Your Health Care Benefit Program

HMO Blue
A Guide to Your Managed Care Health Plan

Underwritten by:

BlueCross BlueShield of New Mexico

NM80935 (4/12)
CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE

Customer Service: Medical/Surgical Claims and Prescription Drugs—The 24/7 Nurseline can help when you have a health problem or concern. The 24/7 Nurseline is staffed by registered nurses who are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

24/7 Nurseline toll-free telephone number: 1-800-973-6329

When you have a non-medical benefit question or concern, call BCBSNM Monday through Friday from 6 A.M. - 8 P.M. and 8 A.M. - 5 P.M. on Saturdays and most holidays or visit the BCBSNM Customer Service department in Albuquerque. (If you need assistance outside normal business hours, you may call the Customer Service telephone number and leave a message. A Customer Service Advocate will return your call by 5 P.M. the next business day.) You may either call toll-free or visit the BCBSNM office in Albuquerque at:

Street address: 4373 Alexander Blvd. NE
Toll-free telephone number: 1-800-423-1630

Send all written inquiries/preauthorization requests and submit medical/surgical claims* to:

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico
P.O. Box 27630
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125-7630

Preauthorizations: Medical/Surgical Services and Prescription Drugs—For preauthorization requests, call a Health Services representative, Monday through Friday 8 A.M. - 5 P.M., Mountain Time. Written requests should be sent to the address given above. Note: If you need preauthorization assistance between 5 P.M. and 8 A.M. or on weekends, call Customer Service. If you call after normal Customer Service hours, you will be asked to leave a message.

1-505-291-3585 or 1-800-325-8334

Mental Health and Chemical Dependency—For inquiries or preauthorizations related to mental health or chemical dependency services, call the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU):

24 hours/day, 7 days/week: 1-888-898-0070

Send claims* to:

Claims, Behavioral Health Unit
P.O. Box 27630
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125-7630

Website—For provider network information, BCBSNM Drug List, claim forms, and other information, or to e-mail your question to BCBSNM, visit the BCBSNM website at:

www.bcbsnm.com

*Exceptions to Claim Submission Procedures—Claims for health care services received from providers that do not contract directly with BCBSNM, should be sent to the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plan in the state where services were received. Note: Do not submit drug plan claims to BCBSNM. See Section 8: Claim Payments and Appeals for details on submitting claims.

Be sure to read this benefit booklet carefully and refer to the Summary of Benefits.

A Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.
A message from

BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF NEW MEXICO

This Plan is underwritten by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico (BCBSNM), your partner in health care. Like most people, you probably have many questions about your coverage. This benefit booklet contains a great deal of information about the services and supplies for which benefits will be provided under your Plan. Please read your entire benefit booklet very carefully. We hope that most of the questions you have about your coverage will be answered.

We refer to our company as “BCBSNM” in this benefit booklet, and we refer to the company or association that you work for as the “group.” Section 10: Definitions will explain the meaning of many of the terms used in this benefit booklet. Whenever the term “you” or “your” is used, we also mean all eligible family members who are covered under this Plan.

Please take some time to get to know your health care benefit plan coverage, including its benefit limits and exclusions, by reviewing this important document and any enclosures. Learning how this plan works can help make the best use of your health care benefits.

BCBSNM and your group may change the benefits described in this benefit booklet. If that happens, BCBSNM or your group will notify you of those mutually agreed upon changes.

If you have any questions once you have read this benefit booklet, talk to your benefits administrator or call us at the number listed on the back of your ID card, or as listed in Customer Assistance on the inside front cover. It is important to all of us that you understand the protection this coverage gives you.

Welcome to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico! We are very happy to have you as a member and pledge you our best service.

Sincerely,

Kurt Shipley
Interim Executive Director
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico

If You Live Outside New Mexico

HMO-participating providers outside New Mexico and nonparticipating providers do not know what services need preauthorization under this Medical Plan, which is administered by BCBSNM. In these case, it is your responsibility to make sure preauthorization is obtained when needed. Please make sure you are aware of preauthorization requirements in Section 4. You may be responsible for all charges if you or your provider do not receive authorization from BCBSNM for certain services. All questions about your Plan benefits should be directed to BCBSNM – not to the BCBS Plan in your state of residency.

NOTE:

This is a Managed Care Medical Plan that generally provides benefits ONLY for services received from a BCBS “HMO” (or HMO-participating) provider. Under the Managed Care Plan, if you obtain nonemergency services from a Nonparticipating (non-HMO) Provider, the services will usually NOT be covered. Exceptions to this requirement are listed in Section 3: How Your Plan Works. It is YOUR responsibility to determine if a provider is in the national BCBS HMO-Participating Provider network.

Revision History: Booklet updated to include all approved and applicable endorsements/amendments effective as of 4/1/12.
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Customer Service: (800) 423-1630

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SECTION 1: HOW TO USE THIS BENEFIT BOOKLET

This benefit booklet describes the medical/surgical, prescription drug, and mental health/chemical dependency coverage available to members of this Managed Care Medical Plan and the Plan’s benefit limitations and exclusions.

- Always carry your current Plan ID card issued by BCBSNM. When you arrive at the provider’s office or at the hospital, show the receptionist your Plan ID card. You may be required to pay copayments or other estimated amounts due at the time of your visit.
- To find doctors and hospitals nearby, you may use the Internet, make a phone call, or request a hard copy of a directory from BCBSNM. See details in Section 2: How Your Plan Works.
- Call BCBSNM (or the Behavioral Health Unit) for preauthorization, if necessary. The phone numbers are on your Plan ID card. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for details about the preauthorization process.
- Please read this benefit booklet and familiarize yourself with the details of your Plan before you need services. Doing so could save you time and money.

- In an emergency, call 911 or go directly to the nearest hospital.

DEFINITIONS

Throughout this benefit booklet, many words are used that have a specific meaning when applied to your health care coverage. When you come across these terms while reading this benefit booklet, please refer to Section 10: Definitions, for an explanation of the limitations or special conditions that may apply to your benefits.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

Throughout this benefit booklet, you are asked to refer to a separately issued Summary of Benefits that shows specific member cost-sharing amounts and coverage limitations of your Plan. If you do not have a Summary of Benefits, please contact a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate (the phone number is at the bottom of each page of this benefit booklet). You will receive a new Summary of Benefits if changes are made to your health care plan.

IDENTIFICATION (ID) CARD

You will receive a BCBSNM identification (ID) card. The ID card contains your “group” number and your identification number (including an alpha prefix) and tells providers that you are entitled to benefits under this health care plan with BCBSNM.

Carry it with you. Do not let anyone who is not named in your coverage use your card to receive benefits. If you need an additional card or need to replace a lost card, contact a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate.

PROVIDER NETWORK DIRECTORY

In order to receive benefits for nonemergency services, you need to use providers who are in the BCBSNM HMO-participating provider network. (You have coverage for nonparticipating provider services only during an emergency or when preauthorized due to medical necessity.)

The provider network directory is available through the BCBSNM website at www.bcbsnm.com. It lists all providers in the BCBSNM HMO-participating provider network and participating pharmacies. (If you want a paper copy of a directory, you may request one from Customer Service. It will be mailed to you free of charge.) Note: Although provider directories are current as of the date shown at the bottom of each page, they can change without notice. To verify a provider’s status or if you have any questions about the directory, contact a Customer Service Advocate or visit the BCBSNM website.

DRUG PLAN BENEFITS

BCBSNM has contracted with a separate pharmacy benefit manager to administer your outpatient drug plan benefits. In addition to your benefit booklet, you will be sent important information about your drug plan benefits. See your separately issued Drug Plan Rider for more information about the drug plan.
LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

Each provision in Section 5: Covered Services not only describes what is covered, but may list some limitations and exclusions that specifically relate to a particular type of service. Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions lists limitations and exclusions that apply to all services.

PREAUTHORIZATION REQUIRED

To receive benefits for some services, you or your provider must call the BCBSNM Health Services department before you receive treatment. Call Monday through Friday, 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., Mountain Standard Time. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for details. Note: Call Customer Service if you need preauthorization assistance after 5 P.M.

Emergency/Maternity Admission Notification

To receive benefits for emergency hospital admissions, you (or your provider) should notify BCBSNM within 48 hours of admission, or as soon as reasonably possible following admission. Call BCBSNM’s Health Services department, Monday through Friday, 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., Mountain Standard Time. Also, if you have a routine delivery and stay in the hospital more than 48 hours, or if you have a C-section delivery and stay in the hospital more than 96 hours, you must call BCBSNM for preauthorization before you are discharged.

Written Request Required

If a written request for preauthorization is required in order for a service to be covered, you or your provider should send the request, along with appropriate documentation, to:

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico
Attn: Health Services Department
P.O. Box 27630
Albuquerque, NM 87125-7630

Please ask your health care provider to submit your request early enough to ensure that there is time to process the request before the date you are planning to receive services.

PREAUTHORIZATION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

All inpatient and specified outpatient mental health and chemical dependency services must be preauthorized by the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) at the phone number below (also listed on the back of your ID card). For services requiring preauthorization, you or your physician should call the BHU before you schedule treatment. The BHU will coordinate covered services with an in-network provider near you. If you do not call and receive preauthorization before receiving nonemergency services, benefits for services may be denied. Call 7 days a week, 24 hours a day:

Toll-Free Phone Number: 1-888-898-0070

BLUEEXTRAS SM

Certain local and national retailers, outlets and businesses offer BCBSNM health plan members an opportunity to save money on services that are not covered under this Plan. These discount offers and other services are not part of your medical/surgical health care benefits described in this benefit booklet, and the entities making the offers and the providers of the services may not be affiliated or associated with BCBSNM or your group health care plan. However, from time to time, BCBSNM will be announcing such offers by sending manufacturer or retail discount coupons to member households, inserting information in the member newsletters, or mailing descriptions of various programs being offered to our members by businesses such as health clubs, pharmacies, vision care providers, hearing aid retailers, dentists, etc. These mailings may contain coupons or offers that enable you, at your discretion, to purchase the described product or enroll in a certain program at a discount or at no charge. The retailer, provider, or manufacturer may pay for and/or provide the content for this information. The discounts and services available to members may change at any time and BCBSNM does not guarantee that a particular discount or service will be available at any given time. For details of current discounts available, please contact a Customer Service Advocate by calling the phone number on the back of your ID card.
CUSTOMER SERVICE

If you have any questions about your coverage, call or e-mail BCBSNM’s Customer Service department. Customer Service Advocates are available Monday through Friday from 6 A.M. - 8 P.M. and 8 A.M. - 5 P.M., Mountain Standard Time on Saturdays and most holidays. If you need assistance outside normal business hours, you may call the Customer Service telephone number and leave a message. A Customer Service Advocate will return your call by 5 P.M. the next business day.

Customer Service representatives can help with the following:

- answer questions about your benefits
- assist with preauthorization requests
- check on a claim’s status
- help you change your PCP selection
- order a replacement ID card, provider directory, benefit booklet, or forms

For your convenience, the toll-free customer service number is printed at the bottom of every page in this benefit booklet. Refer to Customer Assistance on the inside cover of this booklet for important phone numbers, website, and mailing information. You can also e-mail the Customer Service unit via the BCBSNM website noted below:

In addition to accepting e-mail inquiries, the BCBSNM website contains valuable information about BCBSNM provider networks, the BCBSNM Drug List, and other Plan benefits. It also has various forms you can print off that could save you time when you need to file a claim.

Website: www.bcbsnm.com

Behavioral Health Customer Service

When you have questions about your behavioral health benefits, call the BCBSNM Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) for assistance.

Toll-free: 1-888-898-0070

Deaf and Speech Disabled Assistance

Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and speech disabled callers may use the New Mexico Relay Network. Dialing 711 connects the caller to the state transfer relay service for TTY and voice calls.

Translation Assistance

If you need help communicating with BCBSNM, BCBSNM offers Spanish bilingual interpreters for members who call Customer Service. If you need multi-lingual services, call the Customer Service phone number on the back of your ID card.

After Hours Help

If you need or want help to file a complaint outside normal business hours, you may call Customer Service. Your call will be answered by an automatic phone system. You can use the system to:

- leave a message for BCBSNM to call you back on the next business day
- leave a message saying you have a complaint or appeal
- talk to a nurse at the 24/7 Nurseline right away if you have a health problem

24/7 Nurseline

If you can’t reach your doctor, the free 24/7 Nurseline will connect you with a nurse who can help you decide if you need to go to the emergency room or urgent care center, or if you should make an appointment with your doctor.
The Nurseline will also give you advice if you call your doctor and he or she can’t see you right away when you think you might have an urgent problem. To learn more, call:

**Toll-free: 1-800-973-6329**

BCBSNM also has a phone library of more than 1000 health topics available through the Nurseline, including over 600 topics available in Spanish.

**Special Beginnings®**

This is a maternity program that helps you better understand and manage your pregnancy. You should enroll in the program within three months of becoming pregnant, by calling:

**Toll-free: 1-888-421-7781**

**BLUE ACCESS® FOR MEMBERS**

To help members track claim payments, make health care choices, and reduce health care costs, BCBSNM maintains a flexible array of online programs and tools for health care plan members. The online “Blue Access® for Members” (BAM) tool provides convenient and secure access to claim information and account management features and to various cost comparison tools. While online, members can also access a wide range of health and wellness programs and tools, including a health risk assessment and personalized health updates, and a program in which members can earn merchandise and gift cards for making healthy lifestyle choices and for participating in various activities. To access these online programs, go to www.bcbsnm.com, log into Blue Access® for Members and create a user ID and password for instant and secure access.

If you need help accessing the BAM site, call:

**BAM Help Desk (toll-free): 1-888-706-0583**

**Help Desk Hours:** Monday through Friday 7 A.M. - 9 P.M., Mountain Standard Time  
Saturday 6 A.M. - 2:30 P.M. Mountain Standard Time.

**Note:** Depending on your group’s coverage, you may not have access to all online features. Check with your benefits administrator or call Customer Service at the number on the back of your ID card. BCBSNM uses data about program usage and member feedback to make changes to online tools as needed. Therefore, programs and their rules are updated, added, or terminated, and may change without notice as new programs are designed and/or as our members’ needs change. We encourage you to enroll in BAM and check the online features available to you and check back in as frequently as you like. BCBSNM is always looking for ways to add value to your health care plan and hope you will find the website helpful.

**HEALTH CARE FRAUD INFORMATION**

Health care and insurance fraud results in cost increases for health care plans. You can help; always:

- Be wary of offers to waive copayments, deductibles, or coinsurance. These costs are passed on to you eventually.
- Be wary of mobile health testing labs. Ask what your health care insurance will be charged for the tests.
- Review the bills from your providers and the *Explanation of Benefits* (EOB) you receive from BCBSNM. Verify that services for all charges were received. If there are any discrepancies, call a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate.
- Be very cautious about giving information about your health care insurance over the phone.

If you suspect fraud, contact the BCBSNM Fraud Hotline at 1-888-841-7998.
SECTION 2: ENROLLMENT AND TERMINATION INFORMATION

WHO IS ELIGIBLE

Unless otherwise specified in the Group Master Contract, all active employees who have completed the employee probationary period and who are regularly working the minimum number of hours specified in the Group Master Contract and their eligible family members are eligible for coverage. To find out the number of hours you must work per week and to learn of any other eligibility criteria specified by your group, contact your benefits administrator.

BCBSNM may request proof that a valid employer-employee relationship exists, if applicable, and/or that the applicant meets the eligibility requirements stated in the Group Master Contract and the member’s application. The group also agrees to permit BCBSNM to perform payroll audits.

See “Re-Enrollment” in this section for important information if you or an eligible family member were previously enrolled in a health care plan administered by BCBSNM.

Working employees and their spouses age 65 and over may be entitled to the same benefits as those employees under age 65. (See “Medicare-Eligible Members,” on the next page.)

IF YOUR EMPLOYER OFFERS RETIREE BENEFITS

If your employer’s Plan also covers retirees, retirees under the age of 65 who meet the eligibility requirements for Plan participation are also eligible. To be eligible for continued coverage in this Plan, the retiree must also be residing within the BCBSNM HMO Plan service area at least six months out of the year. See “Guest Membership,” later in this section, if you are temporarily residing outside the HMO Plan service area. Note: If you are a retiree covered under this Plan, please contact your benefits administrator for eligibility criteria applicable to you.

ELIGIBLE FAMILY MEMBERS

Covered family member, covered spouse, covered child - An eligible spouse or eligible child (as defined below) who has applied for and been granted coverage under the subscriber’s policy based on his/her family relationship to the subscriber.

Eligible family members - Family members of the subscriber, limited to the following persons:

- the subscriber’s legal spouse
- the subscriber’s eligible child through the end of the month in which the child reaches age 26 (Once a covered child reaches age 26, the child is automatically removed from coverage and rates adjusted accordingly – unless the child is an eligible family member under this Plan due to a disability as described below.)
- the subscriber’s unmarried child age 26 or older who was enrolled as the subscriber’s covered child in this health plan at the time of reaching the age limit, and who is medically certified as disabled, chiefly dependent upon the subscriber for support and maintenance, and incapable of self-sustaining employment by reason of his/her disability (Such condition must be certified by a physician and BCBSNM. Also, a child may continue to be eligible for coverage beyond age 25 only if the condition began before or during the month in which the child would lose coverage due to his/her age. BCBSNM must receive written notice of the disabling condition before the end of the month during which the child’s coverage would otherwise end.)

Eligible child - The following family members of the subscriber through the end of the month during which the child turns age 26:

- natural or legally adopted child of the subscriber
- child placed in the subscriber’s home for purposes of adoption (including a child for whom the subscriber is a party in a suit in which the adoption of the child by the subscriber is being sought)
- stepchild of the subscriber
- child for whom the subscriber must provide coverage because of a court order or administrative order pursuant to state law
A child meeting the criteria above is an “eligible child” whether or not the subscriber is the custodial or noncustodial parent, and whether or not the eligible child is claimed on income tax, employed, married, attending school or residing in the subscriber’s home, except that once the subscriber is no longer a legal guardian of a child or there is no longer a court order to provide coverage to a child, the child must be eligible as a natural child, legally adopted child, or stepchild of the subscriber in order to retain eligibility as a family member under this health plan.

BCBSNM may require acceptable proof (such as copies of income tax forms, legal adoption or legal guardianship papers, or court orders) that an individual qualifies as an eligible family member under this coverage. Unless listed as an eligible family member, no other family member, relative or person is eligible for coverage as a family member.

Information for Noncustodial Parents

When a child is covered by the Plan through the child’s noncustodial parent, then the Plan will:

- provide such information to the custodial parent as may be necessary for the child to obtain benefits through the Plan;
- permit the custodial parent or the provider (with the custodial parent’s approval) to submit claims for covered services with the approval of the noncustodial parent; and
- make payments on claims submitted in accordance with the above provision directly to the custodial parent, the provider, or the state Medicaid agency as applicable.

MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE MEMBERS

Shortly before you turn age 65 or qualify for Medicare benefits for other reasons, you are responsible for contacting the local Social Security office to establish Medicare eligibility. You should then contact your benefits administrator to discuss coverage options.

If an active employee qualifies under the provisions of federal law for the working aged (TEFRA), then the working employee age 65 or older and/or his/her eligible spouse age 65 or older who is covered by Medicare may continue this Plan coverage as primary over Medicare until the eligible employee retires.

A member under age 65 receiving Medicare benefits due to disability or end-stage renal disease (ESRD) also has primary benefits under this Plan coverage, but for only a limited period of time. (For ESRD patients, this Plan coverage is primary only during the CMS-defined ESRD coordination time period - usually 30 months after the start of dialysis. Medicare becomes primary when the Medicare ESRD coordination time period expires.)

In any case, if you are a Medicare beneficiary and you actively select Medicare as your primary coverage, this Plan is not available to you, and your employer may not offer you any other employer-sponsored health care plan.

Refer to a Medicare Handbook or contact the Social Security Administration for more information and eligibility guidelines that apply to you.

APPLYING FOR COVERAGE

An eligible person can apply for coverage, including for his/her eligible family members, by submitting an enrollment/change form to BCBSNM within 31 days after becoming eligible according to the terms of the Group Master Contract. Note: BCBSNM cannot use genetic information or require genetic testing in order to determine if a condition is pre-existing or to limit or deny coverage.

Retiree - If your plan covers retirees, an eligible retiree may apply for continued coverage, including for his/her eligible family members, by contacting your benefits administrator 60 days prior to retirement. If you do not apply for continued coverage and arrange for payment of medical plan contributions, your coverage will end on the date specified by your group.

WHEN COVERAGE BEGINS

BCBSNM will determine your effective date of coverage according to the provisions of the Group Master Contract. Contact your employer to determine your effective date of coverage.
This Plan does not cover any service received before your effective date of coverage (which, for eligible family members, may be later than the subscriber’s effective date). Also, if your prior coverage has an extension of benefits provision, this Plan will not cover those charges incurred after your effective date that are covered under the prior benefit plan.

CHANGES TO COVERAGE

After initial enrollment, you may need to add eligible family members to, or remove them from your coverage, update your address, or switch from Individual to Family coverage, or vice versa.

Your ability to change coverage types (e.g., from Family to Individual coverage, etc.) will depend on the rules and regulations set forth by your employer. Please contact your employer to find out when you can change your coverage type or remove a person from your coverage.

ADDING A FAMILY MEMBER TO COVERAGE

A subscriber may apply for coverage of an eligible family member (such as a new spouse or a newborn child). Within 31 days of acquiring the newly eligible family member, the subscriber must:

- request that the employer notify BCBSNM of the change,
- complete and submit all necessary enrollment/change forms and legal documentation of proof of dependency, and
- pay any additional premium or other employee contribution for coverage, which may mean changing, for example, from Individual to Family coverage.

Adding a Spouse

If a subscriber adds coverage for a spouse within 31 days of marriage, the effective date of the new eligible family member’s coverage will be no later than the first of the month following the date BCBSNM received the completed and signed enrollment/change application form. If the subscriber does not submit a completed and signed enrollment/change application form to his/her benefits administrator or to BCBSNM (or to the COBRA administrator), along with necessary documentation and, if required, change from Individual (or Employee + Child(ren) coverage, if applicable) to Family coverage within 31 days of marriage, the spouse may not be added to coverage except as a late applicant (or as specified under “Special Enrollment” later in this section). You may also have the option of applying for a Two-Person (Employee + Spouse) coverage type. Ask your employer which coverage types are available to you. For example, if you are applying for coverage for a new spouse and his/her eligible child(ren), you will have to change to Family coverage. See “Adding an Eligible Child,” below.

Adding an Eligible Child

If you do not submit an application for an eligible child or add additional coverage, if required, within the time frames below, the child will be considered a late applicant, except as specified under “Special Enrollment.”

Newborn Children

If Family coverage (or Employee/Children coverage, if available) is in effect, a newborn, natural child is covered from birth. (You should, however, submit an application to add the newborn as an eligible child as soon as possible after birth.) If, for example, Family coverage is not in effect, you must add coverage for the newborn within 31 days of the birth in order for newborn care to be covered. (e.g., If an Employee + Child(ren) coverage type is not available to your group, you would need to switch to Family coverage.) In any case, if the application is not received within 31 days and additional premium or other employee contributions for coverage, if any, are not paid, the newborn is considered a late applicant.

Note: If the parent of the newborn is an eligible child of the subscriber (i.e., the newborn is the subscriber’s grandchild), benefits are not available for the newborn.

Adopted Children

A child placed in the subscriber’s home for the purposes of adoption may be added to coverage as soon as the child is placed in the home. However, application for coverage can be made as late as 31 days following legal adoption without being considered late. (Although a child over the age of 18 is not eligible for adoption, an adopted child
is covered as any other child, subject to the same eligible child age limitations and restrictions.) **Note:** An adopted child who is not enrolled within 31 days of adoption or placement in the home will be considered a late applicant unless the child was previously enrolled in a group health plan or other creditable coverage within 30 days of his/her adoption or placement for adoption and has had prior creditable coverage since that date with no significant lapse (i.e., 95 or more days).

**Legal Guardianship**

Application for coverage must be made for a child for whom the subscriber or the subscriber’s spouse becomes the legal guardian **within 31 days** of the court or administrative order granting guardianship.

**Stepchild**

Application for coverage must be made for a stepchild **within 31 days** of the marriage to the stepchild’s biological parent.

**Court Ordered Coverage for Children**

When an employee or employer is required by a court or administrative order to provide coverage for an eligible child, the eligible child may be enrolled in the subscriber’s Family coverage, or Employee/Children coverage, if available and will **not** be considered a late applicant. (If the subscriber has Individual or Two-Person coverage, he/she may be required to pay additional premium in order for the eligible child to be added.) If not specified in the court or administrative order, the eligible child’s effective date of coverage will be the date the order has been filed as public record with the State or the effective date of Family coverage, or Employee/Children coverage, if available, whichever is later. BCBSNM must receive a copy of the court or administrative order.

**LATE APPLICANT**

Unless eligible for a special enrollment, applications from the following enrollees will be considered late:

- anyone not enrolled **within 31 days** of becoming eligible for coverage under this Plan (e.g., a newborn child added to coverage more than 31 days after birth when, for example, Family coverage (or Employee/Children coverage, if available) is not already in effect, a child added more than 31 days after legal adoption, or a new spouse or stepchild added more than 31 days after marriage)
- anyone enrolling on the group’s initial BCBSNM enrollment date who was not covered under the group’s prior plan (but who was eligible for such coverage)
- anyone eligible but not enrolled during the group’s initial enrollment
- anyone who voluntarily terminates his/her coverage and applies for reinstatement of such coverage at a later date (except as a provider under USERRA of 1994)

Application for coverage from late applicants will be accepted only during your group’s annual open enrollment period, except as described under “Special Enrollment for Active Employees and Their Eligible Family Members” and under “Switch Enrollment,” on the next page.

