are not currently included in Anthem’s High Performance Network. The providers that are either included or excluded from Anthem’s and Blue Shield’s High Performance Network within specific markets may also differ.

**Benefits, eligibility and claims**

8. How do I know if a patient is a Blue HPN member?

A Blue HPN patient can easily be identified by their member ID card. The Blue High Performance Network name will be prominently displayed on the front of the member ID card, along with the “HPN in a suitcase” logo as shown in the example below.



The back of the ID card includes the following information about benefit limitations: “Benefits limited to urgent/emergent care outside of HPN product areas. Benefits limited when accessing care from non-HPN providers within HPN product areas, except in emergency situations. File all claims with your local BCBS plan or, when Medicare is primary, file all claims with Medicare when outside of HPN product areas or when seeing non-HPN providers.”

## 9. What do I need to do differently for Blue HPN patients versus BlueCard PPO patients?

In general, the same procedures apply for both Blue HPN and BlueCard PPO patients. Follow the instructions below to check eligibility.

For Blue Shield of California Blue HPN members, check eligibility online at our Provider Connection website, [blueshieldca.com/provider](https://blueshieldca.com/provider). If you do not find what you need online, you can call our Provider Customer Service Department at (800) 541-6652.

For out-of-area Blue Plan members, check patient eligibility and benefits in the same way you would for BlueCard PPO members by using one of these options:

- Submit HIPAA 270 eligibility and benefit request transaction.
- Call (800) 676-BLUE (2583).

You will conduct pre-service review and submit claims using the same contacts and procedures as you do today. One thing to keep in mind, however, is that Blue HPN patients are only covered for urgent and/or emergent care services when they receive care from non-Blue HPN healthcare providers. This may influence how you refer Blue HPN patients for specialty care.

## 10. How do I make referrals to specialists for Blue HPN patients?

You can use Blue Shield's Find a Doctor website at [blueshieldca.com/fad/home](https://blueshieldca.com/fad/home) to identify a Blue HPN healthcare provider in California and be confident that your patients will be receiving care from other healthcare providers who are committed to quality and cost-efficiency, and where the member can use in-network benefits. Be sure to select the Blue HPN plan.

You can also log in to Provider Connection, scroll down to the Quick Links, and access Blue Shield of California Network Referrals. When you click the Verify Now button, you will be routed to the "Verify member's plan" page. From there, you can identify the member and plan, and click "Set Plan" to limit the results in Find a Doctor to only those providers and facilities in the member's plan network.

## 11. My patient needs specialty care and the specialist I usually refer patients to is not in Blue HPN. What do I do?

It is essential to identify specialists that participate in Blue HPN using Find a Doctor before making a recommendation to your patient. This is meant to avoid having your patient pay unexpected out-of-pocket costs. If you cannot find an appropriate specialist within Blue HPN to treat your patient's condition, contact the Provider Customer Service Help Line at (800) 541-6652, as there are exceptions to make sure your Blue HPN patients get the care they need. This is always our priority.

## Quality measurement

### **12. Is there a quality performance threshold that determines Blue HPN healthcare provider inclusion?**

No. Blue HPN does not currently have a specific inclusion threshold for quality performance. We believe greater value can be achieved by working with healthcare providers to elevate the level of care delivered to patients. A “one-size-fits-all” application of a quality threshold does not account for variation in local healthcare dynamics, appropriateness and evolving population health priorities. Our efforts in this area will continue to evolve.

### **13. How are national quality measures selected for Blue HPN reporting?**

When selecting national measures for Blue HPN, The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association identified measures that:

- Aligned with industry-recognized standards, such as the Catalyst for Payment Reform
- Were most commonly used to establish healthcare provider accountability for better patient outcomes
- Closed clinical care gaps, impact longevity and quality of life and/or lower costs
- Spanned care settings and provider types (primary care, specialists and hospitals) to provide a more holistic view of clinical quality performance
- Accounted for regulatory and/or state mandates
- Created a foundation and framework for continuous improvement

### **14. How are local quality measures used for Blue HPN?**

In addition to the national quality measures, Blue Shield uses quality performance measures that address key healthcare challenges in California, prioritizing measures that align with community health disparities, or those that incentivize better performance in areas that address local needs or challenges. Blue Shield’s selected measures align to the Integrated Health Association (IHA) Align-Measure-Perform programs, which are the statewide quality standards in California, as well as to the CMS standards for hospital care.