

SPECIAL eBULLETIN

FOR PROFESSIONAL PROVIDERS

NOV. 6, 2017

ATTENTION: PHYSICAL THERAPISTS AND DOCTORS OF CHIROPRACTIC MEDICINE

BENEFIT LEVEL ALIGNMENT FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY PROVIDERS AND DOCTORS OF CHIROPRACTIC MEDICINE EFFECTIVE JAN. 1, 2018

Highmark is committed to making certain that our members receive quality and affordable care. We continually review the health care services that are provided to our members, such as comparing the services to national clinical protocols and comparing costs among providers. To this end, Highmark has introduced tiered benefit products to its portfolio. In so doing, Highmark is in the process of aligning its providers, including physical therapists and doctors of chiropractic medicine, to participate at specific benefit levels for certain products.

Highmark, using a specific set of performance metrics, measured (a) the components of the care provided by network physical therapists and doctors of chiropractic medicine and (b) the utilization patterns of such network providers.

As a result of that review, Highmark determined that while all network physical therapists and doctors of chiropractic medicine provide quality care, some providers had a lower adherence to clinical protocols, higher-than-average cost, and a higher number of visits than average, all of which can lead to higher out-of-pocket costs for members.

As such, beginning Jan. 1, 2018, network physical therapists and doctors of chiropractic medicine who meet or exceed all or most performance metrics, including favorable utilization benchmarks, will participate in certain designated Highmark products at a higher level of benefits. Conversely, such providers who do not meet all or most performance metrics, including favorable utilization benchmarks, will participate in certain designated Highmark products at a lower level of benefits. Following are lists of those products:

ConnectBlue (ConnectBlue)

Connect Blue EPO

Conemaugh Region Connect Blue EPO

ConnectBlue has three levels of benefits that align with provider participation levels: the Preferred level, Enhanced level, and Standard level. The Preferred level has the highest level of benefits, meaning that the member will have the lowest level of cost sharing. The Enhanced level has a lower level of benefits than the



Preferred level. The Standard level has the lowest level of benefits, and members will have the highest cost-sharing amounts. For 2018, Highmark found that approximately 90% of network physical therapists and doctors of chiropractic medicine will participate at the Preferred level of benefits, which will result in members who use them experiencing the lowest cost-sharing amounts. Approximately 10% of the network physical therapists and doctors of chiropractic medicine will participate at the Enhanced level of benefits.

Members will have access to quality providers no matter the level of benefits at which their network provider participates, but choosing a provider who participates at the Preferred level of benefits will result in the lowest cost-sharing amounts for members. At this time, for 2018, no network physical therapists or doctors of chiropractic medicine will participate at the Standard level of benefits.

Community Blue Flex (Community Flex)

Community Blue Flex PPO

Community Blue Flex EPO

Community Blue Flex PMHR PPO

Community Blue Flex PMHR EPO

Community Blue Flex Penn Highlands PPO

Community Blue Flex Penn Highlands EPO

Community Blue Premier Flex PPO

Community Blue Premier Flex EPO

Community Flex and has two levels of benefits that align with provider participation levels: the Enhanced level of benefits and the Standard level of benefits. The Enhanced level has the highest level of benefits, meaning that the member will have the lowest level of cost-sharing. For 2018, Highmark found that approximately 90% of network physical therapists and doctors of chiropractic medicine will participate at the Enhanced level of benefits, which will result in members who use them experiencing the lowest cost-sharing amounts. Approximately 10% of the network physical therapists and doctors of chiropractic medicine will participate at the Standard level of benefits.

Members will have access to quality providers no matter the level of benefits at which their network provider participates, but choosing a provider who participates at the Enhanced level of benefits will result in the lowest cost-sharing amounts for members.

The changes Highmark is making to tier physical therapy providers and doctors of chiropractic medicine will have no effect on the amount of reimbursement for the services they provide.

Questions about the changes being implemented Jan. 1, 2018, should be sent to:

AncillaryProviderContractAdministration@highmark.com.