**Note:** Late applications are not accepted from retirees. If the retiree does not choose Plan coverage upon retirement, coverage may not be chosen at a later date. Late applications are also not accepted from persons applying for coverage under one of the continuation provisions listed under “How to Continue Coverage,” later in this section. (There are federal and state regulations regarding the amount of time that a terminating plan member has to apply for continued coverage when first eligible. See “How to Continue Coverage” for more information.

**OPEN ENROLLMENT**

Open enrollment is the 30-day period prior to the group’s anniversary date (ask your employer when your group’s open enrollment period is held). During the annual open enrollment period, any eligible employee and his/her eligible family members may enroll as members under this Plan. There is no penalty, benefit reduction, or pre-existing conditions waiting period for taking this action.

**Note:** Open enrollment is **not** available under an extension of benefits, direct-pay continuation, or conversion contract. If a member does not enroll timely in these coverages, the member may **not** enroll at a later date.
If You Are Covered as a Retiree

Open enrollment is **not** available to terminated members who initially declined continued coverage as a retiree. If you voluntarily waive or discontinue retiree health care benefits, you may **not** enroll at a later date.

**Late applicants may not enroll until the next annual open enrollment period.**

**SWITCH ENROLLMENT AND CHANGES IN PLAN**

If your employer offers employees more than one choice of health plan, your Plan choice can only be changed outside open enrollment if you, as an active employee or eligible family member of an active employee, are eligible for a special enrollment. (See “Special Enrollment for Active Employees and Their Eligible Family Members” for details.)

**During an Open Enrollment Period**

During an open enrollment period, the subscriber and his/her eligible family members may change coverage to one of the other health care plans for which the subscriber meets eligibility requirements. This is the only period of time during which a member may “voluntarily” change from one health care plan to another for which he/she is eligible.

**Outside the Open Enrollment Period**

If you or your covered family member must change to another health care plan being offered by the employer because of a change in the subscriber’s residency (i.e., moving outside an HMO service area) or family status (i.e., a special enrollment qualifying event), an enrollment/change form must be submitted to BCBSNM as soon as possible (or, for continuation members, the COBRA administrator). Your effective date under the new health plan will be the first of the month following your change in eligibility status. If you are switching to another health plan due to a special enrollment, the effective date of change is explained below.

**SPECIAL ENROLLMENT FOR ACTIVE EMPLOYEES AND THEIR COVERED FAMILY MEMBERS**

There are four instances (“qualifying events”) in which an eligible person can obtain a “special enrollment” right (see definition in Section 10: Definitions. You have a limited amount of time during which you may request a special enrollment. If you do not request special enrollment **within the time period specified below**, you will be considered a late applicant.

**Note:** There are no special enrollments for persons applying for any continuation, conversion coverage, or extension of benefits due to disability if offered under your Plan. You must enroll in these coverages timely.

**Qualifying Events**

The four instances of special enrollment are:

**Loss of Prior Coverage**

An eligible employee who declined coverage when initially eligible because of having other comprehensive medical coverage and who later *involuntarily* loses the other coverage (or who reaches a lifetime maximum under the prior benefit plan), may apply for coverage for himself/herself and eligible family members. (The eligible family members need not have been covered under the prior benefit plan when the employee has been granted a special enrollment under this provision.) Currently enrolled employees may also add eligible family members to coverage under this provision if the eligible family member had prior creditable coverage that was involuntarily lost or had reached lifetime benefit maximum under the other carrier’s benefit plan. (See definition of “involuntary loss of coverage” in Section 10: Definitions.)

If a completed and signed enrollment/change form is received by the employer **within 31 days** of losing the other coverage (or **within 31 days** of receiving the first denial notice informing the employee or eligible family member that he/she had reached a lifetime limit), the applicant(s) will **not** be considered late.

Documentation from the prior carrier – supporting the fact that the person had prior creditable coverage that was lost involuntarily - may be submitted at a later date with the employer’s approval, but the employee must submit the completed and signed enrollment/change form **within 31 days** of the loss of coverage (or denial notice).

**Note:** Enrollment changes cannot be processed until all documentation is provided to the employer.
If the employee lost prior coverage, special enrollment is available to the current employee and any eligible family members of the employee (including spouse). If an eligible family member of the current employee lost prior coverage, special enrollment is available for the affected eligible family member and the employee (not other eligible family members). The choice to quit paying premiums, for example, because the subscriber or one family member under the other carrier’s benefit plan reaches a lifetime benefit maximum in not an example of involuntary loss of coverage for the entire family. However, in the case of one eligible family member losing prior coverage, although all family members may not be eligible for a “special” enrollment, eligible family members may be enrolled at the same time as the special enrollee, subject to late applicant provisions. Also, in order to be eligible for a special enrollment due to loss of prior coverage, the declining person must have completed a waiver of coverage statement when first eligible to enroll, and the reason stated for declining coverage must have been due to having other coverage. If an employee requests a special enrollment for self only, eligible family member(s) only, or both, BCBSNM requires proof of loss of coverage or proof of the date of the event.

Change in Family Status
An employee who acquires a new eligible family member due to marriage, birth, adoption, or placement for adoption may apply for a special enrollment in this Plan for himself/herself and other family members who are eligible for coverage under this Plan. Application for special enrollment of the employee and his/her eligible family members will not be considered late if submitted within 31 days of the marriage, birth, adoption, or placement of the eligible child in the subscriber’s home. If submitted more than 31 days following the change in family status, special enrollment is not available.

- **Newborn or Adopted Child:** For a change in family status due to birth of an eligible newborn or adoption of a child, coverage begins on the date of birth or adoption (or, if earlier, on the date of placement in the subscriber’s home).
- **Marriage:** The effective date of coverage for all persons granted a special enrollment due to marriage will be the same as the new spouse’s effective date of coverage as described under “Adding An Eligible Family Member to Coverage.”

This right to special enrollment upon a change in family status applies to the employee and to all eligible family members.

Loss of Medicaid/SCHIP Eligibility
If an eligible employee or his/her eligible family member is not currently enrolled in the Plan and loses eligibility under Medicaid or under a state child health plan (SCHIP), the person losing such coverage may enroll in the Plan without being considered a late applicant. To be eligible for special enrollment, the person must apply for coverage under the group health plan no later than 60 days after the date of termination of Medicaid or SCHIP coverage. (In order for an eligible family member to be eligible for special enrollment, the employee must be covered under the employer group health plan. If the employee is not enrolled in the Plan when the eligible family member becomes eligible for assistance, the employee must enroll into the Plan at the same time as the eligible family member.) Documentation from the state – supporting the fact that the person had Medicaid/SCHIP coverage that was lost involuntarily – may be submitted at a later date with the employer’s approval, but the employee must submit the completed and signed enrollment/change form within 60 days of the loss of coverage. Note: Enrollment changes cannot be processed until all documentation is provided to the employer.

If the employee lost Medicaid/SCHIP coverage, special enrollment is available to the current employee and any eligible family members of the employee (including spouse). If an eligible family member of the current employee lost Medicaid/SCHIP coverage, special enrollment is available for the affected eligible family member and the employee (not other eligible family members).

Medicaid/SCHIP Group Health Plan Premium Assistance Eligibility
A state may offer premium subsidies through Medicaid or a state child health plan (SCHIP) to low-income children and their families for qualified employer-sponsored coverage. This includes premium assistance for continuation coverage under federal or state law. Therefore, if an eligible employee or an eligible family member is not enrolled in the Plan and later becomes eligible for group health plan premium assistance under Medicaid or under SCHIP, the eligible person may enroll in the Plan without being considered a late applicant. To be eligible for special enrollment, the affected person must apply for coverage through the employer no later
than **60 days** after becoming eligible for premium assistance. (In order for a family member to be eligible for special enrollment, the employee must be covered under the employer’s health plan. If the employee is not enrolled in the Plan when the eligible family member becomes eligible for assistance, the employee must enroll in to the Plan at the same time as the eligible family member.)

Documentation from the state - supporting the fact that the person is eligible for premium assistance from Medicaid or SCHIP - may be submitted at a later date with the employer’s approval, but the employee must submit the completed and signed enrollment/change form **within 60 days** of the affected person’s premium assistance eligibility date. **Note:** Enrollment changes cannot be processed until all documentation is provided to the employer.

The current employee who is eligible but not enrolled for coverage under the terms of the group health plan (or a dependant of such an employee who is eligible but not enrolled for group health plan coverage under such terms) may enroll in the group health plan upon becoming eligible for a state premium assistance subsidy under Medicaid or SCHIP if special enrollment is requested in a timely manner.

**Applying for Special Enrollment**

Application for special enrollment must be made **within the time period specified for each of the qualifying events above** in order to qualify you and/or your eligible family member(s) for a special enrollment right (switch enrollment may be available to members who are offered more than one Plan option). Please contact your benefits administrator for details about special enrollment privileges that apply to you and your eligible family members.

**Waiving Coverage**

If an employee declines to enroll in this group health plan when initially eligible to do so, the employee must sign a waiver of coverage statement and submit it to the employer. **It is very important that the employee indicate the reason for declining coverage.** If the employee declined coverage due to having other health care coverage and later involuntarily loses the other coverage, the employee and his/her eligible family members may be eligible to enroll in the employer’s group plan as “special enrollees.” An employee waiver of coverage statement, indicating that coverage is being declined due to having coverage, must be submitted to the employer **within 31 days** of becoming eligible for coverage under the employer’s health care Plan. If you later lose the other coverage and wish to enroll in the Plan as a result, you will also need to submit proof that you had the required creditable coverage.

If you do not enroll an eligible family member when he/she is initially eligible, you do not need to sign a waiver of coverage statement. However, if the affected family member later loses the other coverage and requests a special enrollment, you will need to submit proof that the family member had the required creditable coverage.

If the person declining coverage later requests a special enrollment, but no such proof of loss or prior coverage is provided, or if the reason for declining coverage is **not** due to having other coverage, he/she will be ineligible for special enrollment. If the person chooses to enroll anyway, the person will be considered a late applicant.

**Coverage Effective Date**

If a member is granted a special enrollment due to involuntary loss of coverage, due to premium assistance eligibility, or due to marriage, and all required documentation is received timely by the employer, coverage will begin no later than the first day of the month after the employer received the request for special enrollment. However, for a change in family status due to birth of an eligible newborn or adoption of a child, coverage begins on the date of birth or adoption.

If a completed and signed enrollment/change form is **not** received within the time periods set forth in this section, the employee and/or his/her eligible family members will be considered late applicants and no special enrollment right will be available.

**RE-ENROLLMENT**

If a previously covered employee and/or eligible family member is re-enrolled in this group Plan, he/she will usually be considered a late applicant. See “Leave of Absence or Military Service,” and “Special Enrollment” for exceptions and details.
Any individual whose previous BCBSNM contract was terminated for good cause is not eligible to re-enroll in this Plan, unless approved in writing by BCBSNM. (Members currently enrolled in continuation coverage may not re-enroll once coverage is terminated, unless eligibility under this Plan is re-established.)

If coverage is voluntarily discontinued by a COBRA member, the terminated member may not re-enroll at any time.

**NOTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND ADDRESS CHANGES**

The subscriber must notify BCBSNM within 31 days following any changes that may affect his/her or a family member’s eligibility, including a change to a covered family member’s name or address, by indicating such changes on an enrollment/change form and submitting it to BCBSNM. You can obtain this form at BCBSNM’s website at www.BCBSNM.com, from your benefits administrator, or by calling the BCBSNM Customer Service department. (Members covered under federal continuation must submit enrollment/change forms directly to the COBRA administrator.)

**Employees and Their Eligible Family Members**

Employees covered under the group Plan are responsible for completing and submitting signed enrollment/change forms to your employer.

**State Continuation Coverage (for Groups of 20 or Less)**

Employees covered under the group Plan are responsible for completing and submitting signed enrollment/change forms to BCBSNM.

**COBRA Continuation Policy Members**

If you are covered under a COBRA continuation policy, you must contact the COBRA administrator. The name, address, and phone number of the administrator will be provided to you should you elect COBRA coverage.

**COVERAGE TERMINATION**

Except for nonpayment of premium or termination of the Group Master Contract, BCBSNM will not terminate your coverage without giving you 30 days’ written notice. Also, if the employer or group administrator fails to submit premium payments to BCBSNM on a timely basis, coverage will terminate for all affected members as of the end of the last-paid billing period. The affected members and the employer or group administrator will not be notified of such a termination.

Also, if a member’s coverage is cancelled (for reasons other than fraud or deception) and the subscriber has paid premium in advance on behalf of the affected member, BCBSNM will return to the subscriber, within 30 days, the appropriate pro rata portion of the premium, less any amounts due to BCBSNM.

Unless stated otherwise, if you do not elect or do not qualify for continuation coverage (see “How to Continue Coverage”), coverage ends at the end of the month following the earliest of the date:

- The employee terminates employment or otherwise loses eligibility according to the terms of the Group Master Contract. If the group or subscriber fails to notify BCBSNM within 30 days to remove an ineligible person from coverage, BCBSNM may recover any payment made on the ineligible person’s behalf.
- When the premium payment or other employee contribution for coverage is not received on time. (Coverage will be suspended if premium is not paid when it is due. If premium is not received within 30 days after its due date, the group or affected member(s) will be terminated at the end of the last-paid billing period. Any claims received and paid for during the 30-day grace period will be billed both to the subscriber and to the group or, in the case of continuation coverage, to the subscriber.)
- When the member begins a leave of absence or enters the armed forces for more than 30 days or as provided by law. (See “Leave of Absence or Military Service.”)
- When the member materially fails to abide by the rules, policies, or procedures of this Plan or fraudulently provides or materially misrepresents information affecting coverage. If a member knowingly gave false material information in connection with the eligibility or enrollment of the subscriber or any of his/her eligible family members, BCBSNM may terminate the coverage of the subscriber and his/her eligible family members.
retroactively to the date of initial enrollment. The subscriber is liable for any benefit payments made as a result of such improper actions.

- When the subscriber **dies**. (Surviving eligible family members remain covered through the last-paid billing period.)

- If this Plan is primary over **Medicare** due to federal laws and regulations, when the Medicare-eligible member **chooses** Medicare as his/her primary coverage. (See “Medicare-Eligible Members” for information on coverage options for members who are entitled to Medicare.)

- At the **beginning** of the month when the member becomes **age 65** (excepting any laws to the contrary that apply to certain large group employer health plans). See “How to Continue Coverage” for more information regarding continued coverage options in these cases.

- When the member acts in a **disruptive** manner that prevents the orderly business operation of any network provider or dishonestly attempts to gain a financial or material advantage.

- When **group coverage is discontinued** for the entire group or for the employee’s enrollment classification.

- When an employee **retires**. (The retiree and his/her eligible family members may be eligible for continuation coverage through federal law. See “How to Continue Coverage.” Certain retirees who were covered under the Plan after retirement are allowed to remain covered under this Plan.)

- When the subscriber moves to a primary residence or place of employment **outside the geographic area** serviced by BCBSNM. (See “Guest Membership,” later in this section, if you are moving temporarily for 90-180 days or “How to Continue Coverage,” later in this section if the move is permanent or longer than 180 days.)

If you believe your coverage was cancelled due to health status or health requirements, race, gender, age, or sexual orientation, you may appeal such termination to the New Mexico Superintendent of Insurance. Also, BCBSNM will not cancel your coverage for nonpayment of copayments if such a cancellation would constitute abandonment of a member who is hospitalized and receiving treatment for a life-threatening condition. In addition, BCBSNM will not cancel your coverage if you refuse to follow a prescribed course of treatment. Before terminating your coverage for reasons other than nonpayment of premium, BCBSNM must provide you written notice at least 30 calendar days in advance. The notice must be in writing and dated, state the reason for cancellation and the date on which it becomes effective, provide you the list of circumstances under which your coverage cannot be cancelled, and provide you information about appealing your termination to the New Mexico Superintendent of Insurance. You will not receive a notice of cancellation if there is no renewal provision in your contract.

**Additional Family Member Termination Reasons**

In addition, coverage will end for any family member on the earliest of the above dates or the earliest of the following dates:

- at the end of the **last-paid billing period** for Family coverage;

- at the end of the month when a child **no longer qualifies as an eligible child** under the Plan (e.g., a child is removed from placement in the home or reaches the eligible child age limit);

- at the end of the month following the date of a final **divorce** decree or **legal separation** for a spouse;

- at the end of the month when the subscriber gives a minimum **30 days’ advance notice** in writing to end coverage for a covered family member(s), according to the rules of your Plan as established by your employer.

If a family member is being removed from coverage because of losing his/her eligibility under the Plan (for reasons other than reaching the eligible child age limit), the enrollment/change form must be received by BCBSNM **within 31 days** following the effective date of the change. In these cases, the member will be removed from coverage as of the end of the month following the change in his/her eligibility status and payroll deductions will be properly adjusted, if necessary. BCBSNM and the providers of care may recover benefits erroneously paid on behalf of the removed member.

**Note:** If enrolled under federal continuation, send enrollment/change forms to the COBRA administrator.
Voluntary Termination of Coverage
To remove a family member from coverage before loss of eligibility or to voluntarily terminate his/her own coverage, the subscriber must submit a completed enrollment/change form to his/her benefits administrator. If voluntary termination is allowed under your Plan outside the annual renewal period, coverage will end the first of the month following receipt of the enrollment/change form. Voluntarily terminated members may re-enroll under the Plan only as late applicants (except as provided under “Special Enrollment”). Also, these members are not eligible for any extension of benefits or federal or state continuation or conversion coverage. Voluntarily terminated members may apply for individual coverage offered by BCBSNM; a health statement will be required and the application may be denied.

Note: If enrolled under federal continuation, send enrollment/change forms to the COBRA administrator.

Termination of Continuation Coverage or Extension of Benefits
See “How to Continue Coverage” for more information.

Leave of Absence or Military Service
Coverage will end for a subscriber and his/her eligible family members at the end of the month during which the leave began. During a leave of absence covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), coverage will continue as provided by law. Contact your benefits administrator for information.

NOTIFICATION
If the Group Master Contract is terminated or premiums are not submitted, coverage will terminate for all affected members as of the end of the last-paid billing period. The affected members and the group will not be notified of such terminations. (If your group fails to submit premium payments to BCBSNM, it is your group’s responsibility to advise members of BCBSNM Plan termination.)

The required premiums are determined and established by BCBSNM. The percentage of the total premium that you pay is established by your group. BCBSNM may change premium amounts according to any of the following:

- changes in federal and state law; or
- changes to coverage classifications (for example, to a new age category or geographic location, or from an Individual to Family coverage type); or
- after giving the employer and/or subscriber 60 days’ written notice.

PREMIUM REFUNDS
BCBSNM may not refund membership premiums paid in advance on behalf of a terminated member if:

- the enrollment/change form is not received within 31 days of the change in eligibility status; or
- any claims or capitation amounts have been paid on behalf of the terminated member during the period for which premiums have been paid.

HOW TO CONTINUE COVERAGE
If you lose coverage under this Plan, you may be able to continue coverage for a limited period of time. Note: There is no special enrollment under these provisions. You must enroll timely to qualify for continued coverage.

Note: If you are enrolled under a Guest Membership with another Blue Cross and Blue Shield HMO Plan, you may not apply for continuation coverage with the out-of-state Plan, but must contact BCBSNM. To prevent any temporary loss of Guest Membership during the change to continuation coverage, you should call BCBSNM as soon as possible after learning of your loss of eligibility under the employer’s plan.

Continuation Coverage
Your group may be subject to the provisions for continuation of plan coverage under federal law (COBRA or USERRA) or state law (six-month continuation). If so, employees and their covered family members who lose
eligibility under this group health care plan may be able to continue as members, without a health statement, for a limited period of time by purchasing the continuation coverage described below. You must pay premiums from the date of loss of group coverage.

You are not eligible to enroll for continuation coverage if:

- the employer stops offering this coverage to its employees, or
- you do not elect continuation coverage in a timely fashion.

In addition, if you are eligible to elect state continuation coverage, you may not later enroll in federal continuation coverage. Refer to Appendix A: Continuation Coverage Rights under COBRA or contact your benefits administrator for details about enrolling in continuation coverage.

Continuation Benefits

Continuation coverage is identical to the coverage a similarly situated regular member has. If the coverage for regular members changes, your continuation coverage will reflect the same change. For example, if the Plan’s deductible or other cost-sharing amounts change for regular members, yours will change by the same amount.

Federal Continuation (COBRA)

Unless approved in writing by BCBSNM, the following persons may not enroll in this continued coverage option:

- one who voluntarily terminated coverage while still eligible (Involuntary termination includes loss of coverage under the following situations only: legal separation, divorce, loss of eligible child eligibility status, death of the subscriber, termination of employment, reduction in hours, or termination of employer contributions. Any other reason is considered voluntary.)
- a covered family member who was removed from coverage by the subscriber while the family member was still eligible
- any member whose BCBSNM health care coverage was terminated for good cause

Continuation coverage under federal law ends on the earliest of the following dates or any of the applicable dates listed under “Coverage Termination” earlier in this section:

- the first of the month when you become entitled to Medicare
- when the employer discontinues offering this Plan to employees (If this Plan is replaced by another health care plan, continuation coverage will also be replaced by the new Plan.) Exception: If your group declares bankruptcy and you are covered under this Plan as a retiree, you and your eligible family members may be eligible for continued coverage.
- when you become covered under another group health care plan (However, if that health plan includes a pre-existing conditions limitation, continuation coverage will not end until that limitation has been satisfied or until another event occurs which would make you ineligible for continued coverage.)
- when the continuation period expires (If this employer’s Plan is still being administered by BCBSNM, you will have the option of changing to the conversion coverage provided by BCBSNM and described under “Conversion to Individual Coverage.”)

State Continuation Coverage

A subscriber and his/her covered family members may continue Plan coverage for six months after losing coverage for any reason other than nonpayment of premium or termination of the entire group, if your group is eligible for such coverage. (See your Benefits Administrator for more information.) BCBSNM must receive the application for state continuation coverage within 31 days after group coverage is lost. (A health statement is not required.)

State continuation coverage ends on the earliest of the following dates or of the applicable dates listed under “Coverage Termination” earlier in this section:

- when the employer discontinues offering this Plan to employees (If this Plan is replaced by another health care plan, continuation coverage will also be replaced by the new Plan.)
when the continuation period expires (If this employer’s Plan is still being administered by BCBSNM, you will have the option of changing to the conversion coverage provided by BCBSNM and described under “Conversion to Individual Coverage.”)

If you are entitled to both Parts A and B of Medicare, your state continuation coverage option is limited to a Medicare Supplement Plan administered by BCBSNM. Depending upon your age and the Plan you select, a health statement may be required and a pre-existing conditions limitation may apply. (The options for members under age 65 are limited.) Call a Customer Service Advocate for more information.

**Premium Payments**

Subscribers under federal COBRA continuation coverage must pay premiums to the COBRA administrator. Subscribers under state continuation coverage pay premiums to BCBSNM. Contact your benefits administrator for an application for coverage and details.

Premiums for coverage may change on your group’s renewal date or on any date that the Plan is amended. Written notice of any such change will be given to the group or subscriber at least 60 days before the effective date of the premium change.

**USERRA Continuation Coverage**

Employees and their covered family members who lose group coverage because the employee is absent from work due to military service may be able to continue coverage for up to 24 months after the absence begins. Contact your benefits administrator for details about the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA).

**Extension of Benefits**

If you are totally disabled on the date your group terminates coverage, your health care coverage may be continued (for only the disabling condition) for up to 12 consecutive months after the group terminates coverage with BCBSNM.

An extension of benefits is available if you:

- were totally disabled on the date of the group’s termination; and
- incur an expense directly resulting from that particular disability that would have been a covered service before termination.

If coverage is continued under this provision, benefits for the disabling condition are paid subject to all applicable limitations, exclusions, and maximums that applied at the time the group’s coverage terminated. To claim an extension of benefits, you must notify BCBSNM within 31 days of the group’s coverage termination date and provide evidence of your total disability.

**CONVERSION TO INDIVIDUAL COVERAGE**

Involuntarily terminating members may change to individual conversion coverage if this employer group health plan is still in effect and coverage is lost due to one of the following circumstances:

- termination of employment
- a member no longer meets the eligibility requirements of the Group Master Contract
- the period of continuation coverage expires
- a covered family member loses coverage for one of the following reasons:
  - divorce or legal separation from the subscriber
  - disqualification of the member under the definition of a eligible family member
  - death of the subscriber
  - an employee becomes primary under Medicare — leaving eligible family members without coverage

The subscriber and any eligible family members who were covered at the time that group coverage was lost are eligible to apply for conversion coverage without a health statement.
BCBSNM must receive your application for conversion coverage **within 31 days** after you lose eligibility under the group/continuation Plan. **You must pay conversion coverage premiums from the date of such termination.**

Conversion coverage is **not** available in the following situations:

- when group coverage under this Plan was discontinued for the entire group or the employee’s enrollment classification
- when you reside outside of or move out of New Mexico (Call BCBSNM for details on transferring coverage to the Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan in the state where you are living.)

If you are entitled to Medicare, your conversion coverage option is limited to a Medicare Supplement Plan administered by BCBSNM. Depending upon your age and the benefit plan you select, a health statement may be required and a pre-existing conditions limitation may apply. (The options for members under age 65 are limited.) Call a Customer Service Advocate for the enrollment options available to you.

The benefits and premiums for conversion coverage will be those available to terminated health care plan members on your coverage termination date. You will receive a new benefit booklet if you change to conversion coverage. (Some benefits of this Plan are not available under conversion coverage.) Contact a Customer Service Advocate for details.

**GUEST MEMBERSHIP**

Subscribers who are temporarily working or residing out of state for at least 90 days may be eligible for Guest Membership for up to 180 days of membership in one of the many participating Blue Cross and Blue Shield HMOs. Also, eligible family members residing in another state for at least 90 days may also enroll for coverage in the out-of-state, host HMO Plan for as long as this group participates with BCBSNM, or until the eligible family member is no longer eligible (e.g., reaches dependent age limit or subscriber terminates coverage). Under either option, the local HMO provides all of the services and access available through their Plan. For more information, call a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate.

