blue of california

Important notice for new Blue Shield enrollees

Dear Enrollee:

Blue Shield of California recognizes the importance of maintaining a strong doctor-patient relationship when people change health plans, especially when patients have a serious medical condition. That's why we designed our Continuity of Care Program for newly enrolled Access+ HMO® members to provide a smooth transition of care to a healthcare provider in our network.

If you or your covered dependents are currently receiving care for pregnancy or treatment of an acute or serious chronic condition and your current physician or other healthcare provider is not in our Access+ HMO provider network, you may be eligible for our Continuity of Care Program. Examples of conditions that may qualify for continuity of care services include, but are not limited to:

- A surgery or other treatment that was previously recommended and documented by the provider to take place within 180 days of the effective date of coverage and which is authorized by Blue Shield.
- An acute condition requiring prompt medical attention and that has a limited duration (not to exceed the acute phase of the condition when care can be safely transferred to a Blue Shield contracting provider).
- A serious chronic condition, for the period of time necessary to complete a course of treatment and to arrange for safe transfer of care to a Blue Shield contracting provider (but not to exceed 12 months from the effective date of coverage).
- Pregnancy, including the immediate postpartum period.
- Care for a child who is newborn to 36 months of age (not to exceed 12 months from effective date of coverage).
- Terminal illness which has a high probability of causing death within one year or less is covered for the duration of the terminal illness.

Continuity of care is also available if you are currently receiving services for a serious mental health condition. To obtain further information, please contact our mental health services administrator, U.S. Behavioral Health Plan, California, directly by calling their Member Services at **(877) 263-9952**.

If you are currently receiving services for a serious dental condition and your employer has purchased additional group HMO dental plan benefits from Blue Shield, you may be eligible to continue care with your current dental provider. To obtain further information, please contact our dental plan administrator, Dental Benefit Providers of California Inc., directly by calling their HMO Dental Plan Member Services at **(800) 585-8111**.

Your right to continuity of care is subject to the provider agreeing to certain conditions. For additional information and a copy of our written continuity of care policy, please call the HMO Member Services number shown below.

If you or your covered dependents need assistance transitioning care to a Blue Shield Access+ HMO network provider, please complete the attached Request for Continuity of Care Services form. We should receive this form at least 60 days before your new Blue Shield plan takes effect, or as soon as you become aware of the need for continuity of care services.

If you have any questions or need help completing this form, please contact HMO Member Services at **(800) 424-6521**. Our service representatives are ready to help you.

Welcome to Blue Shield. We look forward to providing you with quality coverage and services. To see some of the other valuable programs available to you as a Blue Shield member, please visit our award-winning wellness and benefits Web site, **blueshieldca.com**.

Sincerely,

Alan Sokolow
Chief Medical Director

Access+ HMO is a registered mark of Blue Shield of California.

Blue Shield of California
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