

Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan Maternal Mental Health Program

Effective July 1, 2019, California law includes a mandate that a licensed health care practitioner who provides prenatal or postpartum care for a patient must ensure the patient is offered a screening, or is appropriately screened, for any type of mental health conditions that may be occurring.

In accordance with the law, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan (Blue Shield Promise) requires all participating network practitioners, as well as delegated entities that contract with individual practitioners, to comply with the requirement included in Article 6, Section 123640 (September 2018)¹ of California's Health and Safety Code, following approval of the Assembly Bill 2193 (AB2193) approved in September 2018. This requirement applies to Blue Shield Promise Medi-Cal and Cal MediConnect members.

Blue Shield Promise has developed a Maternal Mental Health Program which assists participating practitioners and delegated entities in implementing the new requirement. The program requirements are outlined below.

Requirements for mental health screening tools for Blue Shield Promise plan members

1. All practitioners must use an evidence-based screening tool when providing a mental health screening.
 - Blue Shield Promise's **preferred** screening tool for maternal mental health screening is the **Edinburgh Perinatal Depression Scale** (questionnaire), which includes use and scoring instructions.
 - A list of additional approved depression screening tools (questionnaires) is also available to practitioners to use.
2. These approved screening questionnaires are self-administered by the member. Practitioners are expected to provide the questionnaire to the member to fill out and return to the practitioner. The form is available in multiple languages and is designed to be easy for the member to complete.

Required Frequency of Mental Health Screening

1. The screening is required to occur at the following times:
 - At least once during each pregnancy
 - At least once within 12 weeks following the birth of the child
2. Practitioners must use one of the following common procedural terminology codes (CPTs) upon completion of the depression screenings and submit the code to Blue Shield Promise alongside visit encounter data:
 - **G8431** should be applied when the screening for depression is documented as being positive and a follow-up plan is documented.
 - **G8510** should be applied when results of the screening for depression are documented as negative, and a follow-up plan is not required.

Recommended Frequency of Mental Health Screening

In order to provide the best possible care, Blue Shield Promise recommends that the screenings take place more often than the minimum requirement, and that they occur as follows:

- Once during the first prenatal visit
- At least once during the second trimester
- At least once during the third trimester
- Once during the 6-week postpartum obstetrical visit
- Following the birth of the child, once during the 3-month pediatric visit, once during the 9-month visit and once during the 12-month visit

After Completion of the Screening

All members whose screening results indicate a positive identification of potential depression or other mental health conditions should be referred to our Managed Behavioral Health Organization, **Beacon Health Options** ("Beacon") for mental health follow-up.

- Beacon in Los Angeles County: (855) 765-9701, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Beacon in San Diego County: (855) 321-2211, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

As a Blue Shield Promise practitioner, you may consult with a Beacon psychiatrist for advice regarding the use of psychotropic medication during pregnancy for a Blue Shield Promise member. Follow these steps to contact a psychiatrist at Beacon:

- Use the appropriate phone number listed above, depending on where your practice is located.
- Press "2" to bypass the phone tree.
- When speaking to a representative, explain that you are calling from a doctor's office. A licensed mental health professional will assist you in completing an internal medical doctor form and arrange a follow-up phone call with a psychiatrist, at your available time.

As a reminder, all Blue Shield Promise members have access to quality behavioral health services through Beacon Health. We encourage you to contact Beacon, when it is appropriate.

Resources for Blue Shield Promise Members

At Blue Shield Promise, we want to support all the care you provide for our members who are either planning pregnancy or are already pregnant and receiving care. To request free brochures on breastfeeding and prenatal care, expectant members may call Blue Shield Promise's Health Education Department at the following numbers:

- Los Angeles County: (323) 827-6036, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- San Diego County: (619) 719-4519, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Members are also eligible to use our free DueDatePlusbyBSCP Promise pregnancy app, which provides information on what to expect and links to Blue Shield Promise resources such as the 24/7 Nurse Advice Line.

If you have questions about the requirements described above, please contact the Blue Shield Provider Information & Enrollment Team at (800) 258-3091, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

¹ <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/>