**Note:** A member covered under another HMO’s Guest Membership is subject to the eligibility criteria of this health care plan; however, such members will receive a benefit booklet and summary from the host HMO Plan. The benefits, benefit limits, and exclusions of this benefit booklet will not apply to guest members of another HMO Plan. Also, guest members of another Plan cannot enroll in federal continuation coverage directly through the other Plan. In such cases, the member should contact BCBSNM as soon as possible after learning that his/her coverage will cease in order to minimize any possibility of temporarily losing a Guest Membership during the transfer of coverage.
SECTION 3: HOW YOUR PLAN WORKS

PCPS AND OTHER HMO-PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS

This health care plan is a Managed Health Care Plan that generally provides benefits only for services received from a BCBSNM “HMO” (or-HMO-participating) provider. Under the Managed Care Plan, if you obtain nonemergency services from a nonparticipating (non-HMO) provider, the services will usually not be covered. Exceptions to this requirement are listed in this Section 3 under “Exceptions for Nonparticipating Providers.”

Your Primary Care Provider (PCP)

In order to receive coverage under your health plan, each member must choose a PCP at the time of enrollment. If you do not select a PCP during enrollment, you will be assigned to a PCP in your area. You may choose a different one for each family member.

A PCP should be chosen for an eligible newborn before the child’s birth, but no later than 31 days following birth, to ensure continuous coverage from birth.

Check your provider directory or visit the “Provider Finder®” section of the BCBSNM website (www.bcbsnm.com) for a list of PCPs and other HMO-participating providers.

Changing PCPs

You may select a new PCP at any time by requesting the change on an enrollment/change form, or by calling a BCBSNM Customer Service representative and notifying them of the change. The change will be effective immediately and BCBSNM will mail you a new identification card with the change. To have medical records transferred from one physician to another, contact your former PCP. You are responsible for any charges related to transferring medical records.

Visiting Your PCP

To avoid possible delays when scheduling an appointment, please follow these steps:

- For routine appointments or sudden illnesses call your PCP’s office and identify yourself as a BCBSNM member. You will be given instructions to follow.

- To receive office care after your PCP’s normal business hours or on weekends and holidays, you should call your PCP (or the physician who is on call for the PCP) and request instructions.

Upon arriving for an appointment, show your BCBSNM Plan ID card to the provider’s receptionist.

Cancelling an Appointment

If you need to cancel an appointment, notify your PCP as soon as possible, but at least 12 hours before the scheduled appointment. You may be charged a fee for a missed appointment. This Plan will not pay for such a charge. If you are going to be late for an appointment, please notify your PCP’s office; you may be asked to reschedule.

HMO-Participating Specialists and Hospitals

If you need care that is not available from your PCP, your PCP may recommend that you visit another, more appropriate HMO-participating specialist or facility. You do not need a referral from your PCP before seeking care from any HMO-participating facility, specialist, or other health care provider. With BCBSNM, you have the freedom of going directly to the HMO-participating provider of your choice and receiving benefits for covered services. Remember: Providers without a BCBSNM HMO-participating contract, and their services, will not be covered except in those limited circumstances outlined in this section.

Keep Your PCP Informed

Although you do not need a PCP referral before arranging to receive covered services from another HMO-participating provider, you should consult with your PCP if possible. Your PCP knows you and your medical history and may be able to suggest a course of treatment or a particular specialist that is more
appropriate than the one you may be considering. Also, many specialists and facilities will not take patients who have not been referred to them by a physician.

**Preauthorization Needed for Some Services**

Your PCP is also aware of the types of services that require preauthorization from BCBSNM and is familiar with the kind of medical information BCBSNM needs in such cases. While you may call BCBSNM for preauthorization *(before you incur costs that may not be covered)*, you may be told that your PCP or other provider must call BCBSNM to obtain the preauthorization for you.

> **Before seeking specialist services, you need to be aware of preauthorization requirements**, which are described in Section 4: Preauthorizations.

**Important:** If you choose to see a physician for nonemergency care and find that you have received services needing preauthorization and did not get the authorization, benefits for the service may be denied. In such cases, you will be responsible for the entire cost of the services — even if you were not aware of the preauthorization requirements.

**Nonemergency Hospital Admissions**

This Plan will cover a medically necessary inpatient stay for a covered service if you are admitted to an HMO-participating facility by your PCP or by an HMO-participating specialist. To be covered, you must obtain preauthorization from BCBSNM before being admitted. See “Preauthorizations,” later in this section, for details.

**Selecting an HMO-Participating Provider**

Check your provider directory or visit the “Provider Finder®” section of the BCBSNM website (www.bcbsnm.com) for a list of HMO-participating providers. **Note:** Although provider directories are current as of the date shown at the bottom of each page, they can change without notice. To verify a provider’s status or if you have any questions about how to use the directory, contact a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate.

**If a provider is nonparticipating and nonemergency services have not been authorized by BCBSNM in advance, the services will be denied and you will be fully responsible for paying the health care provider’s bill for a covered procedure.**

**Nonparticipating Provider Services**

If you visit a nonparticipating provider for nonemergency care without first obtaining preauthorization from BCBSNM, the services will not be covered except in the limited circumstances outlined in this section.

Except in emergencies, BCBSNM will generally NOT authorize services of a nonparticipating provider if the services could be obtained from an HMO-participating provider. Authorizations for such services are given only under very special circumstances related to medical necessity and lack of provider availability in the HMO-participating provider network. BCBSNM will NOT approve an authorization request based on non-medical issues such as whether or not you or your doctor prefer the nonparticipating provider or find the provider more convenient. Regardless of medical necessity or non-medical issues, nonparticipating providers’ services are NOT covered under this Plan, except during an emergency, if you do not first obtain preauthorization.

**Out-of-Country Services**

This Plan does not cover service received outside the United States unless there is an emergency. See Section 8: Claims Payments and Appeals for more information about filing claims for out-of-country services.
Exceptions for Nonparticipating Providers

If authorization is obtained in advance for a nonparticipating provider to perform nonemergency services, the nonparticipating provider:

- may bill you for any amounts in excess of the BCBSNM covered charge, in addition to your copayment; and
- is not responsible for obtaining any necessary approvals on your behalf (see “Preauthorizations,” in Section 4); and
- may or may not file claims for you.

Emergency Care

If you visit a nonparticipating provider for emergency care services, you will receive benefits only for the initial treatment, which includes emergency room services and, if you are hospitalized within 48 hours of an emergency, the related inpatient hospitalization. (Office/urgent care facility services are not considered “emergency care” for purposes of this provision.) You do not need authorization before seeking emergency services in an emergency room. However, you should call BCBSNM within 48 hours of receiving the emergency room care (or as soon as possible). Care obtained from a nonparticipating provider without preauthorization in any other setting (e.g., physician’s office or urgent care center) will not be covered.

All follow-up care (which is no longer considered emergency care) must be preauthorized by BCBSNM in order to be covered. (See “Emergency and Urgent Care” in Section 5: Covered Services for more information.)

Urgent Care

If you need urgent care while in the BCBSNM service area for a condition that is not life-threatening but that requires medical attention, call your PCP and request an immediate appointment, if available. If not available, ask your PCP to recommend another provider, or visit the nearest participating urgent care center.

If you are traveling and need urgent care, call 1-800-810-BLUE (2583). You will be given the name and phone number of a local provider who will be able to call BCBSNM for eligibility information and will submit a claim to the local Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan. You will also need to call your PCP and request that he/she call BCBSNM for preauthorization to visit an out-of-network provider. Nonemergency care outside the service area, including urgent care, from a provider that does not contract directly with BCBSNM must be preauthorized by BCBSNM.

Ancillary Providers in a Hospital

When you are admitted to an HMO-participating hospital or other HMO-participating treatment facility and the admission is covered under the Plan, you will receive benefits for services received during the admission from a nonparticipating anesthesiologist, radiologist, and/or pathologist. These are the only three specialists that are covered under this provision.

Transition of Care

If your health care provider leaves the BCBSNM provider network (for reasons other than medical competence or professional behavior) or if you are a new member and your provider is not in the provider network when you enroll, BCBSNM may authorize you to continue an ongoing course of treatment with the provider for a
transitional period of time of not less than 30 days. (If necessary and ordered by the treating provider, BCBSNM may also authorize transitional care from other out-of-network providers.) The period will be sufficient to permit coordinated transition planning consistent with your condition and needs. Special provisions may apply if the required transitional period exceeds 30 days. If you have entered the third trimester of pregnancy at the effective date of enrollment, the transitional period shall include post-partum care directly related to the delivery. Call the BCBSNM Customer Service department for details.

The above situations are the only instance in which a member may receive benefits for the covered services of a nonparticipating provider.

CALENDAR YEAR

A calendar year is a period of one year which begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of the same year. The initial calendar year is from a member’s effective date of coverage through December 31 of the same year, which may be less than 12 months.

BENEFIT LIMITS

There is no general lifetime maximum benefit under this Plan. However, certain services have separate benefit limits per admission or per calendar year. (See the Summary of Benefits for details.)

Benefits are determined based upon the coverage in effect on the day a service is received, an item is purchased, or a health care expense is incurred. For inpatient services, benefits are based upon the coverage in effect on the date of admission, except that if you are an inpatient at the time your coverage either begins or ends, benefits for the admission will be available only for those covered services received on and after your effective date of coverage or those received before your termination date.

COST-SHARING FEATURES

In order to receive a specific service or benefit covered under this Plan, you must pay a copayment (fixed dollar-amount) to the health care provider (or in some cases, the percentage of covered charges). Copayments for specific services are listed on your Summary of Benefits.

COPAYMENTS

Copayments for specific services are listed on your Summary of Benefits. The copayment amount varies depending on the place of service and on the type of provider (for example, depending on the Plan option chosen by your employer, the copayment for an office visit to a PCP may be lower than the copayment for a specialist visit).

You must make copayments directly to providers at the time of service. You are always responsible for paying a provider’s full charges for noncovered services and for services received without a necessary preauthorization.

Drug Plan Copayment

When you purchase covered drugs and other items through the drug plan, the amount you pay (your “copayment”) may be either a fixed-dollar amount or a percentage of the covered charge. Sometimes you may also have to pay the difference in cost between a brand-name drug and its generic equivalent. In some cases, you may have a deductible to meet. Drug plan copayment amounts and any additional amounts you may pay for a brand-name drug are not subject to the out-of-pocket provision. You will continue to pay these copayment amounts after your Managed Care plan out-of-pocket limit is met. See your Drug Plan Rider for more information about the amounts you pay under the drug plan.

OUT-OF-POCKET LIMIT

The maximum total copayments (and/or coinsurance) that any one member will pay for basic health care services (as defined in federal and state regulations) in any calendar year will not exceed twice the total annual premium that is normally charged for a single member under this Plan. (See your Summary of Benefits for more information.)

Amounts you pay for drugs or other items purchased under the drug plan are not included in this “Out-of-Pocket Limit” provision.
Any copayments over the out-of-pocket limit will be refunded to the subscriber if the refund is requested within 45 days after the end of the calendar year. It is your responsibility to determine when the out-of-pocket limit has been reached; therefore, you should maintain accurate records of copayment amounts.

There is no family out-of-pocket limit. Each member must reach the individual limit to be eligible for the increase in benefits.

Call a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate if you have any questions about your out-of-pocket limit.

**CHANGES TO THE COST-SHARING AMOUNTS**

Copayments and out-of-pocket limits may change during a calendar year. If changes are made, the change applies only to services received after the change goes into effect (for inpatient services, benefits are determined based on the date you are admitted to the facility). You will be notified if changes are made to this Plan. If any benefit changes result in a premium increase, you will be given 60 days’ notice of such changes.
SECTION 4: PREAUTHORIZATIONS

You or your provider must obtain preauthorization from BCBSNM before you are admitted as an inpatient or receive certain types of services.

In order to receive benefits:

- services must be covered and medically necessary;
- services must not be excluded; and
- the procedures described in this section must be followed regardless of where services are rendered or by whom.

These preauthorization requirements will provide you with assurance that you are being treated in the most efficient and appropriate health care setting and can help manage the rising costs of health care. Please note:

Preauthorization determines only the medical necessity of a specific service and/or an admission and an allowable length of stay. **Preauthorization does not guarantee your eligibility for coverage, that benefit payment will be made, or that you will receive benefits.** Eligibility and benefits are based on the date you receive the services. Services not listed as covered, excluded services, services received after your termination date under this Plan, and services that are not medically necessary will be denied.

Most preauthorization requests will be evaluated and you and/or the provider notified of BCBSNM’s decision **within 5 days** of receiving the request (**within 24 hours** for urgent care requests). If requested services are not approved, the notice will include: 1) the reasons for denial; 2) a reference to the health care plan provisions on which the denial is based; and 3) an explanation of how you may appeal the decision if you do not agree with the denial (see Section 8: Claims Payments and Appeals).

Retroactive approvals will not be given, except for emergency and maternity-related admissions, and you may be responsible for the charges if preauthorization is not obtained before the service is received.

SERVICES OF HMO-PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS

If the attending physician is an HMO-contracting provider, obtaining preauthorization is not your responsibility — it is the provider’s. PCPs and other HMO-participating providers contracting with BCBSNM must obtain preauthorization from BCBSNM (or from the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU), when applicable) in the following circumstances:

- when recommending any nonemergency admission, readmission, or transfer
- when a covered newborn stays in the hospital longer than the mother
- before providing or recommending a service listed under “Other Preauthorizations,” later in this section
- before recommending that you go to a nonparticipating provider for whose services you expect to receive benefits (Such requests may be denied.)

BCBSNM will advise you if a preauthorization request is denied.

NONPARTICIPATING PROVIDERS OR PROVIDERS OUTSIDE NEW MEXICO

Except in emergencies, BCBSNM must preauthorize a visit to a nonparticipating provider. If preauthorization is not obtained before a visit to a nonparticipating provider, benefits will not be available for the services.

Care received from a nonparticipating provider without a BCBSNM preauthorization is covered only if a delay in reaching an HMO-participating provider would result in death or disfigurement, jeopardize your health, or seriously impair the function of any bodily organ or part.

**BCBSNM may deny a request to preauthorize a visit to a nonparticipating provider.** Any nonemergency services received from a nonparticipating provider must be unavailable from an HMO-participating provider. If services are available within the BCBSNM HMO-participating network, BCBSNM will not preauthorize a visit to a nonparticipating provider. If an HMO-participating provider is available in another city, you may have to travel to that...
city to receive benefits for nonemergency care. Also, this Plan does not cover services received outside the United States, unless there is an emergency.

Most preauthorizations may be requested over the telephone. If a written request is needed, have your provider call a Health Services representative for instructions for filing a written request for preauthorization. The provider may call on your behalf, but it is your responsibility to ensure that BCBSNM is called when receiving out-of-network services.

**If a Nonparticipating Provider or Provider Outside New Mexico Recommends Services**

Under very special medical circumstances, BCBSNM may preauthorize a visit to a nonparticipating provider. If that provider recommends an admission or a service that requires preauthorization, the provider is not obligated to obtain the preauthorization for you. In such cases, it is your responsibility to ensure that preauthorization is obtained. If preauthorization is not obtained before services are received, you will be entirely responsible for the charges.

**OTHER PREAUTHORIZATIONS**

In addition to preauthorization review for all nonemergency inpatient services, preauthorization is required for certain other services. Most preauthorizations may be requested over the telephone. If a written request is needed, have your provider call a Health Services representative for instructions for filing a written request for preauthorization. An out-of-network provider, or an out-of-state network provider may call on your behalf, but it is your responsibility to ensure that BCBSNM is called. Preferred providers that contract directly with BCBSNM are responsible for requesting all necessary preauthorizations for you.

If preauthorization is not obtained, benefits will be denied for an out-of-network provider for the following services and all related services. (NOTE: Preferred providers that contract directly with BCBSNM will be penalized for the following services and all related services that do not receive preauthorization; the member will be held harmless.)

- air ambulance services (unless during a medical emergency)
- treatment plan for **autism spectrum disorders** or any other developmental delay
- PET scans; cardiac CT scans
- **enteral nutritional products, special medical foods**, and **certain drugs** covered under the **Drug Plan Rider**; prescription **refills** before the supply should have been exhausted
- **home infusion therapy** (HIT), excluding antibiotics
- certain **injections**, including but not limited to intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG)
- nonemergency care from a **nonparticipating provider**
- nonemergency or **elective hospital** or other facility admissions
- **psychological testing**, neuropsychological testing, intensive outpatient program (IOP) treatment, and **electroconvulsive therapy** (ECT)
- transplant procedures including pretransplant evaluations

All services, including those for which preauthorization is required, must meet the standards of medical necessity criteria described in **Section 5: Covered Services**, “Medically Necessary Services,” and will not be covered, if excluded, for any reason. Some services requiring preauthorization may not be approved for payment (for example, due to being experimental, investigational, unproven, or not medically necessary). The complete list of services requiring preauthorization is subject to review and change by BCBSNM.

It is strongly recommended that you request a predetermination for benefits for high-cost services in order to reduce the likelihood of benefits being denied after charges are incurred.

**Preauthorization of Mental Health/Chemical Dependency Services**

All inpatient mental health and chemical dependency services must be preauthorized by the BCBSNM Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) at the phone number listed on the back of your ID card. Preauthorization is also required for outpatient psychological testing, neuropsychological testing, intensive outpatient program (IOP) treatment, and
electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) for treatment of mental disorder and/or chemical dependency. Preauthorization is not required for outpatient/office group, individual, or family therapy visits to a physician or other professional provider licensed to perform covered services under this health plan.

For services needing preauthorization, you or your health care provider should call the BHU before you schedule treatment. **NOTE:** Your provider may be asked to submit clinical information in order to obtain preauthorization for the services you are planning to receive. Services may be authorized or may be denied based on the clinical information received. (Clinical information is information based on actual observation and treatment of a particular patient.)

If you or your provider do not call for preauthorization of nonemergency inpatient services, benefits for covered, medically necessary inpatient facility care may be reduced by an amount that is equal to the preauthorization (or admission review) penalty, if any, indicated for medical/surgical admissions. If inpatient services received without preauthorization are determined to be not medically necessary or not eligible for coverage under your Plan for any other reason, the admission and all related services will be denied. In such cases, you may be responsible for all charges.

If preauthorization is not obtained before you receive outpatient services, your claims may be denied as being not medically necessary. In such cases, you may be responsible for all charges. Therefore, you should make sure that you (or your provider) have obtained preauthorization for outpatient services before you start treatment.

Use the chart below to determine the appropriate contact for your situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Contact Information for Preauthorization, Customer Service, Claim Submission, and Appeal (or Reconsideration) Processes for Medical/Surgical and Behavioral Health Services:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process:</strong> Request preauthorization</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Process:</strong> Customer Service Inquiry</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Process:</strong> Submit claim (post-service)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Process:</strong> Request appeal or reconsideration of claim or preauthorization decision</td>
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**ADVANCE BENEFIT INFORMATION/PREDETERMINATION**

If you want to know what benefits will be paid before receiving services or filing a claim, BCBSNM may require a written request. BCBSNM may also require a written statement from the provider identifying the circumstances of the case and the specific services that will be provided. An advance confirmation/predetermination of benefits **does not guarantee** benefits if the actual circumstances of the case differ from those originally described. When submitted, claims are reviewed according to the terms of this benefit booklet, your eligibility, or any other coverage that applies on the date of service.
UTILIZATION REVIEW/QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Medical records, claims, and requests for covered services may be reviewed to establish that the services are/were medically necessary, delivered in the appropriate setting, and consistent with the condition reported and with generally accepted standards of medical and surgical practice in the area where performed and according to the findings and opinions of BCBSNM’s professional consultants. Utilization management decisions are based only on appropriateness of care and service. BCBSNM does not reward providers or other individuals conducting utilization review for denying coverage or services and does not offer incentives to utilization review decision-makers to encourage underutilization.
SECTION 5: COVERED SERVICES

This section describes the services and supplies covered by this health care plan, subject to the limitations and exclusions in Section 3: How Your Plan Works and Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions. All payments are based on covered charges as determined by BCBSNM. To be covered, services must be medically necessary. Services of a nonparticipating provider are covered only in an emergency or if preauthorization is given by BCBSNM.

MEDICALLY NECESSARY SERVICES

A service or supply is medically necessary when it is provided to diagnose or treat a covered medical condition, is a service or supply that is covered under this Plan, and is determined by BCBSNM's medical director (in consultation with your provider) to meet all of the following conditions:

- it is medical in nature;
- it is recommended by the treating physician;
- it is the most appropriate supply or level of service, taking into consideration:
  - potential benefits;
  - potential harms;
  - cost, when choosing between alternatives that are equally effective; and
  - cost effectiveness, when compared to the alternative services or supplies;
- it is known to be effective in improving health outcomes as determined by credible scientific evidence published in the peer-reviewed medical literature (for established services or supplies, professional standards and expert opinion may also be taken into account); and
- it is not for the convenience of the member, the treating physician, the hospital, or any other health care provider.

All services must be eligible for benefits as described in this section, not listed as an exclusion and must meet all of the conditions of “medically necessary” as defined above in order to be covered.

Note: Because a health care provider prescribes, orders, recommends, or approves a service does not make it medically necessary or make it a covered service, even if it is not specifically listed as an exclusion.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

This Plan covers ambulance services in an emergency (e.g., cardiac arrest, stroke). When you cannot be safely transported within the BCBSNM service area by any other means in a nonemergency situation, this Plan also covers medically necessary ambulance transportation to a hospital with appropriate facilities, or from one hospital to another.

Outside the Service Area

Ambulance services are covered only in an emergency. See “Emergency and Urgent Care” for details on obtaining emergency care.

Air Ambulance

Ground ambulance is usually the approved method of transportation. This Plan covers air ambulance only when terrain, distance, or your physical condition requires the use of air ambulance services or for high-risk maternity and newborn transport to tertiary care facilities. To be covered, nonemergency air ambulance services require preauthorization from BCBSNM.

Exclusions

This Plan does not cover:

- commercial transport, private aviation, or air taxi services
• services not specifically listed as covered, such as private automobile, public transportation, or wheelchair ambulance
• services ordered only because other transportation was not available, or for your convenience

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

For a member 19 years old or younger (or, if enrolled in high school, 22 years old or younger), this Plan covers the habilitative and rehabilitative treatment of autism spectrum disorder through speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and applied behavioral analysis (ABA). Providers must be credentialed to provide such therapy.

Treatment must be prescribed by the member’s treating physician in accordance with a treatment plan. The treatment plan must be preauthorized by BCBSNM; if services are received but were not approved as part of the treatment plan, benefits for services will be denied. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements. Once maximum functionality has been reached and no additional improvement is expected, no therapies are covered unless required to maintain that member’s current functionality (that is, in the absence of additional treatment, the patient would suffer a setback). No benefits are available for any treatments not shown to be habilitative or rehabilitative.

Benefits for all Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services for the treatment of autism spectrum disorder are limited for each eligible BCBSNM-insured person to $36,000 per calendar year and to $200,000 in total lifetime benefits. Once the annual maximum for ABA is reached, no more benefits for ABA are provided until the next year. Once a lifetime maximum is reached, no more benefits for ABA are provided for that BCBSNM member.

Changing from one plan to another, reinstating prior BCBSNM coverage, changing employers, changing policyholder or subscriber, or moving from individual coverage to group coverage or vice versa does not reinstate ABA benefits once an annual or lifetime maximum is reached for a particular insured member. All amounts payable under this provision are tracked at the member level regardless of the policy number under which charges accrued. For example, if a member is covered under two BCBSNM policies, the maximum annual benefit and the maximum lifetime benefit is not doubled for that member. Regardless of the number of policies under which the member is covered, benefits will not exceed the per member annual and lifetime maximum benefits mandated by law.

Services are subject to usual member cost-sharing features such as deductible, coinsurance, copayments, and out-of-pocket limits - based on place of treatment and type of service. All services are subject to the General Limitations and Exclusions except where explicitly mentioned as being an exception. This benefit is subject to the other general provisions of the health plan, including but not limited to: coordination of benefits, participating provider agreements, restrictions on health care services, including review of medical necessity, case management, and other managed care provisions.

Regardless of the type of therapy received, claims for services related to autism spectrum disorder should be mailed to BCBSNM - not to the behavioral health services administrator.

Exclusions

This Plan does not cover:

• any experimental, long-term, or maintenance treatments not required under state law
• medically unnecessary or nonhabilitative services under any circumstance
• any services received under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and related state laws that place responsibility on state and local school boards for providing specialized education and related services to children 3 to 22 years old who have autism spectrum disorder
• treatment plan that has not been preauthorized by BCBSNM
• respite services or care
• Sensory Integration Therapy (SIT) or Auditory Integration Therapy (AIT)
• music therapy, vision therapy, or touch or massage therapy
• floor time
• facilitated communication
• elimination diets; nutritional supplements; intravenous immune globulin infusion; secretin infusion
• chelation therapy
• hippotherapy, animal therapy, or art therapy

DENTAL-RELATED SERVICES AND ORAL SURGERY

The following services are the only dental-related services and oral surgery procedures covered under this Plan. When alternative procedures or devices are available, benefits are based upon the most cost-effective, medically appropriate procedure or device available.

Dental and Facial Accidents

Benefits for covered services for the treatment of accidental injuries to the jaw, mouth, face or sound natural teeth are generally subject to the same limitations, exclusions and member cost-sharing provisions that would apply to similar services when not dental-related (e.g., x-rays, medical supplies, surgical services).

To be covered, initial treatment for the accidental injury must be sought within 72 hours of the accident and be associated with the initial accident in order to be covered. (For treatment of TMJ or CMJ injuries, see “TMJ/CMJ Services.”)

Facility Charges and General Anesthesia for Dental-Related Services

This Plan covers inpatient or outpatient hospital expenses (including ambulatory surgical centers) and hospital and physician charges for the administration of general anesthesia for noncovered, medically necessary dental-related services if the patient requires hospitalization for one of the following reasons:

• Because of the patient’s physical, intellectual or medical condition(s), local anesthesia is not the best choice.
• Local anesthesia is ineffective because of acute infection, anatomic variation, or allergy to local anesthesia.
• The patient is a member age 19 or younger who is extremely uncooperative, fearful or uncommunicative; his/her dental needs are too significant to be postponed; and lack of treatment would be detrimental to the child’s dental health.
• Because oral-facial or dental trauma is so extensive, local anesthesia would be ineffective.
• There is a medically necessary dental procedure - not excluded by any general limitation or exclusion listed in this benefit booklet such as for work-related, pre-existing condition or cosmetic services, etc. - that requires the patient to undergo general anesthesia or be hospitalized.

All hospital covered services for dental procedures must be preauthorized by BCBSNM. Note: Unless listed as a covered service in this section, the dentist’s services for the procedure will not be covered. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Reminder: If hospital covered services are recommended by a nonpreferred (out-of-network) provider, you are responsible for assuring that your provider obtains preauthorization for outpatient covered services or benefits may be reduced or denied. (See Section 4: Preauthorizations.)

Oral Surgery

This Plan covers the following oral surgical procedures only:

• medically necessary orthognathic surgery
• external or intraoral cutting and draining of cellulitis (not including treatment of dental-related abscesses)
• incision of accessory sinuses, salivary glands or ducts
• lingual frenectomy
• removal or biopsy of tumors or cysts of the jaws, cheeks, lips, tongue, roof or floor of mouth when pathological examination is required
TMJ/CMJ Services
This Plan covers standard diagnostic, therapeutic, surgical and nonsurgical treatments of temporomandibular joint (TMJ) and craniomandibular joint (CMJ) disorders or accidental injuries. Treatment may include orthodontic appliances and treatment, crowns, bridges, or dentures only if required because of an accidental injury to sound natural teeth involving the temporomandibular or craniomandibular joint.

Exclusions
This Plan does not cover oral or dental procedures not specifically listed as covered, such as, but not limited to:

- surgeon’s or dentist’s charges for noncovered dental services
- hospitalization or general anesthesia for the patient’s or provider’s convenience
- any service related to a dental procedure that is not medically necessary
- any service related to a dental procedure that is excluded under this Plan for reasons other than being dental-related, even if hospitalization and/or general anesthesia is medically necessary for the procedure being received (e.g., cosmetic procedures, experimental procedures, services received after coverage termination, services related to pre-existing conditions, work-related injuries, etc.)
- nonstandard services (diagnostic, therapeutic, or surgical)
- removal of tori, exostoses, or impacted teeth
- dental-related services that may be related to, or required as the result of, a medical condition or procedure (e.g., chemotherapy or radiation therapy)
- procedures involving orthodontic care, the teeth, dental implants, periodontal disease, noncovered services, or preparing the mouth for dentures
- duplicate or “spare” appliances
- personalized restorations, cosmetic replacement of serviceable restorations, or materials (such as precious metals) that are more expensive than necessary to restore damaged teeth
- dental treatment or surgery, such as extraction of teeth or application or cost of devices or splints, unless required due to an accidental injury and covered under “Dental and Facial Accidents” or “TMJ/CMJ Services”
- dentures, artificial devices and/or bone grafts for denture wear, including implants

DIABETIC SERVICES
Diabetic persons are entitled to the same benefits for medically necessary covered services as are other members under the health care plan. For special coverage details, such as for insulin, glucose monitors and educational services, refer to the applicable provisions as noted below. Note: This Plan will also cover items not specifically listed as covered when new and improved equipment, appliances and prescription drugs for the treatment and management of diabetes are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

For insulin and over-the-counter diabetic supplies, including glucose meters, see your separately issued Drug Plan Rider.

For durable medical equipment, see “Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics.”

For educational services and diabetes management services, see “Physician Visits/Medical Care.”

EMERGENCY CARE AND URGENT CARE
Acute medical emergency care is available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. If services are received in an emergency room or other trauma center, the condition must meet the definition of an “emergency” in order to be covered.

Emergency Care
This Plan covers medical or surgical procedures, treatments, or services delivered after the sudden onset of what reasonably appears to be a medical condition with symptoms of sufficient severity, including severe pain, that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected by a reasonable layperson to result in
jeopardy to his/her health; serious impairment of bodily functions; serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part, or disfigurement. (In addition, services must be received in an emergency room, trauma center, or ambulance to qualify as an emergency.) Examples of emergency conditions include, but are not limited to: heart attack or suspected heart attack, coma, loss of respiration, stroke, acute appendicitis, severe allergic reaction, or poisoning.

For accidental injury to the mouth, jaw, teeth, or TMJ, see “Dental-Related Services and Oral Surgery.”

**Emergency Room and Ambulance Services**

Use of an emergency center for nonemergency care is NOT covered. However, services will not be denied if you, in good faith and possessing average knowledge of health and medicine, seek care for what reasonably appears to be an emergency — even if your condition is later determined to be nonemergency.

You do not need BCBSNM authorization before seeking emergency room or emergency ambulance services from either an HMO-participating or a nonparticipating provider. Nonparticipating provider care received without a preauthorization in any other setting (e.g., physician’s office or urgent care center) will not be covered. (See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.) Emergency room and ambulance services for a condition that meets the definition of “emergency care” will be covered within the limits of the health care plan. Services for conditions that do not meet the definition of “emergency care” and have not been preauthorized will not be covered.

**What to Do**

In an emergency:

- If cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is necessary or if there is an immediate threat to life or limb, call 911.
- If you do not call 911, and you are:
  - In the service area (i.e., New Mexico): Either call your PCP or go directly to an HMO-participating hospital. If due to the severity of the medical problem, you are unable to reach an HMO-participating hospital, go to the nearest medical facility or trauma center.
  - Outside the service area: Go to the nearest medical facility or trauma center.

**Emergency Notification**

You do not need BCBSNM authorization before seeking emergency room services or being hospitalized as an inpatient from the emergency room for emergency care. However, you should call BCBSNM for preauthorization of nonparticipating facility services or in order to notify BCBSNM of any emergency inpatient admission as soon as reasonably possible. Such services, when received without preauthorization, may be reviewed for medical necessity/appropriateness and you may be responsible for all charges.

**Follow-Up Care**

Once you are discharged from the emergency room or inpatient setting, follow-up care from a nonparticipating provider must be preauthorized by BCBSNM in order to be covered. You should notify your PCP and/or BCBSNM as soon as possible after receiving the emergency room care or of being admitted as an inpatient in order to arrange for follow-up care.

**Filing Claims for Services of a Nonparticipating Provider**

When you receive the itemized bill from the hospital or emergency room physician, send it to BCBSNM or the local BCBS Plan in the state where services were received. See Section 8 for more information on filing claims.

**Urgent Care**

The urgent care copayment will apply to care received in an urgent care facility (including hospital-based urgent care centers). Covered services received in an emergency room or other trauma center are subject to the emergency room copayment and your condition must meet the definition of “emergency care” in order to be covered.
Urgent Care Center Copayments

When you visit an HMO-participating urgent care facility, you pay a copayment for the covered visit. If you visit a nonparticipating urgent care facility, services will not be covered unless such services meet one of the criteria listed in Section 3: How Your Plan Works as being eligible for a “benefit exception” for nonparticipating providers.

If you need urgent care, you have the choice of taking any of the following steps to receive care:

- Call your PCP and request an immediate appointment (if available).
- Visit the nearest BCBSNM HMO-participating urgent care center.
- If there is not a BCBSNM HMO-participating center nearby, call your PCP and ask for BCBSNM preauthorization to visit another facility or other appropriate provider. If you do not receive preauthorization before receiving treatment from a nonparticipating provider, you are responsible for the entire cost of the service. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.
- If you are away from home and need urgent care, call a Customer Service Advocate, who will connect you with the BlueCard Program. If you prefer, you may contact a BlueCard representative directly at 1-800-810-BLUE (2583). The BlueCard representative will give you the name and telephone number of a local provider who will be able to call BCBSNM Customer Service for eligibility information and will submit a claim to the local affiliated HMO Plan. You will also need to call your PCP and have him/her call BCBSNM for preauthorization to visit an out-of-network provider. Urgent care and follow-up care from providers who do not participate with BCBSNM must always be preauthorized by BCBSNM. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Exclusions

This Plan does not cover:

- the follow-up care received outside the service area as a result of an emergency or an urgent condition, if you could have returned to the service area to receive care without medically harmful results
- services received outside the service area if you could have foreseen the need for this care before leaving the service area
- urgent care or follow-up care received from a nonparticipating provider if it is not authorized in advance by BCBSNM

HEARING AIDS/RELATED SERVICES FOR CHILDREN UNDER AGE 21

This Plan covers the cost of hearing aids, the fitting and dispensing fees for hearing aids and ear molds, up to a maximum amount of $2,200 per hearing impaired ear every 36 months for members under 21 years old. This 36-month benefit period begins on the date the first covered hearing aid-related service is received and payable under this provision and ends 36 months later. The next benefit period for the impaired ear begins 36 months after the first hearing aid-related service (e.g., fitting cost, ear mold, etc.) OR on the date the next hearing aid-related service for that ear, whichever length of time is greater.

Benefits for hearing aid-related services payable under this provision are not subject to any copayment amount. Benefits for hearing aid-related services will be provided at 100 percent of the covered charges. (Other covered services, such as hearing examinations and audiometric testing related to a hearing aid need for members under 21 years old are subject to the usual plan copayment provisions for office services and diagnostic testing. Benefits for these additional services are not applied to the 36-month maximum benefit available for hearing aids.) Routine hearing examinations and related services are not covered for members age 21 and older.

HOME HEALTH CARE/HOME I.V. SERVICES

For oxygen, ostomy supplies and medical equipment, see “Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics.”
Conditions and Limitations of Coverage

If you are homebound (unable to receive medical care on an outpatient basis), this Plan covers home health care services and home I.V. services provided under the direction of a physician. Nursing management must be through a home health care agency approved by BCBSNM. A visit is one period of home health service of up to four hours.

Preauthorization Required

Before you receive home I.V. therapy, your physician or home health care agency must obtain preauthorization from BCBSNM. **This Plan does not cover home I.V. services without preauthorization.** See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Covered Services

This Plan covers the following services, subject to the limitations and conditions above, when provided by an approved home health care agency during a covered visit in your home:

- skilled nursing care provided on an intermittent basis by a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse
- physical, occupational, or respiratory therapy provided by licensed or certified physical, occupational, or respiratory therapists
- speech therapy provided by a speech pathologist or an American Speech and Hearing Association certified therapist
- intravenous medications and other prescription drugs ordinarily not available through a retail pharmacy if preauthorization is received from BCBSNM (If drugs are not provided by the home health care agency, see your separately issued Drug Plan Rider.) See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.
- drugs, medicines, or laboratory services that would have been covered during an inpatient admission
- enteral nutritional supplies (e.g., bags, tubing) (For enteral nutritional formulas, see your separately issued Drug Plan Rider.)
- medical supplies
- skilled services by a qualified aide to do such things as change dressings and check blood pressure, pulse, and temperature

Exclusions

This Plan does not cover:

- care provided primarily for your or your family’s convenience
- homemaking services or care that consists mostly of bathing, feeding, exercising, preparing meals for, moving, giving medications to, or acting as a sitter for the patient (See the “Custodial Care” exclusion in *Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions*.)
- services provided by a nurse who ordinarily resides in your home or is a member of your immediate family
- private duty nursing

HOSPICE CARE SERVICES

Conditions and Limitations

This Plan covers inpatient and home hospice services for a terminally ill member received during a hospice benefit period when provided by a hospice program approved by BCBSNM. If you need an extension of the hospice benefit period, the hospice agency must provide a new treatment plan and the attending physician must recertify your condition to BCBSNM. (See definition of a hospice benefit period in *Section 10* for more information.)

Covered Services

This Plan covers the following services, subject to the conditions and limitations under the hospice care benefit:
• visits from hospice physicians
• skilled nursing care by a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse
• physical and occupational therapy by licensed or certified physical or occupational therapists
• speech therapy provided by an American Speech and Hearing Association certified therapist
• medical supplies (If supplies are not provided by the hospice agency, see “Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics.”)
• drugs and medications for the terminally ill patient (If drugs are not provided by the hospice agency, see your separately issued Drug Plan Rider.)
• medical social services provided by a qualified individual with a degree in social work, psychology, or counseling, or the documented equivalent in a combination of education, training and experience (Such services must be recommended by a physician to help the member or his/her family deal with a specified medical condition.)
• services of a home health aide under the supervision of a registered nurse and in conjunction with skilled nursing care
• nutritional guidance and support, such as intravenous feeding and hyperalimentation
• respite care for a period not to exceed five continuous days for every 60 days of hospice care and no more than two respite care periods during each hospice benefit period (Respite care provides a brief break from total care-giving by the family.)

Exclusions
This Plan does not cover:
• food, housing, or delivered meals
• medical transportation
• homemaker and housekeeping services
• comfort items
• private duty nursing
• supportive services provided to the family of a terminally ill patient when the patient is not a member of this Plan
• care or services received after the member’s coverage terminates

HOSPITAL/OTHER FACILITY SERVICES
If applicable, see:
“Dental-Related Services and Oral Surgery”
“Emergency and Urgent Care”
“Hospice Care”
“Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care”
“Psychotherapy (Mental and Chemical Dependency)

For inpatient physician medical visits, see “Physician Visits/Medical Care.”

For physical rehabilitation and skilled nursing facility services, see “Short-Term Rehabilitation:Occupational, Physical, Speech Therapy (Inpatient and Outpatient, Including Skilled Nursing Facility.”

See other subheadings in this section that apply to the type of service required during an admission, such as, “Surgery and Related Services” or “Transplant Services.”
Blood Services
This Plan covers the processing, transporting, handling, and administration of blood and blood components. This Plan covers directed donor or autologous blood storage fees only when the blood is used during a scheduled surgical procedure. This Plan does not cover blood replaced through donor credit.

Inpatient Services
Preauthorization Required
To be covered, preauthorization from BCBSNM must be received for all inpatient admissions. Also, nonparticipating facility services are covered only for emergency care or if preauthorization for such services is received from BCBSNM. (You may be required to travel to another city to receive services from a participating facility.)

Covered Services
For acute inpatient medical or surgical care received during a covered hospital admission, this Plan covers room and board and other medically necessary services provided by the facility.

Medical Detoxification
This Plan also covers medically necessary services related to medical detoxification from the effects of alcohol or drug abuse. Detoxification is the treatment in an acute care facility for withdrawal from the physiological effects of alcohol or drug abuse, which usually takes about three days in an acute care facility. Benefits for detoxification services are the same as for any other acute medical/surgical condition. Preauthorization is required for all inpatient hospitalizations. See “Psychotherapy (Mental Health and Chemical Dependency)” for information about benefits for chemical dependency rehabilitation. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Exclusions
This Plan does not cover:

- admissions related to noncovered services or procedures (See “Dental-Related Services and Oral surgery” for an exception.)
- custodial care facility admissions
- transplants or related services when transplant is received at a facility that does not contract directly with a BCBSNM participating provider or through the national BCBS transplant network (See “Transplant Services” for more information.)

Outpatient or Observation Services
Coverage for outpatient or observation services and related physician or other professional provider services for the treatment of illness or accidental injury depends on the type of service received (for example, see “Lab, X-Ray, Other Diagnostic Services” or “Emergency and Urgent Care”). Observation and emergency room services are subject to the copayment listed on the Summary of Benefits. The copayment will be waived if you are admitted as an inpatient directly from the observation or emergency room; inpatient hospital benefit will apply.

LAB, X-RAY, OTHER DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES
For invasive diagnostic procedures such as biopsies and endoscopies or any procedure that requires the use of an operating or recovery room, see “Surgery and Related Services.”

This Plan covers diagnostic services, including but not limited to, preadmission testing, that are related to an illness or accidental injury. Covered services include:

- x-ray and radiology services, ultrasound, and imaging studies
- laboratory and pathology tests
- EKG, EEG, and other electronic diagnostic medical procedures
• genetic testing (Tests such as amniocentesis or ultrasound to determine the gender of an unborn child are not covered; see “Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care.”)
• infertility-related testing (See “Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care.”)
• PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scans, cardiac CT scans with preauthorization from BCBSNM
• MRIs
• psychological or neuropsychological testing with preauthorization from BCBSNM
• audiometric (hearing) and vision tests for the diagnosis and/or treatment of an accidental injury or an illness

Note: All services, including those for which preauthorization is required, must meet the standards of medical necessity criteria established by BCBSNM and will not be covered if excluded for any reason under this Plan. Some services requiring preauthorization will not be approved for payment. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.

MATERNITY/REPRODUCTIVE SERVICES AND NEWBORN CARE

Like benefits for other conditions, member cost-sharing amounts for pregnancy, family planning, infertility, and newborn care are based on the place of service and type of service received.

Family Planning and Infertility-Related Services

For oral contraceptive coverage and contraceptive devices purchased from a pharmacy, see your Drug Plan Rider.

Family Planning

Covered family planning services include FDA-approved devices and other procedures such as:
• family planning counseling and health education
• follow-up care for trouble you may have from using a birth control method that a family planning provider gave you
• birth control pills (covered under the drug plan provision)
• pregnancy testing and counseling
• injection of Depo-Provera for birth control purposes
• diaphragm, including fitting
• IUDs or cervical caps, including fitting, insertion, and removal
• surgical sterilization procedures such as vasectomies and tubal ligations

Infertility-Related Services

This Plan covers the following infertility-related treatments (Note: the following procedures only secondarily treat infertility):
• surgical treatments such as opening an obstructed fallopian tube, epididymis, or vas deferens when the obstruction is not the result of a surgical sterilization
• replacement of deficient, naturally occurring hormones if there is documented evidence of a deficiency of the hormone being replaced

The above services are the only infertility-related treatments that will be considered for benefit payment.

Diagnostic testing is covered only to diagnose the cause of infertility. Once the cause has been established and the treatment determined to be noncovered, no further testing is covered. For example, this Plan will cover lab tests to monitor hormone levels following the hormone replacement treatment listed as covered above. However, daily ultrasounds to monitor ova maturation are not covered since the testing is being used to monitor a noncovered infertility treatment.

Exclusions

In addition to services not listed as covered above, this Plan does not cover:
contraceptive devices that do not require a prescription, including over-the-counter contraceptive products such as condoms and spermicide

sterilization reversal for males or females

infertility treatments and related services, such as hormonal manipulation and excess hormones to increase the production of mature ova for fertilization

Gamete Intrafallopian Transfer (GIFT)

Zygote Intrafallopian Transfer (ZIFT)

cost of donor sperm

artificial conception or insemination; fertilization and/or growth of a fetus outside the mother’s body in an artificial environment, such as in-vivo or in-vitro (test tube) fertilization, and embryo transfer; drugs for induced ovulation; or other artificial methods of conception

**Pregnancy-Related/Maternity Services**

Like any other service, maternity care must be received from a PCP or other HMO-participating women’s health care provider. Therefore, once your pregnancy is confirmed, you may choose either your PCP or another HMO-participating women’s health care provider to provide maternity care and receive benefits for covered services. The provider is then responsible for notifying BCBSNM of any admissions. If you are pregnant, you or your physician should call BCBSNM for admission notification before your pregnancy due date, soon after your pregnancy is confirmed. BCBSNM must be notified if the mother’s stay is greater than 48 hours for a routine delivery or greater than 96 hours for a C-section delivery as soon as possible. If not notified, benefits for covered facility services may be reduced or denied. (If you are out-of-area and need emergency services, also notify BCBSNM, your PCP, or HMO-participating provider within 48 hours or as soon as possible.)

If there is no PCP or HMO-participating provider in your area able to provide maternity services, you or your provider may request authorization from BCBSNM to recommend you to a nonparticipating women’s health care provider.

If you are pregnant on the date you enroll and you are already seeing a provider, please call Customer Service so that BCBSNM can approve your visits to the provider if he/she is outside the HMO-participating provider network. If you are in your first or second trimester, in most cases you will be allowed to continue your care with that doctor for at least 30 days. If you are six or more months pregnant, you can continue seeing your doctor for the rest of your pregnancy.

**Covered Services**

Covered pregnancy-related services include:

- hospital or other facility charges for room and board and ancillary services, including the use of labor, delivery, and recovery rooms (This Plan covers all medically necessary hospitalization, including at least 48 hours of inpatient care following a vaginal delivery and 96 hours following a C-section delivery. **Note:** Newborns who are not eligible for coverage under this Plan will not be not be covered beyond the 48 or 96 hours required under federal law.)

- routine or complicated delivery, including prenatal and postnatal medical care of an obstetrician, certified nurse-midwife or licensed midwife (Expenses for prenatal and postnatal care are included in the total covered charge for the actual delivery or completion of pregnancy.) **Note:** Home births are not covered unless the provider has an HMO-participating provider contract with his/her local BCBS Plan and is credentialed to provide the service.

- pregnancy-related diagnostic tests, including genetic testing or counseling  (Services must be sought due to a family history of a gender-linked genetic disorder or to diagnose a possible congenital defect caused by a present, external factor that increases risk, such as advanced maternal age or alcohol abuse. For example, tests such as amniocentesis or ultrasound to determine the gender of an unborn child are **not** covered.)

- necessary anesthesia services by a provider qualified to perform such services, including acupuncture used as an anesthetic during a covered surgical procedure and administered by a physician, a licensed doctor of oriental medicine, or other practitioner as required by law
• when necessary to protect the life of the infant or mother, coverage for transportation, including air transport, for the medically high-risk pregnant woman with an impending delivery of a potentially viable infant to the nearest available tertiary care facility for newly born infants (See “Ambulance Services” for details.)

• services of a physician who actively assists the operating surgeon in performing a covered surgical procedure when the procedure requires an assistant

• elective, spontaneous, or therapeutic termination of pregnancy prior to full term (Copayment will be based on the place of treatment at the time of pregnancy termination.)

This Plan does not cover care for normal deliveries or planned C-sections outside the BCBSNM service area, unless you made a reasonable effort to be in the service area during the six weeks preceding your anticipated delivery date or your PCP arranges out-of-area care for you by obtaining preauthorization from BCBSNM (which will direct you to a contracted provider in the area you will be visiting). See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Special Beginnings
This is a maternity program for BCBSNM members that is available whenever you need it. It can help you better understand and manage your pregnancy. To take full advantage of the program, you should enroll within three months of becoming pregnant. When you enroll, you will receive a questionnaire to find out if there may be any problems with your pregnancy to watch out for, information on nutrition, newborn care, and other topics helpful to new parents. You will also receive personal and private phone calls from an experienced nurse - all the way from pregnancy to six weeks after your child is born. To learn more, or to enroll, call toll-free at:

1-888-421-7781

Newborn Care
If you have Family coverage on the date a new eligible child is born, the initial newborn care for the child is covered. If you do not have coverage for your newborn on the date of birth, you must add coverage within 31 days of birth in order for any newborn charges, routine or otherwise, to be covered beyond the first 48 hours of birth (or 96 hours in the case of a C-section).

Newborn Eligibility
If you do not elect to add coverage for your newborn within 31 days, and wish to add the child to coverage later, the child is considered a late applicant unless eligible for a special enrollment. Note: If the parent of the newborn is a covered child of the subscriber (i.e., the newborn is the subscriber’s grandchild), services for the newborn are not covered except for the first 48 hours of routine newborn care (or 96 hours in the case of a C-section).

Routine Newborn Care
If both the mother’s charges and the baby’s charges are eligible for coverage under this Plan, no additional copayment for the newborn is required for the facility’s initial routine nursery care if the covered newborn is discharged on the same day as the mother.

Extended Stay Newborn Care
A newborn who is enrolled for coverage within the time limits specified in Section 2: Enrollment and Termination Information is also covered if he/she stays in the hospital longer than the mother.

If the pediatrician is a nonparticipating provider or you are in a nonparticipating hospital and services are eligible for coverage, you must ensure that BCBSNM is called before the mother is discharged from the hospital. If you do not, benefits for the newborn’s covered facility services may be reduced or denied. The baby’s services will be subject to a separate copayment and out-of-pocket limit.

PHYSICIAN VISITS/MEDICAL CARE
This section describes benefits for therapeutic injections, allergy care and testing, and other nonsurgical, nonroutine medical visits to a health care provider for evaluating your condition and planning a course of treatment. See specific topics referenced in this section for more information regarding a particular type of service (e.g., “Preventive Services,” “Transplant Services,” etc.).
This Plan covers medically necessary care provided by a physician or other professional provider for an illness or accidental injury.

**Office Visits and Consultations**
Services covered under this provision include allergy care, therapeutic injections, office visits, consultations (including second or third surgical opinions) and examinations, and other nonroutine office medical procedures — when not related to hospice care or payable as part of a surgical procedure. (See “Hospice Care” or “Surgery and Related Services” if the medical visits are related to either of these services.)

**Allergy Care**
This Plan covers direct skin (percutaneous and intradermal) and patch allergy tests, radioallergosorbent testing (RAST), allergy serum, and appropriate FDA-approved allergy injections administered in a provider’s office or in a facility.

**Diabetes Self-Management Education**
This Plan covers diabetes self-management training if you have diabetes or an elevated blood glucose due to pregnancy. Training must be prescribed by a health care provider and given by a certified, registered, or licensed health care professional with recent education in diabetes management. Covered services are limited to:

- medically necessary visits upon the diagnosis of diabetes
- visits following a physician diagnosis that represents a significant change in your symptoms or condition that warrants changes in your self-management
- visits when re-education or refresher training is prescribed by a health care provider
- medical nutrition therapy related to diabetes management

See your separately issued *Drug Plan Rider* for benefits for insulin and oral agents to control blood glucose levels, glucose meters, needles, syringes, and test strips; see “Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics” for other covered supplies and equipment required due to diabetes.

**Genetic Inborn Errors of Metabolism**
This Plan covers medically necessary expenses related to the diagnosis, monitoring and control of genetic inborn errors of metabolism as defined in Section 10: Definitions. Covered services include medical assessment, including clinical services, biochemical analysis, medical supplies, prescription drugs (see your *Drug Plan Rider*), corrective lenses for conditions related to the genetic inborn error of metabolism, nutritional management and preauthorized special medical foods (as defined and described in your *Drug Plan Rider*). In order to be covered, services cannot be excluded under any other provision of this benefit booklet and are paid according to the provisions of the Plan that apply to that particular type of service (e.g., special medical foods are covered under your *Drug Plan Rider*, medical assessments under “Physician Visits/Medical Care” and corrective lenses under “Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics”).

To be covered, the member must be receiving medical treatment provided by licensed health care professionals, including physicians, dieticians and nutritionists, who have specific training in managing patients diagnosed with genetic inborn errors of metabolism. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.

**Injections and Injectable Drugs**
This Plan covers most FDA-approved therapeutic injections administered in a provider’s office. However, this Plan covers some injectable drugs only when preauthorization is received from BCBSNM. Your BCBSNM-contracted provider has a list of those injectable drugs that require preauthorization. If you need a copy of the list, call a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate. (When you request preauthorization, you may be directed to purchase the self-injectable medication through your drug plan.) See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.
BCBSNM reserves the right to exclude any injectable drug currently being used by a member. Proposed new uses for injectable drugs previously approved by the FDA will be evaluated on a medication-by-medication basis. Call a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate if you have any questions about this policy.

**Mental Health Evaluation Services**

This Plan covers medication checks and intake evaluations for mental disorders, alcohol, and drug abuse the BHU. See “Psychotherapy (Mental Health and Chemical Dependency)” for psychotherapy and other therapeutic service benefits.

**Inpatient Medical Visits**

With the exception of dental-related services (see “Dental-Related Services and Oral Surgery”), this Plan covers the following services when received on a covered inpatient hospital day:

- visits for a condition requiring **only** medical care, unless related to hospice care (See “Hospice Care Services.”)
- consultations (including second opinions) and, if surgery is performed, inpatient visits by a provider who is not the surgeon and who provides medical care **not** related to the surgery (For the surgeon’s services, see “Surgery and Related Services” or “Transplant Services.”)
- medical care requiring **two or more** physicians at the same time because of multiple illnesses
- initial routine newborn care for a newborn added to coverage within the time limits specified in Section 2: Enrollment and Termination Information (See “Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care” for details and for extended stay benefits.)

**PREVENTIVE SERVICES**

Claims filed under this provision must clearly show that the office visit and tests were for routine or preventive care.

The services listed under this provision are not limited as to the number of times you may receive the service in any given period or as to the age of the patient (except when a service is inappropriate for the patient’s age group, such as providing a pediatric immunization to an adult). You and your physician are encouraged to determine how often and at what time you should receive preventive tests and examinations and you will receive coverage according to the benefits and limitations of your health care plan.

This Plan covers the following preventive services, not subject to coinsurance, deductible, copayment, or benefit maximums when received from an in-network provider (out-of-network services are subject to the usual out-of-network deductible, coinsurance, and out-of-pocket limit):

a. evidence-based items or services that have in effect a rating of “A” or “B” in the current recommendations of the United States Preventive Services Task Force (“USPSTF”);

b. immunizations for routine use that have in effect a recommendation by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) with respect to the individual involved;

c. evidence-informed preventive care and screenings provided for in the comprehensive guidelines supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (“HRSA”) for infants, children, and adolescents;

d. with respect to women, to the extent not described in item “a” above, evidence-informed preventive care and screenings provided for in comprehensive guidelines supported by the HRSA.

For purposes of item “a” above, the current recommendations of the USPSTF regarding breast cancer screening mammography and prevention issued in or around November 2009 are not considered to be current.

The preventive services described in items “a” through “d” above may change as USPSTF, CDC, and HRSA guidelines are modified. For more information, you may visit the BCBSNM website at www.bcbsnm.com or contact Customer Service at the toll-free number on your BCBSNM health plan identification card.
Covered preventive services not described in items “a” through “d” above may be subject to copayments, and/or dollar maximums. Allergy injections are not considered immunizations under the “Preventive Services” benefit. Examples of covered services include, but are not limited to:

- routine physical, breast, and pelvic examinations
- routine adult and pediatric immunizations
- an annual routine gynecological or pelvic examination and low-dose mammogram screenings
- papilloma virus screening and cytologic screening (a Pap test or liquid-based cervical cytopathology)
- human papillomavirus vaccine (HPV) for members ages 9 - 26 years old
- periodic blood hemoglobin, blood pressure and blood glucose level tests
- periodic colorectal screening tests
- periodic blood cholesterol or periodic fractionated cholesterol level including a low-density lipoprotein (LDL) and a high-density lipoprotein (HDL) level; periodic stool examination for the presence of blood
- periodic left-sided colon examination of 35 to 60 centimeters or colonoscopy
- well-child care, including well-baby and well-child screening for diagnosing the presence of autism spectrum disorder (This routine service is not limited by the annual and lifetime maximum benefits for applied behavioral analysis; see “Autism Spectrum Disorders” for additional covered services.)
- periodic glaucoma eye tests
- vision and hearing screenings in order to detect the need for additional vision or hearing testing for members when received as part of a routine physical examination (A screening does not include an eye examination, refraction or other test to determine the amount and kind of correction needed.)
- health education and counseling services if recommended by your physician, including an annual consultation to discuss lifestyle behaviors that promote health and well-being, including smoking/tobacco use cessation counseling

**Exclusions**

This Plan does not cover:

- employment physicals, insurance examinations, or examinations at the request of a third party (the requesting party may be responsible for payment); premarital examinations; sports or camp physicals; any other nonpreventive physical examination
- immunizations or medications required for international travel
- hepatitis B immunizations when required due to possible exposure during the member’s work
- routine eye examinations; eye refractions; or any related service or supply
- routine hearing examinations; hearing aids; or any related service or supply, unless otherwise specified in this section (See “Hearing Aids/Related Services for Children Under Age 21.”)

**PSYCHOTHERAPY (MENTAL HEALTH AND CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY)**

**Note:** You do not receive a separate mental health/chemical dependency ID card; use your BCBSNM ID card to receive all medical/surgical and mental health/chemical dependency services covered under this Plan.

**Medical Necessity**

In order to be covered, treatment must be medically necessary and not experimental, investigational, or unproven. Therapy must be:

- required for the treatment of a distinct mental disorder as defined by the latest version of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* published by the American Psychiatric Association; and
- reasonably expected to result in significant and sustained improvement in your condition and daily functioning; and
• consistent with your symptoms, functional impairments and diagnoses and in keeping with generally accepted national and local standards of care; and
• provided to you at the least restrictive level of care.

Covered Services/Providers
Covered services include solution-focused evaluative and therapeutic mental health services (including individual and group psychotherapy) received in a psychiatric hospital, an IOP (intensive outpatient program), or an alcoholism treatment program that complies with applicable state laws and regulations, and services rendered by psychiatrists, licensed psychologists, and other providers as defined in Section 10: Definitions. See your BCBSNM Provider Directory for a list of HMO-participating providers or check the BCBSNM website at www.bcbsnm.com.

Preauthorization Requirements
All inpatient mental health and chemical dependency services must be preauthorized by the Behavioral Health Unit at the phone number listed on the back of your ID card. The BHU Call Center is open 24/7 to assist members and providers with emergency admission inquiries and to respond to crisis calls. Preauthorization is also required for outpatient psychological testing, neuropsychological testing, intensive outpatient program (IOP) treatment, and electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) for treatment of mental illness and/or chemical dependency. Preauthorization is not required for outpatient/office group, individual, or family therapy visits to a physician or other professional provider licensed to perform covered services under this health plan. You or your physician should call the Behavioral Health Unit before you schedule treatment. If you do not call before receiving nonemergency services, benefits for covered services may be denied as explained in the Admission Review section, earlier. In such cases, you may be responsible for all charges, so please ensure that you or your provider have received preauthorization for any services you plan to receive.

Exclusions
This Plan does not cover:

• psychoanalysis or psychotherapy that you may use as credit toward earning a degree or furthering your education
• services billed by a school, halfway house or group home, or their staff members; foster care, residential treatment centers, or behavior modification services
• long-term therapy or therapy for the treatment of chronic mental disorders or incurable conditions for which treatment produces minimal or temporary change of relief - except that medication management for chronic conditions is covered (Chronic conditions are conditions such as, but not limited to, autism, Down’s Syndrome and developmental delays.) See “Early Developmental Delay and Disability” in Section 8: Claims Payments and Appeals for reimbursement of certain services provided to eligible children by the Department of Health.
• maintenance therapy or care provided after you have reached your rehabilitative potential (See the “Long-Term or Maintenance Therapy” exclusion in the General Limitations and Exclusions section.)
• biofeedback, hypnotherapy, or behavior modification services
• religious or pastoral counseling
• custodial care (See the “Custodial Care” exclusion in Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions.)
• any care that is patient-elected and is not considered medically necessary
• care that is mandated by court order or as a legal alternative, and lacks clinical necessity as diagnosed by a licensed provider; services rendered as a condition of parole or probation
• special education, school testing and evaluations, counseling, therapy, or care for learning deficiencies or educational and developmental disorders; behavioral problems unless associated with manifest mental disorders or other disturbances (See “Early Developmental Delay and Disability” in Section 8: Claim Payments and Appeals for reimbursement of certain services provided to eligible children by the Department of Health.)
• non-national standard therapies, including those that are experimental as determined by the mental health professional practice
• the cost of any damages to a treatment facility

REHABILITATION AND OTHER THERAPY

When billed by a facility during a covered admission, therapy is covered in the same manner as the other ancillary services (see “Hospital/Other Facility Services”).

Acupuncture and Spinal Manipulation
This Plan covers acupuncture and osteopathic or spinal manipulation services (application of manual pressure or force to the spine) when administered by a licensed provider acting within the scope of licensure and when necessary for the treatment of a medical condition. Benefits for acupuncture and for spinal manipulation are limited as specified in the Summary of Benefits. Note: If your provider charges for other services in addition to acupuncture or manipulation, the other services will be covered according to the type of service being claimed. For example, physical therapy services from a provider on the same day as an acupuncture or manipulation service will apply toward the “Short-Term Rehabilitation” benefit.

Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation
This Plan covers outpatient cardiac rehabilitation programs provided within six months of a cardiac incident and outpatient pulmonary rehabilitation services.

Chemotherapy and Radiation Therapy
This Plan covers the treatment of malignant disease by standard chemotherapy and treatment of disease by radiation therapy.

Cancer Clinical Trials
If you are a participant in an approved cancer clinical trial, you may receive coverage for certain routine patient care costs incurred in the trial. The trial must be conducted as part of a scientific study of a new therapy or intervention for the prevention of reoccurrence, early detection, or treatment of cancer. The persons conducting the trial must provide BCBSNM with notice of when the member enters and leaves a qualified cancer clinical trial and must accept BCBSNM’s covered charges as payment in full (this includes the health care Plan’s payment plus your share of the covered charge).

The routine patient care costs that are covered must be the same services or treatments that would be covered if you were receiving standard cancer treatment. Benefits also include FDA-approved prescription drugs that are not paid for by the manufacturer, distributor, or supplier of the drug. (Member cost-sharing provisions described under your separately issued Drug Plan Rider will apply to these benefits.)

If benefits for services provided in the trial are denied, you may contact the Superintendent of Insurance for an expedited appeal.

Dialysis
This Plan covers the following services:

• renal dialysis (hemodialysis)
• continual ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD)
• apheresis and plasmapheresis
• the cost of equipment rentals and supplies for home dialysis
Short-Term Rehabilitation: Occupational, Physical, Speech Therapy (Inpatient and Outpatient, Including Skilled Nursing Facility)

Preauthorization Required
To be covered, all inpatient, short-term rehabilitation treatments, including skilled nursing facility and physical rehabilitation facility admissions, must receive preauthorization from BCBSNM. Services received without preauthorization will be denied. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Covered Services
This Plan covers the following short-term rehabilitation services when rendered for the medically necessary treatment of accidental injury or illness:

- occupational therapy performed by a licensed occupational therapist
- physical therapy performed by a physician, licensed physical therapist, or other professional provider licensed as a physical therapist (such as a doctor of oriental medicine)
- speech therapy, including audio diagnostic testing, performed by a properly accredited speech therapist for the treatment of communication impairment or swallowing disorders caused by disease, trauma, congenital anomaly, or a previous treatment or therapy
- inpatient physical rehabilitation and skilled nursing facility services when preauthorized by BCBSNM

Benefit Limits
Benefits are limited as specified in the Summary of Benefits. Note: Long-term therapy, maintenance therapy, and therapy for chronic conditions are not covered. This Plan covers short-term rehabilitation only.

Exclusions
This Plan does not cover:

- maintenance therapy or care provided after you have reached your rehabilitative potential except as required under New Mexico State law (Even if you have not reached your rehabilitative potential, this Plan does not cover services that exceed maximum benefit limits, if any. See “Autism Spectrum Disorders” in this Covered Services section and the “Long-Term and Maintenance Therapy” exclusion in Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions.)
- therapy for the treatment of chronic conditions such as, but not limited to, cerebral palsy or developmental delay, except as required by law and described in this Covered Services section under “Autism Spectrum Disorders” (See “Early Developmental Delay and Disability” in Section 8: Claim Payments and Appeals for reimbursement of certain services provided to eligible children by the Department of Health.)
- services provided at or by a health spa or fitness center, even if the service is provided by a licensed or registered provider
- therapeutic exercise equipment prescribed for home use (e.g., treadmill, weights)
- speech therapy for dysfunctions that self-correct over time; speech services that maintain function by using routine, repetitive, and reinforced procedures that are neither diagnostic or therapeutic; other speech services that can be carried out by the patient, the family, or caregiver/teacher
- herbs, homeopathic preparations, or nutritional supplements
- services of a massage therapist or rolfing

SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT AND PROSTHETICS
For contraceptive devices, see “Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care: Family Planning.”

For diabetic supplies such as needles, syringes, glucose meters, and test strips, see your separately issued Drug Plan Rider.
For supplies or equipment used during an inpatient or outpatient stay, see “Hospital/Other Facility Services.” (Supplies or equipment that are dispensed by a facility for use outside of the facility are subject to the provisions of this “Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics” section.)

To be covered, items must be medically necessary and ordered by a health care provider. If you have a question about durable medical equipment, medical supplies, prosthetics or appliances not listed, please call the BCBSNM Health Services Department.

**Diabetic Supplies and Equipment**

This Plan covers the following supplies and equipment for diabetic members and individuals with elevated glucose levels due to pregnancy (supplies are not to exceed a 30-day supply purchased during any 30-day period):

- injection aids, including those adaptable to meet the needs of the legally blind
- insulin pumps and insulin pump supplies
- blood glucose monitors, including those for the legally blind
- medically necessary podiatric appliances for prevention and treatment of foot complications associated with diabetes, including therapeutic molded or depth-inlay shoes, functional orthotics, custom molded inserts, replacement inserts, preventive devices, and shoe modifications

**Reminder:** For additional diabetic supply coverage, (e.g., insulin needle and syringes, autolet, glucose meters, test strips for glucose monitors, glucagon emergency kits), see your *Drug Plan Rider*.

**Note:** The Plan will also cover items not specifically listed as covered when new and improved equipment, appliances, and prescription drugs for the treatment and management of diabetes are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. This Plan will: 1) maintain an adequate formulary to provide these resources to individuals with diabetes; and 2) guarantee reimbursement or coverage for the equipment, appliances, prescription drugs, insulin, or medical supplies described in this benefit booklet and/or your *Drug Plan Rider* within the limits of this Plan.

**Durable Medical Equipment and Appliances**

This Plan covers the following items:

- orthopedic appliances
- replacement of items only when required because of wear (and the item cannot be repaired) or because of a change in your condition
- oxygen and oxygen equipment, wheelchairs, hospital beds, crutches, and other medically necessary durable medical equipment
- lens implants for aphakic patients (those with no lens in the eye) and soft lenses or sclera shells (white supporting tissue of eyeball)
- either one set of prescription eyeglasses or one set of contact lenses (whichever is appropriate for your medical needs) when needed to replace lenses absent at birth or lost through cataract or other intraocular surgery or ocular injury, to treat conditions related to genetic inborn errors of metabolism, or prescribed by a physician as the only treatment available for keratoconus (Duplicate glasses/lenses are not covered. Replacement is covered only if a physician or optometrist recommends a change in prescription due to a change in your medical condition.)
- cardiac pacemakers

This Plan covers the rental (or at the option of BCBSNM, the purchase of) durable medical equipment (including repairs to or replacement of such purchased items), when prescribed by a covered health care provider and required for therapeutic use.

**Medical Supplies**

This Plan covers the following medical supplies, not to exceed a 30-day supply purchased during any 30-day period, unless otherwise indicated:
• colostomy bags, catheters
• gastrostomy tubes
• hollister supplies
• tracheostomy kits, masks
• lamb’s wool or sheepskin pads
• ace bandages, elastic supports when billed by a physician or other provider during a covered office visit
• slings
• support hose prescribed by a physician for treatment of varicose veins (six pair per calendar year)

Orthotics and Prosthetic Devices
This Plan covers the following items when medically necessary and ordered by a provider:

• surgically implanted prosthetics or devices, including penile implants required as a result of illness or accidental injury
• externally attached prostheses to replace a limb or other body part lost after accidental injury or surgical removal; their fitting, adjustment, repairs and replacement
• replacement of prosthetics only when required because of wear (and the item cannot be repaired) or because of a change in your condition
• breast prosthetics when required as the result of a mastectomy and mastectomy bras, which are limited to four bras per calendar year
• functional orthotics only for patients having a locomotive problem or gait difficulty resulting from mechanical problems of the foot, ankle, or leg (A functional orthotic is used to control the function of the joints and prescribed by a physician or podiatrist.)
• orthotics (e.g., collars, braces, molds) prescribed by an eligible provider to protect, restore, or improve impaired body function

When alternative prosthetic devices are available, the allowance for a prosthesis will be based upon the most cost-effective item.

Exclusions
This Plan does not cover, regardless of therapeutic value, items such as, but not limited to:

• air conditioners, biofeedback equipment, humidifiers, purifiers, self-help devices, or whirlpools
• items that are primarily nonmedical in nature such as Jacuzzi units, hot tubs, exercise equipment, heating pads, hot water bottles, or diapers
• nonstandard or deluxe equipment, such as motor-driven wheelchairs, chairlifts or beds; external prosthetics that are suited for heavier physical activity such as fast walking, jogging, bicycling, or skiing
• repairs to items that you do not own
• comfort items such as bedboards, beds or mattresses of any kind, bathtub lifts, overbed tables, or telephone arms
• repair or rental costs that exceeds the purchase price of a new unit
• dental appliances (See “Dental-Related Services and Oral Surgery” for exceptions.)
• accommodative orthotics (deal with structural abnormalities of the foot, accommodate such abnormalities, and provide comfort, but do not alter function)
• orthopedic shoes, unless joined to braces (Diabetic members should refer to “Diabetic Supplies and Equipment” earlier in this section for information about covered podiatric equipment and orthopedic shoes.)
• equipment or supplies not ordered by a health care provider, including items used for comfort, convenience, or personal hygiene
• duplicate items; repairs to duplicate items; or the replacement of items because of loss, theft, or destruction
• stethoscopes or blood pressure monitors
• voice synthesizers or other communication devices
• eyeglasses or contact lenses or the costs related to prescribing or fitting of glasses or contact lenses, unless listed as covered; sunglasses, special tints, or other extra features for eyeglasses or contact lenses
• hearing aids or ear molds, fitting of hearing aids or ear molds, or related services or supplies for persons 21 or and older or, if under age 21, in excess of the maximum benefit described in this section (For surgically implanted devices for the profoundly hearing impaired, see “Surgery and Related Services” below.)
• syringes or needles for self-administering drugs (Coverage for insulin needles and syringes and other diabetic supplies not listed as covered in this section is described under your separately issued Drug Plan Rider.)
• items that can be purchased over-the-counter, including but not limited to dressings for wounds (i.e., bed sores) and burns, gauze, and bandages
• contraceptive devices that do not require a prescription, including over-the-counter contraceptive products such as condoms and spermicide (See “Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care: Family Planning” for devices requiring a prescription.)
• items not listed as covered

SURGERY AND RELATED SERVICES
For accidental injuries to the jaws, mouth, or teeth, oral surgery, or treatment of TMJ disorders or injuries, see “Dental-Related Services and Oral Surgery.”

See “Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care” for deliveries, C-sections, surgical sterilizations and limited infertility-related treatments or “Transplant Services,” if applicable.

To be covered, preauthorization from BCBSNM must be received for all inpatient surgical procedures. See “Preauthorizations” in Section 4 for details.

Surgeon’s Services
Covered services include surgeon’s charges for a covered surgical procedure.

Cochlear Implants
This Plan covers cochlear implantation of a hearing device (such as an electromagnetic bone conductor) to facilitate communication for the profoundly hearing impaired, including training to use the device.

Mastectomy Services
This Plan covers medically necessary hospitalization related to a covered mastectomy (including at least 48 hours of inpatient care following a mastectomy and 24 hours following a lymph node dissection).

This Plan also covers cosmetic breast surgery when received within 12 months of a mastectomy for breast cancer (unless a later surgical procedure is approved as medically appropriate by BCBSNM). Coverage is limited to:

• cosmetic surgery of the breast/nipple on which the mastectomy was performed, including tattooing procedures
• the initial surgery of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance
• prostheses and treatment of physical complications following the mastectomy, including treatment of lymphedema

This Plan does not cover subsequent procedures to correct unsatisfactory cosmetic results attained during the initial breast/nipple surgery or tattooing, or breast surgery.
Reconstructive Surgery
Reconstructive surgery improves or restores bodily function to the level experienced before the event that necessitated the surgery, or in the case of a congenital defect, to a level considered normal. Such surgeries may have a coincidental cosmetic effect. This Plan covers reconstructive surgery when required to correct a functional disorder caused by:

- an accidental injury
- a disease process or its treatment (For breast surgery following a mastectomy, see “Mastectomy Services,” above.)
- a functional congenital defect (any condition, present from birth, that is significantly different from the common form; for example, a cleft palate or certain heart defects)

Cosmetic procedures and procedures that are not medically necessary, including all services related to such procedures, will be denied.

Exclusions
This Plan does not cover:

- cosmetic or plastic surgery or procedures, such as breast augmentation, rhinoplasty, and surgical alteration of the eye that does not materially improve the physiological function of an organ or body part (unless covered under “Mastectomy Services”)
- procedures to correct cosmetically unsatisfactory surgical results or surgically induced scars
- refractive keratoplasty, including radial keratotomy, or any procedure to correct visual refractive defect
- unless required as part of medically necessary diabetic disease management, trimming of corns, calluses, toenails, or bunions (except surgical treatment such as capsular or bone surgery)
- sex change operations or complications arising from transsexual surgery
- subsequent surgical procedures needed because you did not comply with prescribed medical treatment or because of a complication from a previous noncovered procedure (such as a noncovered organ transplant, sex change operation or previous cosmetic surgery)
- obesity treatment, including the surgical treatment of morbid obesity
- the insertion of artificial organs, or services related to transplants not specifically listed as covered under “Transplant Services”
- standby services unless the procedure is identified by BCBSNM as requiring the services of an assistant surgeon and the standby physician actually assists

Anesthesia Services
This Plan covers necessary anesthesia services, including acupuncture used as an anesthetic, when administered during a covered surgical procedure by a physician, certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA), or other practitioner licensed to provide anesthesia.

Exclusions
This Plan does not cover local anesthesia. (Coverage for surgical procedures includes an allowance for local anesthesia because it is considered a routine part of the surgical procedure.)

Assistant Surgeon Services
Covered services include services of a professional provider who actively assists the operating surgeon in the performance of a covered surgical procedure when the procedure requires an assistant.

Exclusions
This Plan does not cover:

- services of an assistant only because the hospital or other facility requires such services
• services performed by a resident, intern, or other salaried employee or person paid by the hospital
• services of more than one assistant surgeon unless the procedure is identified by BCBSNM as requiring the services of more than one assistant surgeon

TRANSPLANT SERVICES

Preauthorization, requested in writing, must be obtained from BCBSNM before a pretransplant evaluation is scheduled. A pretransplant evaluation is not covered if preauthorization is not obtained from BCBSNM. If approved, a BCBSNM case manager will be assigned to you (the transplant recipient candidate) and must later be contacted with the results of the evaluation.

If you are approved as a transplant recipient candidate, you must ensure that preauthorization for the actual transplant is also received. None of the benefits described here are available unless you have this preauthorization. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Facility Must Be in Transplant Network

Benefits for covered services will be approved only when the transplant is performed at a facility that contracts with BCBSNM, another Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) Plan or the national BCBS transplant network, for the transplant being provided. Your BCBSNM case manager will assist your provider with information on the exclusive network of contracted facilities and required approvals. Call BCBSNM Health Services for information on these BCBSNM transplant programs.

Effect of Medicare Eligibility on Coverage

If you are now eligible for (or are anticipating receiving eligibility for) Medicare benefits, you are solely responsible for contacting Medicare to ensure that the transplant will be eligible for Medicare benefits.

Organ Procurement or Donor Expenses

If a transplant is covered, the surgical removal, storage, and transportation of an organ acquired from a cadaver is also covered. If there is a living donor that requires surgery to make an organ available for a covered transplant, coverage is available for expenses incurred by the donor for surgery, organ storage expenses, and inpatient follow-up care only.

This Plan does not cover donor expenses after the donor has been discharged from the transplant facility. Coverage for compatibility testing prior to organ procurement is limited to the testing of cadavers and, in the case of a live donor, to testing of the donor selected.

Bone Marrow, Cornea or Kidney

This Plan covers the following transplant procedures if preauthorization is received from BCBSNM (See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.):

• bone marrow transplant for a member with aplastic anemia, leukemia, severe combined immunodeficiency disease (SCID), or Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome, and other conditions determined by BCBSNM to be medically necessary and not experimental, investigational, or unproven
• cornea transplant
• kidney transplant

Heart, Heart-Lung, Liver, Lung, Pancreas-Kidney

This Plan covers transplant-related services for a heart, heart-lung, liver, lung or pancreas-kidney transplant. Services must be preauthorized in order to be covered. All other limitations, requirements, and exclusions of this “Transplant Services” provision apply to these transplant-related services. See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.

In addition to the general provisions of this “Transplant Services” section, the following benefits, limitations, and exclusions apply to the above-listed transplants for one year following the date of the actual transplant or
retransplant. After one year, usual benefits apply and the services must be covered under other provisions of the Plan in order to be considered for benefit payment.

**Recipient Travel and Per Diem Expenses**

If BCBSNM requires you (i.e., the transplant recipient) to temporarily relocate outside of your city of residence to receive a covered transplant, travel to the city where the transplant will be performed is covered. A standard per diem benefit ($50) will be allocated for lodging expenses for the recipient and one additional adult traveling with the transplant recipient. If the transplant recipient is an eligible child under the age of 18, benefits for travel and per diem expenses for **two adults** to accompany the child are available.

Travel expenses and standard per diem allowances are limited to a total combined lifetime maximum benefit of **$10,000** per transplant. Your case manager may approve travel and per diem lodging allowances based upon the total number of days of temporary relocation, up to the **$10,000** benefit maximum.

Travel expenses are **not** covered and per diem allowances are **not** paid if you choose to travel to receive a transplant for which travel is not considered medically necessary by the case manager or if the travel occurs **more than five days** before or **more than one year** following the transplant or retransplant date.

**Transplant Exclusions**

This Plan does **not** cover:

- transplant-related services for a transplant that did not receive ***preauthorization*** from BCBSNM (See Section 4: Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.)
- any transplant or organ-combination transplant not listed as covered
- implantation of artificial organs or devices (mechanical heart, unless covered under BCBSNM medical policy)
- nonhuman organ transplants
- care for complications of noncovered transplants or follow-up care related to such transplants
- services related to a transplant performed in a facility not contracted directly or indirectly with BCBSNM to provide the required transplant (except cornea, kidney, or bone marrow)
- expenses incurred by a member of this plan for the donation of an organ to another person
- drugs that are self-administered or for use while at home (These services may be covered under your separately issued Drug Plan Rider.)
- donor expenses after the donor has been discharged from the transplant facility
- lodging expenses in excess of the per diem allowance, if available, and food, beverage, or meal expenses
- travel or per diem expenses:
  - incurred **more than five days before** or **more than one year following** the date of transplantation
  - if the recipient’s case manager indicates that travel is not medically necessary
  - related to a cornea or kidney transplant
- moving expenses or other personal expenses (e.g., laundry or dry cleaning expenses; telephone calls; day care expenses; taxicab or bus fare; vehicle rental expenses; parking expenses; personal convenience items)
- expenses charged only because benefits are available under this provision (such as transportation received from a member of your family, or from any other person charging for transportation that does not ordinarily do so)
SECTION 6: GENERAL LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

These general limitations and exclusions apply to all services listed in this benefit booklet and your Drug Plan Rider. This Plan does not cover any service or supply not specifically listed as a covered service in this benefit booklet. If a service is not covered, then all services performed in conjunction with it are not covered.

This Plan will not cover any of the following services, supplies, situations, or related expenses:

— Before Effective Date of Coverage
  This Plan does not cover any service received, item purchased, prescription filled, or health care expense incurred before your effective date of coverage. If you are an inpatient when coverage either begins or ends, benefits for the admission will be available only for those covered services received on and after your effective date of coverage or those received before your termination date.

— Biofeedback
  This Plan does not cover services related to biofeedback.

— Blood Services
  This Plan does not cover directed donor or autologous blood storage fees when the blood is used during a nonscheduled surgical procedure. This Plan does not cover blood replaced through donor credit.

— Complications of Noncovered Services
  This Plan does not cover any services, treatments, or procedures required as the result of complications of a noncovered service, treatment, or procedure (e.g., due to a noncovered sex change operation, cosmetic surgery, transplant, or experimental procedure).

— Convalescent Care or Rest Cures
  This Plan does not cover convalescent care or rest cures.

— Cosmetic Services
  Cosmetic surgery is beautification or aesthetic surgery to improve an individual’s appearance by surgical alteration of a physical characteristic. This Plan does not cover cosmetic surgery, services, or procedures for psychiatric or psychological reasons, or to change family characteristics or conditions caused by aging. This Plan does not cover services related to or required as a result of a cosmetic service, procedure, surgery, or subsequent procedures to correct unsatisfactory cosmetic results attained during an initial surgery.

Examples of cosmetic procedures are: dermabrasion; revision of surgically induced scars; breast augmentation; rhinoplasty; surgical alteration of the eye; correction of proptosis or micrognathism; excision or reformation of sagging skin on any part of the body including, but not limited to, eyelids, face, neck, abdomen, arms, legs, or buttock; services performed in connection with the enlargement, reduction, implantation, or change in appearance of a portion of the body including, but not limited to, breast, face, lips, jaw, chin, nose, ears, or genitals; or any procedures that BCBSNM determines are not required to materially improve the physiological function of an organ or body part.

Exception: Cosmetic breast/nipple surgery required due to a mastectomy is covered as required by law. Also, reconstructive surgery, which may have a coincidental cosmetic effect, may be covered when required as the result of accidental injury, illness, or congenital defect. See “Surgery and Related Services” in Section 5: Covered Services for details.

— Custodial Care
  This Plan does not cover custodial care or care in a place that is primarily your residence when you do not require skilled nursing care. This Plan does not cover services to assist in activities of daily living (such as
sitter’s or homemaker’s services), or services not requiring the continuous attention of skilled medical or paramedical personnel, regardless of where they are furnished or by whom they were recommended.

— Dental-Related Services and Oral Surgery
In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, see “Dental-Related Services and Oral Surgery” in Section 5: Covered Services for additional exclusions.

— Domiciliary Care
This Plan does not cover domiciliary care or care provided in a residential institution, treatment center, halfway house, or school because your own home arrangements are not available or are unsuitable, and consisting chiefly of room and board, even if therapy is included.

— Duplicate (Double) Coverage
This Plan does not cover amounts already paid by other valid coverage or that would have been paid by Medicare as the primary carrier if you were entitled to Medicare, had applied for Medicare, and had claimed Medicare benefits. See Section 7: Coordination of Benefits and Reimbursement for more information. Also, if your prior coverage has an extension of benefits provision, this Plan will not cover charges incurred after your effective date of coverage under this Plan that are covered under the prior plan’s extension of benefits provision.

— Duplicate Testing
This Plan does not cover duplicative diagnostic testing or overreads of laboratory, pathology, or radiology tests.

— Experimental, Investigational, or Unproven Services
This Plan does not cover any treatment, procedure, facility, equipment, drug, device, or supply not accepted as standard medical practice (as defined) or those considered experimental, investigational, or unproven, unless for acupuncture rendered by a licensed doctor of oriental medicine or unless specifically listed as covered under “Autism Spectrum Disorders” or under “Cancer Clinical Trials” in Section 5: Covered Services and mandated by law. In addition, if federal or other government agency approval is required for use of any items and such approval was not granted when services were administered, the service is experimental and will not be covered. To be considered experimental, investigational, or unproven, one or more of the following conditions must be met:

- The device, drug, or medicine cannot be marketed lawfully without approval of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and approval for marketing has not been given at the time the device, drug, or medicine is furnished.
- Reliable evidence shows that the treatment, device, drug, or medicine is the subject of ongoing phase I, II, or III clinical trials or under study to determine its maximum tolerated dose, its toxicity, its safety, or its efficacy as compared with the standard means of treatment or diagnosis.
- Reliable evidence shows that the consensus of opinion among experts regarding the treatment, procedure, device, drug, or medicine is that further studies or clinical trials are necessary to determine its maximum tolerated dose, its toxicity, its efficacy, its safety, or its efficacy as compared with the standard means of treatment or diagnosis.

The guidelines and practices of Medicare, the FDA, or other government programs or agencies may be considered in a determination; however, approval by other bodies will neither constitute nor necessitate approval by BCBSNM.

Reliable evidence means only published reports and articles in authoritative peer-reviewed medical and scientific literature; the written protocol or protocols used by the treating facility, or the protocol(s) of another facility studying substantially the same medical treatment, procedure, device, or drug; or the written informed consent used by the treating facility or by another facility studying substantially the same medical treatment, procedure, device, or drug. Experimental or investigational does not mean cancer chemotherapy or other types of therapies that are the subjects of ongoing phase IV clinical trials.

The service must be medically necessary and not excluded by any other contract exclusion.
Standard medical practice means the services or supplies that are in general use in the medical community in the United States, and:

- have been demonstrated in standard medical textbooks published in the United States and/or peer-reviewed literature to have scientifically established medical value for curing or alleviating the condition being treated;
- are appropriate for the hospital or other facility provider in which they were performed; and
- the physician or other professional provider has had the appropriate training and experience to provide the treatment or procedure.

— Food or Lodging Expenses

This Plan does not cover food or lodging expenses, except for those lodging expenses that are eligible for a per diem allowance under “Transplant Services” in Section 5: Covered Services, and not excluded by any other provision in this section.

— Genetic Testing or Counseling

This Plan does not cover tests such as amniocentesis or ultrasound to determine the gender of an unborn child. See “Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care” in Section 5: Covered Services for details.

— Hair Loss Treatments

This Plan does not cover wigs, artificial hairpieces, hair transplants or implants, or medication used to promote hair growth or control hair loss, even if there is a medical reason for hair loss.

— Hearing Examinations, Procedures and Aids

This Plan does not cover audiometric (hearing) tests unless 1) required for the diagnosis and/or treatment of an accidental injury or an illness, or 2) covered as a preventive screening service, or 3) covered as part of the hearing aid benefit for members under age 21 and described under “Hearing Aids/Related Services for Children Under Age 21” in Section 5: Covered Services. (A screening does not include a hearing test to determine the amount and kind of correction needed.) This Plan does not cover hearing aids or ear molds, fitting of hearing aids or ear molds, or any related service or supply for members age 21 and older. For members under age 21, see “Hearing Aids/Related Services for Children Under Age 21” in Section 5. (For surgically implanted devices, see “Surgery and Related Services” in Section 5: Covered Services.)

— Home Health, Home I.V. and Hospice Services

In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, see “Home Health Care/Home I.V. Services” or “Hospice Care” in Section 5: Covered Services for additional exclusions.

— Hypnotherapy

This Plan does not cover hypnosis or services related to hypnosis, whether for medical or anesthetic purposes.

— Infertility Services/Artificial Conception

This Plan does not cover services related to, but not limited to, procedures such as: artificial conception or insemination, fertilization and/or growth of a fetus outside the mother’s body in an artificial environment, such as in-vivo or in-vitro (“test tube”) fertilization, Gamete Intrafallopian Transfer (GIFT), Zygote Intrafallopian Transfer (ZIFT), embryo transfer, drugs for induced ovulation, or other artificial methods of conception. This Plan does not cover the cost of donor sperm, costs associated with the collection, preparation, or storage of sperm for artificial insemination, or donor fees.

This Plan does not cover infertility testing, treatments, or related services, such as hormonal manipulation and excess hormones to increase the production of mature ova for fertilization.
This Plan does not cover reversal of a prior sterilization procedure. (Certain treatments of medical conditions that sometimes result in restored fertility may be covered; see “Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care” in Section 5: Covered Services.)

— Late Claim Filing

This Plan does not cover services of a nonparticipating provider if the claim for such services is received by BCBSNM more than 12 months after the date of service. (HMO-participating providers will file claims for you and must submit them within a specified period of time, usually 180 days.) If a claim is returned for further information, resubmit it within 45 days.

— Learning Deficiencies/Behavioral Problems

This Plan does not cover special education, counseling, therapy, diagnostic testing, treatment, or any other service for learning deficiencies or chronic behavioral problems, whether or not associated with a manifest mental disorder, retardation, or other disturbance. See “Autism Spectrum Disorders” in Section 5: Covered Services for details about mandated coverage for children with these diagnoses. See Section 8: Claim Payments and Appeals for reimbursement of certain services provided to eligible children by the Department of Health.

— Limited Services/Covered Charges

This Plan does not cover amounts in excess of covered charges or services that exceed any maximum benefit limits listed in this benefit booklet, or any amendments, riders, addenda, or endorsements.

— Local Anesthesia

This Plan does not cover local anesthesia. (Coverage for surgical, maternity, diagnostic, and other procedures includes an allowance for local anesthesia because it is considered a routine part of the procedure.)

— Long-Term and Maintenance Therapy

This Plan does not cover long-term therapy whether for physical or for mental conditions, even if medically necessary and even if any applicable benefit maximum has not yet been reached, except that medication management for chronic conditions is covered. Therapies are considered long-term if measurable improvement is not possible within two months of beginning active therapy. Long-term therapy includes treatment for chronic or incurable conditions for which rehabilitation produces minimal or temporary change or relief. Treatment of chronic conditions is not covered. (Chronic conditions include, but are not limited to, muscular dystrophy, Down’s syndrome, and cerebral palsy.) Note: This exclusion does not apply to benefits for medication or medication management or to certain services required to be covered under New Mexico state law for children with autism spectrum disorders.

This Plan does not cover maintenance therapy or care or any treatment that does not significantly improve your function or productivity, or care provided after you have reached your rehabilitative potential (unless therapy is covered during an approved hospice benefit period). In a dispute about whether your rehabilitative potential has been reached, you are responsible for furnishing documentation from your physician supporting his/her opinion. Note: Even if your rehabilitative potential has not yet been reached, this Plan does not cover services that exceed maximum benefit limits.

— Medical Policy Determinations

Any technologies, procedures, or services for which medical policies have been developed by BCBSNM are either limited or excluded as defined in the medical policy. (See “Medical Policy” in Section 10: Definitions). Exception: The fact that this Plan covers certain services that are excluded under BCBSNM medical policy and certain services defined as experimental or as maintenance therapy but which must be covered under New Mexico state law (such as cancer clinical trials and applied behavioral analysis) does not mean that any other services will be or should be covered when contraindicated by BCBSNM medical policy. Only covered acupuncture and those services mandated by state law will be excepted from this BCBSNM standard medical policy exclusion.
— **Medically Unnecessary Services**

*This Plan does not cover* services that are not medically necessary as defined in *Section 5: Covered Services* unless such services are specifically listed as covered (e.g., see “Preventive Services” or “Autism Spectrum Disorders” in *Section 5: Covered Services*).

BCBSNM, in consultation with the provider, determines whether a service or supply is medically necessary and whether it is covered. Because a provider prescribes, orders, recommends, or approves a service or supply does *not* make it medically necessary or make it a covered service, even if it is not specifically listed as an exclusion. (BCBSNM determines medical necessity based on the criteria given in *Section 5: Covered Services*.)

— **No Legal Payment Obligation**

*This Plan does not cover* services for which you have no legal obligation to pay or that are free, including:

- charges made only because benefits are available under this Plan
- services for which you have received a professional or courtesy discount
- volunteer services
- services provided by you for yourself or a covered family member, by a person ordinarily residing in your household, or by a family member
- physician charges exceeding the amount specified by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) when primary benefits are payable under Medicare

**Note:** The “No Legal Payment Obligation” exclusion does not apply to services received at Department of Defense facilities or covered by Indian Health Service/Contract Health Services, and Medicaid, or certain services that are reimbursed to the Department of Health according to the “Early Developmental Delay and Disability” provision in *Section 8: Claim Payments and Appeals*.

— **Noncovered Providers of Service**

*This Plan does not cover* services prescribed or administered by a:

- member of your immediate family or a person normally residing in your home
- physician, other person, supplier, or facility (including staff members) that are not specifically listed as covered in this benefit booklet, such as a:
  - health spa or health fitness center (whether or not services are provided by a licensed or registered provider)
  - school infirmary
  - halfway house
  - massage therapist
  - private sanitarium
  - extended care facility or similar institution
  - residential treatment center (A residential treatment center is a facility where the primary services are the provision of room and board and constant supervision or a structured daily routine for a person who is impaired but whose condition does not require acute care hospitalization.)
  - dental or medical department sponsored by or for an employer, mutual benefit association, labor union, trustee, or any similar person or group
  - homeopathic or naturopathic provider

— **Nonmedical Expenses**

*This Plan does not cover* nonmedical expenses (even if medically recommended and regardless of therapeutic value), including costs for services or items such as, but not limited to:
• adoption or surrogate expenses
• educational programs such as behavior modification and arthritis classes (Some diabetic services and other educational programs may be covered; see “Physician Visits/Medical Care” and “Preventive Services” in Section 5: Covered Services for details.)
• vocational or training services and supplies
• mailing and/or shipping and handling
• missed appointments; “get-acquainted” visits without physical assessment or medical care; provision of medical information to perform admission review or other preauthorizations; filling out of claim forms; copies of medical records; interest expenses
• modifications to home, vehicle, or workplace to accommodate medical conditions; voice synthesizers; other communication devices
• membership at spas, health clubs, or other such facilities
• personal convenience items such as air conditioners, humidifiers, exercise equipment, or personal services such as haircuts, shampoos, guest meals, and television rentals, Internet services
• personal comfort services, including homemaker and housekeeping services, except in association with respite care covered during a hospice admission
• immunizations or medications required for international travel
• moving expenses or other personal expenses (e.g., laundry or dry cleaning expenses; phone calls; day care expenses; taxicab or bus fare; vehicle rental expenses; parking expenses; personal convenience items)
• physicals or screening examinations and immunizations given primarily for insurance, licensing, employment, camp, weight reduction programs, medical research programs, sports, or for any nonpreventive purpose
• hepatitis B immunizations when required due to possible exposure during the member’s work
• court- or police-ordered services unless the services would otherwise be covered or services rendered as a condition of parole or probation
• the cost of any damages to a treatment facility that are caused by the member

— Nonparticipating Provider Services

This Plan does not cover nonemergency services provided by a nonparticipating provider unless preauthorization for such services is received from BCBSNM. You will be financially responsible for the services of a nonparticipating provider if you did not receive, in advance, a valid authorization from BCBSNM. Note: When preauthorization is requested, BCBSNM may require that you travel to another city to receive services from an HMO-participating provider.

Except in emergencies, BCBSNM will generally NOT preauthorize services of a nonparticipating provider if the services could be obtained from an HMO-participating provider. Preauthorizations for such services are given only under very special circumstances related to medical necessity and lack of provider availability in the BCBSNM HMO-participating network. BCBSNM will NOT approve a preauthorization request based on non-medical issues such as whether or not you or your doctor prefer the nonparticipating provider or find the provider more convenient. Regardless of medical necessity or non-medical issues, nonparticipating providers’ services are NOT covered under this Plan, except during an emergency, if you do not first obtain preauthorization.

Note: If you health care provider leaves the BCBSNM HMO-participating provider network (for reasons other than medical competence or professional behavior) or if you are a new member and your provider is not in the HMO-participating provider network when you enroll, BCBSNM may authorize you to continue an ongoing course of treatment with the provider for a transitional period of time of not less than 30 days. (If necessary and ordered by the treating provider, BCBSNM may also preauthorize transitional care from other nonparticipating providers.) The period will be sufficient to permit coordinated transition planning consistent with your condition and needs. Special provisions may apply if the required transitional period exceeds 30 days. If you have entered
the third trimester of pregnancy at the effective date of enrollment, the transitional period shall include post-partum care directly related to the deliver. Call the BCBSNM Customer Service department for details.

Members who extend coverage under an extension of benefits due to disability after the group contract is terminated are not eligible to receive preauthorization for services of a nonparticipating provider. Services of a nonparticipating provider are not covered in such instances of extended coverage.

— Nonprescription Drugs

This Plan does not cover nonprescription or over-the-counter drugs, medications, ointments, or creams, including herbal or homeopathic preparations, or prescription drugs that have over-the-counter equivalents, except for those products specifically listed as covered in your separately issued Drug Plan Rider. This exclusion includes nonprescription items for smoking and tobacco use cessation such as nicotine patches and nicotine gum.

— Nutritional Supplements

This Plan does not cover vitamins, dietary/nutritional supplements, special foods, formulas, mother’s milk, or diets, unless prescribed by a physician. Such supplements require a prescription to be covered under the “Home Health Care/Home I.V. Services” in Section 5: Covered Services. This Plan covers other nutritional products only under specific conditions set forth under your Drug Plan Rider.

— Post-Termination Services

This Plan does not cover any service received or item or drug purchased after your coverage is terminated, even if: 1) preauthorization for such service, item, or drug was received from BCBSNM, or 2) the service, item, or drug was needed because of an event that occurred while you were covered. (If you are an inpatient when coverage ends, benefits for the admission will be available only for those covered services received before your termination date.)

— Prescription Drugs, Insulin, Diabetic Supplies, Enteral Nutritional Products and Special Medical Foods

You should have received a separately issued Drug Plan Rider that explains your benefits for these items. All general limitations and exclusions listed in this Section 6 also apply to items covered under the Drug Plan Rider.

— Preauthorization Not Obtained When Required

This Plan does not cover certain services if you do not obtain preauthorization from BCBSNM before those services are received. See Section 4: Preauthorizations.

— Private Duty Nursing Services

This Plan does not cover private duty nursing services.

— Psychotherapy (Mental Health and Chemical Dependency)

In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, see “Psychotherapy (Mental Health and Chemical Dependency)” in Section 5: Covered Services for additional exclusions.

— Sex-Change Operations and Services

This Plan does not cover services related to sex-change operations, reversals of such procedures or complications arising from transsexual surgery.

— Sexual Dysfunction Treatment

This Plan does not cover services related to the treatment of sexual dysfunction.
— **Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics**

In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, see “Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics” in *Section 5: Covered Services* for additional exclusions.

— **Surgery and Related Services**

In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, see “Surgery and Related Services” in *Section 5: Covered Services* for additional exclusions.

— **Therapy and Counseling Services**

**This Plan does not cover** therapies and counseling programs other than the therapies listed as covered in this benefit booklet. In addition to treatments excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, (see “Rehabilitation and Other Therapy” in *Section 5: Covered Services* for additional exclusions) **this Plan does not cover** services such as, but not limited to:

- recreational, sleep, crystal, primal scream, sex, and Z therapies
- self-help, stress management, weight-loss, and codependency programs
- services of a massage therapist or rolfing
- smoking/tobacco use cessation counseling programs that do not meet the standards set by the NM Public Regulation Commission and described under “Cessation Counseling” in *Section 10: Definitions.*
- transactional analysis, encounter groups, and transcendental meditation (TM); moxibustion; sensitivity or assertiveness training
- vision therapy; orthoptics
- pastoral, spiritual, or religious counseling
- supportive services provided to the family of a terminally ill patient when the patient is not a member of this Plan
- therapy for chronic conditions such as, but not limited to, cerebral palsy or developmental delay, except as required by law and described in *Section 5* under “Autism Spectrum Disorders” (See “Early Developmental Delay and Disability” in *Section 8: Claim Payments and Appeals* for coverage of certain services provided to eligible children by the Department of Health.)
- any therapeutic exercise equipment for home use (e.g., treadmill, weights)
- speech therapy for dysfunctions that self-correct over time; speech services that maintain function by using routine, repetitive, and reinforced procedures that are neither diagnostic or therapeutic, except as required by law and described in *Section 5* under “Autism Spectrum Disorders”; other speech services that can be carried out by the patient, the family, or caregiver/teacher

— **Thermography**

**This Plan does not cover** thermography (a technique that photographically represents the surface temperatures of the body).

— **Transplant Services**

Please see “Transplant Services” in *Section 5: Covered Services* for specific transplant services that are covered and related limitations and exclusions. In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, **this Plan does not cover** any other transplants (or organ-combination transplants) or services related to any other transplants.

— **Travel or Transportation**

**This Plan does not cover** travel expenses, even if travel is necessary to receive covered services unless such services are eligible for coverage under “Transplant Services” or “Ambulance Services” in *Section 5: Covered Services.*
— **Veteran’s Administration Facility**

*This Plan does not cover* services or supplies furnished by a Veterans Administration facility for a service-connected disability or while a member is in active military service.

— **Vision Services**

*This Plan does not cover* any services related to refractive keratoplasty (surgery to correct nearsightedness) or any complication related to keratoplasty, including radial keratotomy or any procedure designed to correct visual refractive defect (e.g., farsightedness or astigmatism). *This Plan does not cover* eyeglasses, contact lenses, prescriptions associated with such procedures, and costs related to the prescribing or fitting of glasses or lenses, unless listed as covered under “Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics” in *Section 5: Covered Services*. *This Plan does not cover* sunglasses, special tints, or other extra features for eyeglasses or contact lenses.

— **War-Related Conditions**

*This Plan does not cover* any service required as the result of any act of war or related to an illness or accidental injury sustained during combat or active military service.

— **Weight Management/Obesity Surgery**

*This Plan does not cover* weight-loss or other weight-management programs, dietary control, or medical obesity treatment, other than counseling programs as required under federal law, unless dietary advice and exercise are provided by a physician, nutritionist, or dietitian licensed by the appropriate agency. Weight-loss medications are covered only when medically necessary and only when the member meets BCBSNM’s current medical policy criteria.

*This Plan does not cover* any and all surgical treatments of obesity, including without limitation, gastric bypass or other type of bariatric surgery, under any circumstance. This is true regardless of the presence or absence of other medical conditions that can be either directly or indirectly attributed to obesity. Obesity means any diagnosis of obesity including morbid obesity.

— **Work-Related Conditions**

*This Plan does not cover* services resulting from work-related illness or injury, or charges resulting from occupational accidents or sickness covered under:

- occupational disease laws
- employer’s liability
- municipal, state, or federal law (except Medicaid)
- Workers’ Compensation Act

To recover benefits for a work-related illness or injury, you must pursue your rights under the Workers’ Compensation Act or any of the above provisions that apply, including filing an appeal. (BCBSNM may pay claims during the appeal process on the condition that you sign a reimbursement agreement.)

*This Plan does not cover* a work-related illness or injury, even if:

- You fail to file a claim within the filing period allowed by the applicable law.
- You obtain care not authorized by Workers’ Compensation insurance.
- Your employer fails to carry the required Workers’ Compensation insurance. (The employer may be liable for an employee’s work-related illness or injury expenses.)
- You fail to comply with any other provisions of the law.

**Note:** This “Work-Related Conditions” exclusion does not apply to an executive employee or sole proprietor of a professional or business corporation who has affirmatively elected not to accept the provisions of the New Mexico Workers’ Compensation Act. You must provide documentation showing that you have waived Workers’ Compensation and are eligible for the waiver. (The Workers’ Compensation Act may also not apply if an employer has a very small number of employees or employs certain types of laborers excluded from the Act.)
SECTION 7: COORDINATION OF BENEFITS (COB) AND REIMBURSEMENT

For a work-related injury or condition, see the “Work-Related Conditions” exclusion in Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions.

This Plan contains a coordination of benefits (COB) provision that prevents duplication of payments. When you are enrolled in any other valid coverage, the combined benefit payments from all coverages cannot exceed 100 percent of BCBSNM’s covered charges. (Other valid coverage is defined as all other group and individual (or direct-pay) insurance policies or health care plans including Medicare, but excluding Indian Health Service and Medicaid coverages, that provide payments for medical services and are considered other valid coverage for purposes of coordinating benefits under this Plan.)

If you are also covered by Medicare, special COB rules may apply. Contact a Customer Service Advocate for more information. If you are enrolled in federal continuation coverage, coverage ends at the beginning of the month when you become entitled to Medicare or when you become insured under any other valid coverage (unless a pre-existing conditions limitation applies).

When this Plan is secondary, all provisions (such as obtaining preauthorization) must be followed or benefits may be denied.

The following rules determine which coverage pays first:

No COB Provision — If the other valid coverage does not include a COB provision, that coverage pays first.

Medicare — If the other valid coverage is Medicare and Medicare is not secondary according to federal law, Medicare pays first.

Child/Spouse — If a covered child under this health plan is covered as a spouse under another health plan, the covered child’s spouse’s health plan is primary over this health plan.

Subscriber/Family Member — If the member who received care is covered as an employee, retiree, or other policy holder (i.e., as the subscriber) under one health plan and as a spouse, child, or other family member under another, the health plan that designates the member as the employee, retiree, or other policy holder (i.e., as the subscriber) pays first.

If you have other valid coverage and Medicare, contact the other carrier’s customer service department to find out if the other coverage is primary to Medicare. There are many federal regulations regarding Medicare Secondary Payer provisions, and other coverage may not be subject to those provisions.

Child — For a child whose parents are not separated or divorced, the coverage of the parent whose birthday falls earlier in the calendar year pays first. If the other valid coverage does not follow this rule, the father’s coverage pays first.

Child, Parents Separated or Divorced — For a child of divorced or separated parents, benefits are coordinated in the following order:

— Court-Decreed Obligations. Regardless of which parent has custody, if a court decree specifies which parent is financially responsible for the child’s health care expenses, the coverage of that parent pays first.

— Custodial/Noncustodial. The plan of the custodial parent pays first. The plan of the spouse of the custodial parent pays second. The plan of the noncustodial parent pays last.

— Joint Custody. If the parents share joint custody, and the court decree does not state which parent is responsible for the health care expenses of the child, the plans follow the rules that apply to children whose parents are not separated or divorced.

Active/Inactive Employee — If a member is covered as an active employee under one coverage and as an inactive employee under another, the coverage through active employment pays first. (Even if a member is covered as a family member under both coverages, the coverage through active employment pays first.) If the other plan does not have this rule and the plans do not agree on the order of benefits, the next rule applies.
**Longer/Shorter Length of Coverage** — When none of the above applies, the plan in effect for the longest continuous period of time pays first. (The start of a new plan does not include a change in the amount or scope of benefits, a change in the entity that pays, provides, or administers the benefits, or a change from one type of plan to another.)

**Responsibility For Timely Notice**

BCBSNM is not responsible for coordination of benefits if timely information is not provided.

**Facility of Payment**

Whenever any other plan makes benefit payments that should have been made under this Plan, BCBSNM has the right to pay the other plan any amount BCBSNM determines will satisfy the intent of this provision. Any amount so paid will be considered to be benefits paid under this Plan, and with that payment BCBSNM will fully satisfy its liability under this provision.

**Overpayments - Right of Recovery**

Regardless of who was paid, whenever benefit payments made by BCBSNM exceed the amount necessary to satisfy the intent of this provision, BCBSNM has the right to recover the excess amount from any persons to or for whom those payments were made, or from any insurance company, service plan, or any other organizations or persons.

**REIMBURSEMENT**

If you or one of your covered family members incur expenses for sickness or injury that occurred due to the negligence of a third party and benefits are provided for covered services described in this benefit booklet, you agree:

— BCBSNM has the right to reimbursement for all benefits provided from any and all damages collected from the third party for those same expenses whether by action at law, settlement, or compromise, by you or your legal representative as a result of that sickness or injury, in the amount of the total covered charges for covered services for which BCBSNM has provided benefits to you or your covered family members.

— BCBSNM is assigned the right to recover from the third party, or his or her insurer, to the extent of the benefits BCBSNM provided for that sickness or injury.

BCBSNM shall have the right to first reimbursement out of all funds you, your covered family members, or your legal representative, are or were able to obtain for the same expenses for which BCBSNM has provided benefits as a result of that sickness or injury.

You are required to furnish any information or assistance or provide any documents that BCBSNM may reasonably require in order to obtain our rights under this provision. This provision applies whether or not the third party admits liability.
SECTION 8: CLAIMS PAYMENTS AND APPEALS

FILING CLAIMS
You must submit claims within 12 months after the date services or supplies were received. A claim submitted more than 12 months after the service was received will not be accepted under any circumstance. If a claim is returned for further information, resubmit it within 45 days.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT FILING CLAIMS
This section addresses the procedures for filing claims and appeals. The instructions in no way imply that filing a claim or an appeal will result in benefit payment and do not exempt you from adhering to all of the provisions described in this benefit booklet. All claims submitted will be processed by BCBSNM according to the patient’s eligibility and benefits in effect at the time services are received. Whether inside or outside New Mexico and/or the United States, you must meet all preauthorization requirements or benefits may be denied as explained in Section 4: Preauthorizations. Covered services are the same services listed as covered in Section 5: Covered Services and all services are subject to the limitations and exclusions listed throughout this booklet.

IF YOU HAVE OTHER VALID COVERAGE
When you have other valid coverage that is “primary” over this Plan, you need to file your claim with the other coverage first. (See Section 7: Coordination of Benefits (COB) and Reimbursement.) After your other coverage (including health care insurance, dental or vision plan, Medicare, automobile, or other liability insurance, Workers’ Compensation, etc.) pays its benefits, a copy of their payment explanation form must be attached to the claim sent to BCBSNM or to the local BCBS Plan, as instructed under “Where to Send Claim Forms” later in this section.

If the other valid coverage pays benefits to you (or your family member) directly, give your provider a copy of the payment explanation so that he/she can include it with the claim sent to BCBSNM or to the local BCBS Plan. (If a nonparticipating provider does not file claims for you, attach a copy of the payment explanation to the claim that you send to BCBSNM or to the local BCBS Plan, as applicable.)

HMO-PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS
PCPs and other HMO-participating providers file claims with BCBSNM (or their local, affiliated BCBS Plan) and payment is made directly to them. Be sure that these providers know you have managed care (HMO) health care coverage administered by BCBSNM. Do not file claims for these services yourself. Also, HMO-participating providers have specific timely filing limits in their contracts with BCBSNM (usually 180 days). The contract language lets providers know that they may not bill the employer or any member if they do not meet that filing limit for a service and the claim for that service is denied.

PROVIDER NETWORK
Network providers are not required to comply with any specified numbers, targeted averages, or maximum durations of patient visits. You will not be held liable to a network provider for any sums owed to the provider by BCBSNM.

NONPARTICIPATING PROVIDERS
If your nonparticipating provider does not file a claim for you for emergency care, submit a separate claim form for each family member as the services are received. Attach itemized bills and, if applicable, your other valid coverage’s payment explanation, to a Member Claim Form. (Forms can be printed from the BCBSNM website at www.bcbsnm.com or requested from a Customer Service Advocate.) Complete the claim form using the instructions on the form. (See special claim filing instructions for out-of-country claims under “Where to Send Claim Forms” later in this section.)

Payment normally is made to the provider. However, if you have already paid the provider for the services being claimed, your claim must include evidence that the charges were paid in full. Upon approval of the claim, BCBSNM will reimburse you for covered services, based on covered charges, less any required member copayment. You will be responsible for charges not covered by the Plan.
ITEMIZED BILLS

Claims for covered service must be itemized on the provider’s billing forms or letterhead stationery and must show:

- member’s identification number
- member’s and subscriber’s name and address
- member’s date of birth and relationship to the subscriber
- name, address, National Provider Identification number (NPI), and tax ID or social security number of the provider
- date of service or purchase, diagnosis, type of service or treatment, procedure, and amount charged for each service (each service must be listed separately)
- accident or surgery date (when applicable)
- amount paid by you (if any) along with a receipt, cancelled check, or other proof of payment

Correctly itemized bills are necessary for your claim to be processed. The only acceptable bills are those from health care providers. Do not file bills you prepared yourself, canceled checks, balance due statements, or cash register receipts. Make a copy of all itemized bills for your records before you send them. The bills are not returned to you. All information on the claim and itemized bills must be readable. If information is missing or is not readable, BCBSNM will return it to you or to the provider.

Do not file for the same service twice unless asked to do so by a Customer Service Advocate. If your itemized bills include services previously filed, identify clearly the new charges that you are submitting. (See “Where to Send Claim Forms” below, for special instructions regarding out-of-country claims.)

WHERE TO SEND CLAIM FORMS

If your nonparticipating provider does not file a claim for you, you (not the provider) are responsible for filing the claim. Remember: Participating and preferred providers will file claims for you; these procedures are used only when you must file your own claim.

Services in United States, Canada, Jamaica, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico

If a nonparticipating provider will not file a claim for you, ask for an itemized bill and complete a claim form the same way that you would for services received from any other nonparticipating provider. Mail the claim forms and itemized bills to BCBSNM at the address below (or, if you prefer, you may send to the local Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan in the state where the services were received):

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico
P.O. Box 27630
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125-7630

Mental Health/Chemical Dependency Claims

Claims for covered mental health and chemical dependency services received in New Mexico should be submitted to:

BCBSNM, BH Unit
P.O. Box 27630
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125-7630

Drug Plan Claims

If you purchase a prescription drug or other item covered under the drug plan from a nonparticipating pharmacy or other provider in an emergency, or if you do not have your ID card with you when purchasing a prescription or other covered item, you must pay for the prescription in full and then submit a claim to BCBSNM’s pharmacy benefit manager. Do not send these claims to BCBSNM. The bills or receipts must be issued by the pharmacy and must include the pharmacy name and address, drug name, prescription number, and amount charged. If not included in
your enrollment materials, you can obtain the name and address of the pharmacy benefit manager and the necessary claim forms from a Customer Service Advocate or on the BCBSNM website at www.bcbsnm.com.

**Services Outside the United States, U.S. Virgin Islands, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, or Canada**

Nonemergency care received outside the United States is not covered. For covered emergency inpatient hospital services received outside the United States (including Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and the U.S. Virgin Islands) and Canada, show your Plan ID card issued by BCBSNM. BCBSNM participates in a claim payment program with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. If the hospital has an agreement with the Association, the hospital files the claim for you to the appropriate Blue Cross Plan. Payment is made to the hospital by that Plan, and then BCBSNM reimburses the other Plan. **Note:** Services received outside the United States (including Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and the U.S. Virgin Islands) and Canada will be covered only if they are for emergency treatment.

You will need to pay up front for care received from a doctor, a participating outpatient hospital, and/or a nonparticipating hospital. Then, complete an *International Claim Form* and send it with the bill(s) to the BlueCard® Worldwide Service Center (the address is on the form). The *International Claim Form* is available from BCBSNM, the BlueCard® Worldwide Service Center, or on-line at:

www.bcbs.com/coverage/bluecard/bluecard-worldwide.html

The BlueCard® Worldwide *International Claim Form* is to be used to submit institutional and professional claims for benefits for covered services received outside the United States, Puerto Rico, Jamaica and the U.S. Virgin Islands. For filing instructions for other claim types (e.g., dental, prescription drugs, etc.) contact your Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plan. The *International Claim Form* must be completed for each patient in full, and accompanied by fully itemized bills. It is not necessary for you to provide an English translation or convert currency.

Since the claim cannot be returned, please be sure to keep photocopies of all bills and supporting documentation for your personal records. The member should submit an *International Claim Form* (available at www.bcbs.com), attach itemized bills, and mail to BlueCard® Worldwide at the address below. BlueCard® Worldwide will then translate the information, if necessary, and convert the charges to United States dollars. They also will contact BCBSNM for benefit information in order to process the claim. Once the claim is finalized, the *Explanation of Benefits* will be mailed to the subscriber and payment, if applicable, will be made to the subscriber via wire transfer or check. Mail international claims to:

BlueCard® Worldwide Service Center  
P.O. Box 72017  
Richmond, VA 23255-2017

**CLAIMS PAYMENT PROVISIONS**

Most claims will be evaluated and you and/or the provider notified of the BCBSNM benefit decision within 30 days of receiving the claim. If all information needed to process the claim has been submitted, but BCBSNM cannot make a determination within 30 days, you will be notified (before the expiration of the 30-day period) that an additional 15 days is needed for claim determination.

After a claim has been processed, the subscriber will receive an *Explanation of Benefits* (EOB). The EOB indicates what charges were covered and what charges, if any, were not. **Note:** If a Qualified Child Medical Support Order (QCMSO) is in effect, the QCMSO provisions will be followed. For example, when the member is an eligible child of divorced parents, and the subscriber under this Plan is the noncustodial parent, the custodial parent may receive the payment and the EOB.

**If A Claim or Preauthorization Is Denied**

If benefits are denied or only partially paid, BCBSNM will notify you of the determination. The notice to you will include: 1) the reasons for denial; 2) a reference to the health care plan provisions on which the denial is based; and 3) an explanation of how you may appeal the decision if you do not agree with the denial. (See “Complaints/Appeals Summary,” later in this section. **You also have 180 days in which to appeal a decision.**
Covered Charge
Provider payments are based upon HMO-participating provider agreements and covered charges as determined by BCBSNM. For services received outside of New Mexico, covered charges may be based on the local Plan practice (e.g., for out-of-state providers that contract with their local Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plan, the covered charge may be based upon the amount negotiated by the other Plan with its own contracted providers). You are responsible for paying copayments, any penalty amounts, and noncovered expenses. For covered emergency services received in foreign countries, BCBSNM will use the exchange rate in effect on the date of service in order to determine billed charges.

HMO-Participating Providers
Payments for covered services usually are sent directly to network (HMO-participating) providers. The EOB you receive explains the payment.

Nonparticipating Providers
If covered services are received from a nonparticipating provider, payments are usually made to the subscriber (or to the applicable alternate payee when a QCMSO is in effect). The check will be attached to an EOB that explains BCBSNM’s payment. In these cases, you are responsible for arranging payment to the provider and for paying any amounts greater than covered charges plus copayments, any penalty amounts, and noncovered expenses.

Accident-Related Hospital Services
If services are administered as a result of an accident, a hospital or treatment facility may place a lien upon a compromise, settlement, or judgement obtained by you when the facility has not been paid its total billed charges from all other sources.

Assignment of Benefits
BCBSNM specifically reserves the right to pay the subscriber directly and to refuse to honor an assignment of benefits in any circumstances. No person may execute any power of attorney to interfere with BCBSNM’s right to pay the subscriber instead of anyone else.

Early Development Delay and Disability
For covered children under age four who are also eligible for services under the New Mexico Department of Health’s (DOH) “Family, Infant and Toddler” (FIT) program, as defined in 7.30.8, NMAC, your BCBSNM Plan will reimburse the DOH for certain medically necessary early intervention services that are provided as part of an individualized family service plan under the FIT program by personnel who are licensed and certified for the DOH’s FIT program. The maximum reimbursement under the BCBSNM Plan is limited to $3,500 per year. However, amounts paid to DOH for such services are not included in any annual or lifetime benefit maximums under the Plan. Claims for services payable to the DOH under this provision will be honored only if submitted to BCBSNM by the New Mexico DOH.

Medicaid
Payment of benefits for members eligible for Medicaid is made to the appropriate state agency or to the provider when required by law.

Overpayments
If BCBSNM makes an erroneous benefit payment to the subscriber or member for any reason (e.g., provider billing error, claims processing error), BCBSNM may recover overpayments from you. If you do not refund the overpayment, BCBSNM reserves the right to withhold future benefit payments to apply to the amount that you owe the Plan, and to take legal action to correct payments made in error.

BLUECARD® PROGRAM
Other Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans outside of New Mexico (“Host Blue”) may have contracts with certain providers in their service areas. Under BlueCard®, when you receive covered services outside of New Mexico from a
Host Blue contracting provider that does not have a contract with BCBSNM, the amount you pay for covered services is calculated on the lower of:

- the billed charges for your covered services, or
- the negotiated price that the Host Blue passes on to BCBSNM.

Often, this “negotiated price” is a **simple discount** that reflects the actual price the Host Blue pays. Sometimes, it is an **estimated price** that takes into account special arrangements the Host Blue has with an individual provider or a group of providers. Such arrangements may include settlements, withholds, non-claims transactions, and/or other types of variable payments. The “negotiated price” may also be an **average price** based on a discount that results in expected average savings (after taking into account the same special arrangements used to obtain an estimated price). Average prices tend to vary more from actual prices than estimated prices.

Negotiated prices may be adjusted from time to time to correct for over- or underestimation of past prices. However, the amount used by BCBSNM to calculate your share of the billed amount is considered a final price.

Laws in a small number of states may require the Host Blue to 1) use another method for, or 2) add a surcharge to your liability calculation. If any state laws mandate other liability calculation methods, including a surcharge, BCBSNM would calculate your liability for any covered services according to the applicable state law in effect when you received care.

**APPEALS PROCESS**

**Grievances (Complaints)**

If you have an inquiry or a concern about any prior authorization request, claims payment, claims that have been denied or only partially paid, the quality of care you receive, the cancellation of your coverage, or any other review decisions made by BCBSNM, call a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate for assistance. Many complaints or problems can be handled informally by calling, writing, or e-mailing BCBSNM Customer Service. If you are not satisfied with the initial response, you can request internal review as described below.

If you make an oral grievance, a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate will assist you. The Managed Health Care Bureau of the New Mexico Insurance Division is also available to assist you with the grievances, questions, or complaints. Call

1-888-427-5772 or (505) 827-3928

You may designate a representative to act for you in the internal review. Your designation of a representative must be in writing in order to protect against disclosure of information about you except to your authorized representative. You, your guardian or representative, or a provider acting on your behalf can contact a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate in person, by letter, by e-mail, or by telephone if you have an inquiry or complaint about a prior authorization request, a claim payment or denial, or any other issue. If you make an inquiry or complaint or file a grievance under the following procedures, you will not be subject to retaliatory action by BCBSNM. **Note:** This is a summary of procedures. You may request a more detailed written explanation of these procedures by calling BCBSNM Customer Service.

**Grievance Procedures**

If you are not satisfied with the initial decision made by BCBSNM, you can request internal review. Within **180 days** after you receive notice of a BCBSNM decision (payment, denial, or partial denial) on a claim or a prior authorization request, call or write BCBSNM Customer Service and explain your reasons for disagreeing with the decision. If you do not submit the request for internal review within the 180-day period, you waive your right to internal review, unless you can satisfy BCBSNM that matters beyond your control prevented you from timely filing the request. You may also ask to see relevant documents and you may submit written issues, comments and additional medical information as part of the internal review.

**Adverse Determination Grievance**

This is a summary of the grievance procedure that applies to “adverse determinations” made by BCBSNM regarding a request for a health care service. An “adverse determination” means a decision made either
pre-service or post-service by BCBSNM that a health care service requested by a provider or member has been reviewed and, based upon the information available, does not meet the requirements for coverage or medical necessity and the requested health care service is either denied, reduced, or terminated.

If your request for health care service has been denied in whole or in part, you may request internal review of the adverse determination. The internal review will be either “expedited” or “standard.”

**Expedited Review**
If required by the medical exigencies of the request, BCBSNM will conduct an “Expedited Review” and will render a decision as soon as practicable, but not later than 72 hours from receipt of the request.

**Standard Review**
If not medically exigent, BCBSNM will conduct a “Standard Review.” If the request for internal review is made before you receive the health care service (“pre-service request for review”), the entire internal review process shall be completed within 20 working days of receipt of the request for internal review. If the request for internal review is made after you receive the health care service (“post-service request for review”), the entire internal review shall be completed within 40 working days of the request for internal review. BCBSNM may extend the review period 10 working days in pre-service cases and 20 working days in post-service cases.

If BCBSNM upholds the adverse determination, BCBSNM will notify you of that decision by telephone (if available) and by mail. You will be informed of the next internal level of appeal at that time and will be asked whether you want to pursue an “internal panel review” (second level of appeal) of the initial decision. If you elect to pursue the internal panel review, BCBSNM will notify you of the date, time, and location that the panel will convene and will make arrangements for you to participate by phone or in person, if necessary. BCBSNM will not unreasonably deny your request for a postponement. The internal panel decision will be provided to you by telephone, if available, and in writing within the time frames set forth by the applicable regulations, subject to any extensions or postponements.

**Administrative Grievance**
This is a summary of the grievance procedure followed by BCBSNM for any oral or written complaint about any aspect of the Plan other than a request for health care service including, without limitation:

- administrative practices of BCBSNM that affect the availability, delivery, or quality of health care services;
- claims payment, handling, or reimbursement for health care services; and
- termination of coverage.

If you are dissatisfied with a decision, action, or inaction of BCBSNM, you have the right to request an initial internal review of the administrative grievance orally or in writing. A BCBSNM representative will complete the internal review and mail a written decision to you within 15 working days of receipt of the administrative grievance. The decision will be binding unless you request reconsideration of the internal review within 20 working days of your receipt of the initial decision.

Upon receipt of your request for reconsideration of the internal review, BCBSNM will appoint a reconsideration committee to schedule and hold a hearing. Arrangements will be made for you to participate in the hearing in person or by telephone. The hearing shall be held within 15 working days after the receipt of your request for reconsideration and the decision of committee will be provided to you in writing within 7 working days after the hearing. BCBSNM will not unreasonably deny your request for a postponement.

**BCBSNM Contacts**
For more information, contact:
EXTERNAL APPEALS

If you are still not satisfied after having completed the BCBSNM inquiry, appeals, and grievance procedures, you have the option of taking one or more of the following steps.

Review by the NM Superintendent of Insurance

If you are dissatisfied with the BCBSNM internal review of your grievance or appeal decision, you have the right to request an external review by the New Mexico Superintendent of Insurance by filing a written request within four months of receipt of the written decision from BCBSNM. You may file your request by:

- mail to the Superintendent of Insurance at the following address:
  Attention: Managed Health Care Bureau - External Review Request
  New Mexico Public Regulation Commission
  P.O. Box 1269, 1120 Paseo de Peralta
  Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87504-1269
- fax to Managed Health Care Bureau-External Review Request at (505) 827-4734;
- e-mail to mheb.grievance@state.nm.us (subject: “External Review Request”);
- online by using a Division of Insurance Complaint Form at http://www.nmprc.state.nm.us; or
- if required by medical exigencies of the case, by telephone at 1-888-427-5772 or (505) 827-3928.

You will need to provide a copy of the BCBSNM decision; a fully executed release form authorizing the Superintendent to obtain any necessary medical records from BCBSNM or other health care provider; and any other supporting documentation. You may contact the Managed Health Care Bureau to assist you in this process by calling toll-free at 1-888-427-5772.

Other External Appeals

If you are still not satisfied after having exhausted the BCBSNM inquiry, complaint, and internal appeal procedures, you may have the option of taking other steps, as described below. No action at law or in equity may be brought, or arbitration demand made, earlier than 60 days after BCBSNM has received the claim for benefits or preauthorization request, or later than three years after the date that the claim for benefits should have been filed with BCBSNM.

Arbitration for Non-ERISA Plans

The “Arbitration for Non-ERISA Plans” provision applies to all governmental plans, church plans, and plans maintained outside the United States primarily for the benefit of persons substantially all of whom are nonresident aliens. If a dispute about coverage, benefits or handling of claims, or preauthorization requests continues after the member has followed and exhausted the reconsideration or appeal process administered by BCBSNM, the issue or claim shall be submitted to arbitration upon agreement by the member. The rules for arbitration shall be the “Commercial Arbitration Rules” developed by the American Arbitration Association. You may obtain a copy of these rules from a Customer Service Advocate. The rules are also available from the American Arbitration Association’s Web site (www.adr.org). The use of arbitration does not limit your ability to seek other means by which to resolve disputes, but is an avenue available to you.
External Appeal for ERISA Plans

This Plan provided by your group may be part of an employee welfare benefit plan governed by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). The “External Appeal for ERISA Plans” right is applicable to all group plans except governmental plans, church plans, and plans maintained outside the United States primarily for the benefit of persons substantially all of whom are nonresident aliens. Therefore, if this Plan is governed by ERISA and you are still not satisfied after having completed the reconsideration or appeal process administered by BCBSNM, you may have a right to bring a civil action under ERISA section 502(a).

CATASTROPHIC EVENTS

In case of fire, flood, war, civil disturbance, court order, strike, or other cause beyond BCBSNM’s control, BCBSNM may be unable to process claims or provide preauthorization for services on a timely basis. If due to circumstances not within the control of BCBSNM or a network provider (such as partial or complete destruction of facilities, war, riot, disability of a network provider, or similar case), BCBSNM and the provider will have no liability or obligation if medical services are delayed or not provided. BCBSNM and its network providers will, however, make a good-faith effort to provide services.
SECTION 9: GENERAL PROVISIONS

ADVANCE DIRECTIVES
Advance directives are written documents (such as a Living Will, Health Care Treatment Directives, and Durable Power of Attorney) that designate a person with the responsibility for making your health care decisions if you are incapable of expressing your own wishes. They also describe the kind of treatment you do and do not want. Members over age 18 have the right to refuse or accept medical care or surgical treatments and to execute advance directives.

BCBSNM, providers, and staff do not discriminate care based on whether you have signed any type of advance directive. If you have questions or concerns about advance directives, contact your PCP or personal physician to discuss these issues.

APPLICATION STATEMENT
No statement (except a fraudulent statement) you make in any application for coverage that is more than two years old can void this coverage or be used against you in any legal action or proceeding relating to this coverage unless the application or a true copy of it is incorporated in or attached to the contract.

AVAILABILITY OF PROVIDER SERVICES
BCBSNM does not guarantee that a certain type of room or service will be available at any hospital or other facility within the BCBSNM network, nor that the services of a particular hospital, physician, or other provider will be available.

CHANGES TO THE BENEFIT BOOKLET
BCBSNM may amend this benefit booklet when authorized by an officer of BCBSNM. BCBSNM will give your group at least 30 days prior written notice of an amendment to this benefit booklet. No employee of BCBSNM may change this benefit booklet by giving incomplete or incorrect information, or by contradicting the terms of this benefit booklet. Any such situation will not prevent BCBSNM from administering this benefit booklet in strict accordance with its terms. See the inside back cover for further information.

CONSUMER ADVISORY BOARD
BCBSNM has established a Consumer Advisory Board to provide input from the member’s point-of-view about BCBSNM’s general operations and internal policies and to identify areas that need improvement.

DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY
BCBSNM has no control over any diagnosis, treatment, care, or other service provided to you by any facility or professional provider, whether preferred or not. BCBSNM is not liable for any loss or injury caused by any health care provider by reason of negligence or otherwise.

DISCLOSURE AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION
BCBSNM will only disclose information as permitted or required under state and federal law.

ENTIRE CONTRACT
This benefit booklet (and any amendments, riders, endorsements, and the Summary of Benefits), your group enrollment/change application, and your identification (ID) card shall constitute the entire contract. All statements, in the absence of fraud, made by any applicant shall be deemed representations and not warranties. No such statements shall void coverage or reduce benefits unless contained in a written application for coverage.

EXECUTION OF PAPERS
On behalf of yourself and your eligible family members you must, upon request, execute and deliver to BCBSNM any documents and papers necessary to carry out the provisions of this Plan.
HOLD-HARMLESS
The contracts between BCBSNM and its HMO-participating providers include a “hold harmless” clause which provides that an HMO plan member cannot be liable to the provider for monies owed by BCBSNM for health care plan services covered under the HMO health plan.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS
The relationship between BCBSNM and its participating providers is that of independent contractors; physicians and other providers are not agents or employees of BCBSNM, and BCBSNM and its employees are not employees or agents of any participating provider. BCBSNM will not be liable for any claim or demand on account of damages arising out of, or in any manner connected with, any injuries suffered by you while receiving care from any participating provider.

The relationship between BCBSNM and the group is that of independent contractors; the employer is not an agent or employee of BCBSNM, and BCBSNM and its employees are not employees or agents of the group.

MEMBER RIGHTS
All members have these rights:

- The right to available and accessible services, when medically necessary, as determined by your primary care or treating physician in consultation with BCBSNM, 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, or urgent or emergency care services, and for other health services as defined by your benefit booklet.
- The right to be treated with courtesy and consideration, and with respect for your dignity and your need for privacy.
- The right to have their privacy respected, including the privacy of medical and financial records maintained by BCBSNM and its health care providers as required by law.
- The right to be provided with information concerning BCBSNM’s policies and procedures regarding products, services, providers, and appeals procedures and other information about the company and the benefits provided.
- The right to choose a PCP within the limits of the covered benefits and plan network, including the right to refuse care of specific practitioners.
- The right to all the rights afforded by law, rule, or regulation as a patient in a licensed health care facility, including the right to refuse medication and treatment after possible consequences of this decision have been explained in language you understand.
- The right to receive from your physician(s) or provider, in terms that you understand, an explanation of your complete medical condition, recommended treatment, risk(s) of treatment, expected results and reasonable medical alternatives, irrespective of BCBSNM’s position on treatment options. If you are not capable of understanding the information, the explanation shall be provided to your next of kin, guardian, agent or surrogate, if able, and documented in your medical record.
- The right to prompt notification of termination or changes in benefits, services or provider network.
- The right to file a complaint or appeal with BCBSNM or with the New Mexico Superintendent of Insurance and to receive an answer to those complaints within a reasonable time.
- The right to request information about any financial arrangements or provisions between BCBSNM and its preferred providers that may restrict referral or treatment options or limit the services offered to members.
- The right to adequate access to qualified health professionals near your work or home within the BCBSNM service area (the state of New Mexico).
- The right to affordable health care, with limits on out-of-pocket expenses, including the right to seek care from a nonpreferred provider, and an explanation of your financial responsibility when services are provided by a nonpreferred provider, or provided without required preauthorization.
The right to detailed information about coverage, maximum benefits, and exclusions of specific conditions, ailments or disorders, including restricted prescription benefits, and all requirements that you must follow for preauthorization and utilization review.

The right to make recommendations regarding BCBSNM’s member rights and responsibilities policies.

The right to a complete explanation of why care is denied, an opportunity to appeal the decision to BCBSNM’s internal review and the right to a secondary appeal., and the right to request the assistance of the Superintendent of Insurance.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES
As a member enrolled in a managed health care plan administered by BCBSNM, you have these responsibilities:

- The responsibility to supply information (to the extent possible) that BCBSNM and its preferred practitioners and providers need in order to provide care.
- The responsibility to follow plans and instructions for care that you have agreed on with your treating provider or practitioners.
- The responsibility to understand your health problems and participate in developing mutually agreed-upon treatment goals with your treating provider or practitioner to the degree possible.

MEMBERSHIP RECORDS
BCBSNM will keep membership records and the employer will periodically forward information to BCBSNM to administer the benefits of this Plan. You can inspect all records concerning your membership in this Plan during normal business hours given reasonable advance notice.

REFUSAL TO FOLLOW RECOMMENDED TREATMENT
If you refuse treatment that has been recommended by a participating provider, the provider may decide that your refusal compromises the provider-patient relationship and obstructs the provision of proper medical care. Providers will try to render all necessary and appropriate professional services according to your wishes when they are consistent with the provider’s judgement. If you refuse to follow the recommended treatment or procedure, you are entitled to see another provider of the same specialty for a second opinion. You can also pursue the appeal process.

RESEARCH FEES
BCBSNM reserves the right to charge you an administrative fee when extensive research is necessary to reconstruct information that has already been provided to you in explanations of benefits, letters, or other forms. If BCBSNM requires an independent medical examination (IME) before authorizing a service or processing a claim. BCBSNM will cover the cost of the IME. In the unlikely event that BCBSNM requires an autopsy before paying a claim, BCBSN will pay the cost of the autopsy.

SENDING NOTICES
All notices to you are considered to be sent to and received by you when deposited in the United States mail with first-class postage prepaid and addressed to the subscriber at the latest address on BCBSNM membership records or to the employer.

TRANSFER OF BENEFITS
All documents described in this booklet are personal to the member. Neither these benefits nor health care plan payments may be transferred or given to any person, corporation, or entity. Any attempted transfer will be void. Use of benefits by anyone other than a member will be considered fraud or material misrepresentation in the use of services or facilities, which may result in cancellation of coverage for the member and appropriate legal action by BCBSNM.
SECTION 10: DEFINITIONS

It is important for you to understand the meaning of the following terms. The definition of many terms determines your benefit eligibility.

**Accidental injury** — A bodily injury caused solely by external, traumatic, and unforeseen means. Accidental injury does not include disease or infection, hernia or cerebral vascular accident. Dental injury caused by chewing, biting, or malocclusion is not considered an accidental injury.

**Acupuncture** — The use of needles inserted into the human body for the prevention, cure, or correction of any disease, illness, injury, pain, or other condition.

**Admission** — The period of time between the dates when a patient enters a facility as an inpatient and is discharged as an inpatient. (If you are an inpatient at the time your coverage either begins or ends, benefits for the admission will be available only for those covered services received on and after your effective date of coverage or those received before your termination date.)

**Alcohol abuse** — Conditions defined by patterns of usage that continue despite occupational, social, marital, or physical problems related to compulsive use of alcohol. Alcohol abuse may also be defined by significant risk of severe withdrawal symptoms if the use of alcohol is discontinued.

**Alcohol abuse treatment facility, alcohol abuse treatment program** — An appropriately licensed provider of medical detoxification and rehabilitation treatment for alcohol abuse.

**Ambulance** — A specially designed and equipped vehicle used only for transporting the sick and injured. It must have customary safety and lifesaving equipment such as first-aid supplies and oxygen equipment. The vehicle must be operated by trained personnel and licensed as an ambulance.

**Ambulatory surgical facility** — An appropriately licensed provider, with an organized staff of physicians, that meets all of the following criteria:

- has permanent facilities and equipment for the primary purpose of performing surgical procedures on an outpatient basis; and
- provides treatment by or under the supervision of physicians and nursing services whenever the patient is in the facility; and
- does not provide inpatient accommodations; and
- is not a facility used primarily as an office or clinic for the private practice of a physician or other provider.

**Appliance** — A device used to provide a functional or therapeutic effect.

**Applied behavioral analysis (ABA)** — Services that include behavior modification training programs that are based on the theory that behavior is learned through interaction between an individual and the environment. The goal of behavior management is to reinforce and increase desirable, functional behaviors while reducing undesirable, “maladaptive” behaviors.

**Autism spectrum disorder** — A condition that meets the diagnostic criteria for the pervasive developmental disorders published in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, fourth edition, text revision, also known as *DSM-IV-TR*, published by the American Psychiatric Association, including autistic disorder; Asperger’s disorder; pervasive development disorder not otherwise specified; Rhett’s disorder; and childhood integrative disorder.

**Benefit booklet** — This document or evidence of coverage, which explains the benefits, limitations, exclusions, terms, and conditions of your health coverage.

**Blue Access for Members (BAM)** — On-line programs and tools that BCBSNM offers its members to help track claims payments, make health care choices, and reduce health care costs. For details, see Section 1: How To Use This Benefit Booklet.
BlueCard — BlueCard is a national program that enables members of one Blue company to obtain healthcare services while traveling or living in another Blue company’s service area. The program links participating healthcare providers with the independent Blue companies across the country and in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide, through a single electronic network for claims processing and reimbursement.

BlueCard Access — The term used by Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies for national doctor and hospital finder resources available through the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. These provider location tools are useful when you need covered health care outside New Mexico. Call BlueCard Access at 1 (800) 810- BLUE (2583) or visit the BlueCard Doctor and Hospital Finder at bcbsnm.com

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico — A Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association; also referred to as BCBSNM.

BlueExtras — Discount offers and other services that are not a part of the health plan benefits described in this benefit booklet; the entities making the offers and the providers of the services may not be affiliated or associated with BCBSNM or your health plan. See Section 1: How To Use This Benefit Booklet for details.

Calendar year — A calendar year (also known as a benefit period) is a period of one year that begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of the same year (also referred to as calendar year). The initial calendar year benefit period is from a member’s effective date of coverage and ends on December 31, which may be less than 12 months.

Cancer clinical trial — A course of treatment provided to a patient for the prevention of reoccurrence, early detection or treatment of cancer for which standard cancer treatment has not been effective or does not exist. It does not include trials designed to test toxicity or disease pathophysiology, but must have a therapeutic intent and be provided as part of a study being conducted in a cancer clinical trial in New Mexico. The scientific study must have been approved by an institutional review board that has an active federal-wide assurance of protection for human subjects and include all of the following: specific goals, a rationale and background for the study, criteria for patient selection, specific direction for administering the therapy or intervention and for monitoring patients, a definition of quantitative measures for determining treatment response, methods for documenting and treating adverse reactions, and a reasonable expectation based on clinical or pre-clinical data, that the treatment will be at least as effective as standard cancer treatment. The trial must have been approved by a United States federal agency or by a qualified research entity that meets the criteria established by the federal National Institutes of Health for grant eligibility.

Cardiac rehabilitation — An individualized, supervised physical reconditioning exercise session lasting 4-12 weeks. Also includes education on nutrition and heart disease.

Certified nurse-midwife — A person who is licensed by the Board of Nursing as a registered nurse and who is licensed by the New Mexico Department of Health (or appropriate state regulatory body) as a certified nurse-midwife.

Certified nurse practitioner — A registered nurse whose qualifications are endorsed by the Board of Nursing for expanded practice as a certified nurse practitioner and whose name and pertinent information is entered on the list of certified nurse practitioners maintained by the Board of Nursing.

Cessation counseling — As applied to the “smoking/tobacco use cessation” benefit described in Section 5: Covered Services, under “Preventive Services,” cessation counseling means a program, including individual, group, or proactive telephone quit line, that:

- is designed to build positive behavior change practices and provides counseling at a minimum on: establishment of reasons for quitting, understanding nicotine addiction, techniques for quitting, discussion of stages of change, overcoming the problems of quitting, including withdrawal symptoms, short-term goal setting, setting a quit date, relapse prevention information, and follow-up;
- operates under a written program outline that meets minimum requirements established by the NM Public Regulation Commission;
- employs counselors who have formal training and experience in tobacco cessation programming and are active in relevant continuing education activities; and
uses a formal evaluation process, including mechanisms for data collection and measuring participant rate and impact of the program.

**Chemical dependency** — Conditions defined by patterns of usage that continue despite occupational, marital, or physical problems that are related to compulsive use of alcohol, drugs or other substance. Chemical dependency (also referred to as “substance abuse,” which includes alcohol or drug abuse) may also be defined by significant risk of severe withdrawal symptoms if the use of alcohol, drugs, or other substance is discontinued.

**Chemotherapy** — Drug therapy administered as treatment for malignant conditions and diseases of certain body systems.

**Child** — See definition of “Eligible Family Member” in *Section 2: Enrollment and Termination Information*.

**Chiropractor services**— Any service or supply administered by a chiropractor acting within the scope of his/her licensure and according to the standards of chiropractic medicine in New Mexico or the state in which services are rendered.

**Chiropractor** — A person who is a doctor of chiropractic (D.C.) licensed by the appropriate governmental agency to practice chiropractic medicine.

**Church Plan** — That term as defined pursuant to Section 3(33) of the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974.

**Claim** — The term “claim,” as used in this document, refers only to post-service bills for services already received and sent to BCBSNM (or its designee) for benefit determination.

**Clinical psychologist** — A person with a doctoral degree in clinical psychology licensed or certified in accordance with the New Mexico Professional Psychologist Act or similar statute in another state.

**Copayment** — The fixed-dollar amount (or, in some cases, a percentage) that you must pay to a health care provider in order to receive a specific service or benefit covered under this Plan. Copayments are listed on the *Summary of Benefits*.

**Cosmetic** — See the “Cosmetic Services” exclusion in *Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions*.

**Cost effective** — A procedure, service, or supply that is an economically efficient use of resources with respect to cost, relative to the benefits and harms associated with the procedure, service, or supply. When determining cost effectiveness, the situation and characteristics of the individual patient are considered.

**Covered charge** — The amount that BCBSNM determines is a fair and reasonable allowance for a particular covered service.

**Covered services** — Those services and other items for which benefits are available under the terms of the benefit plan of an eligible plan member.

**Creditable coverage** — Health care coverage through an employment-based group health care plan; health insurance coverage; Part A or B of Title 18 of the Social Security Act (Medicare); Title 19 of the Social Security Act (Medicaid) except coverage consisting solely of benefits pursuant to section 1928 of that title; 10 USCA Chapter 55 (military benefits); a medical care program of the Indian Health Service or of an Indian nation, tribe, or pueblo; the NM Medical Insurance Pool (NMMIP) Act, or similar state sponsored health insurance pool; a health plan offered pursuant to 5 USCA Chapter 89; a public health plan as defined in federal regulations, whether foreign or domestic; any coverage provided by a governmental entity, whether or not insured, a State Children’s Health Insurance Program; or a health benefit plan offered pursuant to section 5(e) of the federal Peace Corps Act.

**Dental-related services** — Services performed for treatment or conditions related to the teeth or structures supporting the teeth.
Dentist, oral surgeon — A doctor of dental surgery (D.D.S.) or doctor of medical dentistry (D.M.D.) who is licensed to practice prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases, accidental injuries and malformation of the teeth, jaws, and mouth.

Diagnostic services — Procedures such as laboratory and pathology tests, x-ray services, EKGs and EEGs that do not require the use of an operating or recovery room and that are ordered by a provider to determine a condition or disease.

Dialysis — The treatment of a kidney ailment during which impurities are mechanically removed from the body with dialysis equipment.

Doctor of oriental medicine — A person who is a doctor of oriental medicine (D.O.M.) licensed by the appropriate governmental agency to practice acupuncture and oriental medicine.

Drug abuse — A condition defined by patterns of usage that continue despite occupational, marital, or physical problems related to compulsive use of drugs or other non-alcoholic substance. There may also be significant risk of severe withdrawal symptoms if the use of drugs is discontinued. Drug abuse does not include nicotine addiction or alcohol abuse.

Drug abuse treatment facility — An appropriately licensed provider primarily engaged in detoxification and rehabilitation treatment for chemical dependency.

Drug List — A list of prescription drugs that are preferred for use by BCBSNM for retail and mail-order pharmacy benefits. The list is subject to periodic review and change by BCBSNM. BCBSNM-contracted providers should have received a copy of the list. If you need a list of commonly prescribed drugs on the BCBSNM Drug List, request it from a Customer Service Advocate or visit the BCBSNM website. Your drug plan may or may not use a Drug List. See your separately issued Drug Plan Rider for details.

Drug Plan Rider — The document that explains the coverage available to you for prescription drugs, insulin, diabetic supplies, and certain nutritional products.

Durable medical equipment — Any equipment that can withstand repeated use, is made to serve a medical purpose, and is generally considered useless to a person who is not ill or injured.

Effective date of coverage — 12:01 a.m. of the date on which a member’s coverage under this plan begins.

Eligible family members — See “Eligible Family Members” in Section 2: Enrollment and Termination Information for more information about eligible family members.

Emergency, emergency care — Medical or surgical procedures, treatments, or services delivered after the sudden onset of what reasonably appears to be a medical condition with symptoms of sufficient severity, including severe pain, that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected by a reasonable layperson to result in jeopardy to his/her health; serious impairment of bodily functions; serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part, or disfigurement. In addition, services must be received in an emergency room, trauma center, or ambulance to qualify as an emergency. Examples of emergency conditions include, but are not limited to: heart attack or suspected heart attack, coma, loss of respiration, stroke, acute appendicitis, severe allergic reaction, or poisoning.

Employee probationary period — The number of months or days of continuous employment beginning with the employee’s most recent date of hire and ending on the date the employee first becomes eligible for coverage under the employer’s group. Your employer determines the length of the probationary period.

Enteral nutritional products — A product designed to provide calories, protein, and essential micronutrients by the enteral route (i.e., by the gastrointestinal tract, which includes the stomach and small intestine only).

Experimental, investigational or unproven — See the “Experimental, Investigational or Unproven Services” exclusion in Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions.
Facility — A hospital (see “Hospital” later in this section) or other institution (also, see “Provider” later in this section).

Genetic inborn error of metabolism — A rare, inherited disorder that is present at birth; if untreated, results in mental retardation or death, and requires that the affected person consume special medical foods.

Good cause — Failure of the subscriber to pay the premiums or other applicable charges for coverage; a material failure to abide by the rules, policies, or procedures of this Plan; or fraud or material misrepresentation affecting coverage.

Governmental plan — That term as defined in Section 3(32) of the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and includes a federal governmental plan (a governmental plan established or maintained for its employees by the United States government or an instrumentality of that government).

Group — A bonafide employer covering employees of such employer for the benefit of persons other than the employer; or an association, including a labor union, that has a constitution and bylaws and is organized and maintained in good faith for purposes other than that of obtaining insurance.

Group health care plan — An employee welfare benefit plan as defined in Section 3(1) of the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to the extent that the plan provides medical care and includes items and services paid for as medical care (directly or through insurance, reimbursement, or otherwise) to employees or their eligible family members (as defined under the terms of the Plan).

Group Master Application — The application for coverage completed by the employer (or association representative).

Group Master Contract — A contract for health care services which by its terms limits eligibility to members of a specified group. The Group Master Contract includes the group master application and may include coverage for eligible family members.

Habilitative treatment — Treatment programs that are necessary to: 1) develop, 2) maintain, and 3) restore to the maximum extent practicable the functioning of an individual. All three conditions must be met in order to be considered habilitative.

HMO-participating provider — Either a facility (i.e., a hospital) or a professional provider (i.e., a physician) that, for the service being provided, contracts with BCBSNM as an HMO-participating provider, either directly or indirectly, or with the national BCBS transplant network to provide health care services to members with an expectation of receiving payment (other than copayments, coinsurance, or deductibles) directly or indirectly from BCBSNM. An HMO-participating provider also agrees to bill BCBSNM and to accept this Plan’s payment (provided in accordance with the provisions of the contract) plus the member’s copayment as payment in full for covered services. BCBSNM, will pay the HMO-participating provider directly.

The contracts between BCBSNM and its providers include a “hold harmless” clause so that an HMO member cannot be liable to the provider for moneys owed by BCBSNM for services covered under this Plan.

BCBSNM may add, change, or terminate specific participating providers at its discretion or recommend a specific provider for specialized care as medical necessity warrants. Participating providers are not required by BCBSNM to comply with any specified numbers, targeted averages, or maximum durations of patient visits.

HMO-participating specialist — A health care practitioner who has an HMO-participating provider contract with BCBSNM, but is not specially contracted as a “PCP.” A specialist does not include hospitals or other treatment facilities, urgent care facilities, pharmacies, equipment suppliers, ambulance companies, or similar ancillary health care providers.

Home health care agency — An appropriately licensed provider that both:

- brings skilled nursing care and other services on an intermittent, visiting basis into your home in accordance with the licensing regulations for home health care agencies in New Mexico or in the state where the services are provided; and

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• is responsible for supervising the delivery of these services under a plan prescribed and approved in writing by the attending physician.

**Home health care services** — Covered services, as listed under “Home Health Care/Home I.V. Services” in Section 5: Covered Services, that are provided in the home according to a treatment plan by a certified home health care agency under active physician and nursing management. Registered nurses must coordinate the services on behalf of the home health care agency and the patient’s physician.

**Hospice** — A licensed program providing care and support to terminally ill patients and their families. An approved hospice must be licensed when required, Medicare-certified as, or accredited by, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), as a hospice.

**Hospice benefit period** — The period of time during which hospice benefits are available. It begins on the date the attending physician certifies that the member is terminally ill and ends six months after the period began (or upon the member’s death, if sooner). The hospice benefit period must begin while the member is covered for these benefits, and coverage must be maintained throughout the hospice benefit period.

**Hospice care** — An alternative way of caring for terminally ill patients in the home or institutional setting, which stresses controlling pain and relieving symptoms but does not cure. Supportive services are offered to the family before the death of the patient.

**Hospital** — A health institution offering facilities, beds, and continuous services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The hospital must meet all licensing and certification requirements of local and state regulatory agencies. Services provided include:

- diagnosis and treatment of illness, injury, deformity, abnormality or pregnancy
- clinical laboratory, diagnostic x-ray, and definitive medical treatment provided by an organized medical staff within the institution
- treatment facilities for emergency care and surgical services either within the institution or through a contractual arrangement with another licensed hospital (These contracted services must be documented by a well-defined plan and related to community needs.)

A hospital is not, other than incidentally, a skilled nursing facility, nursing home, custodial care home, health resort, spa, or sanatorium; is not a place for rest, the aging, or the treatment of mental disorders, alcohol or drug abuse, or pulmonary tuberculosis; ordinarily does not provide hospice or rehabilitation care; and is not a residential treatment center.

**Host Blue** — When you are outside New Mexico and receive covered services, the provider will submit claims to the Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) Plan in that state. That BCBS Plan (the “Host Blue” Plan) will then price the claim according to local practice and contracting, if applicable, and then forward the claim electronically to BCBSNM - your “Home” Plan - for completion of processing (e.g., benefits and eligibility determination). For details, see “BlueCard” in Section 8: Claims Payments and Appeals.

**Identification card (ID card)** — The card BCBSNM issues to the subscriber that identifies the cardholder as a Plan member.

**Initial enrollment eligibility date** — A member’s effective date of coverage or the first day of any employee probationary period imposed on the member by the employer, whichever is earlier. For a late applicant or for a person applying under a special enrollment provision, the initial enrollment eligibility date is his/her effective date of coverage.

**Inpatient services** — Care provided while you are confined as an inpatient in a hospital or treatment center for at least 24 hours. Inpatient care includes partial hospitalization (a nonresidential program that includes from 5-12 hours of continuous mental health or chemical dependency care during any 24-hour period in a treatment facility). Inpatient hospital services include, but are not limited to, semi-private room accommodations, general nursing care, meals, and special diets or parenteral nutrition when medically necessary, physician and surgeon services, use of all hospital facilities when use of such facilities is determined to be medically necessary by your treating physician,
pharmaceuticals and other medications, anesthesia and oxygen services, special duty nursing when medically necessary, radiation therapy, inhalation therapy, and administration of whole blood and blood components when medically necessary.

**Intensive outpatient program (IOP)** — Distinct levels or phases of treatment that are provided by a certified/licensed chemical dependency or mental health program. IOPs provide a combination of individual, family, and/or group therapy in a day, totaling nine or more hours in a week.

**Investigational drug or device** — For purposes of the “Cancer Clinical Trial” benefit described in Section 5: Covered Services under “Rehabilitation and Other Therapy,” an “investigational drug or device” means a drug or device that has not been approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration.

**Involuntary loss of coverage** — As applied to special enrollment provisions, loss of other coverage due to legal separation, divorce, death, moving out of an HMO service area, termination of employment, reduction in hours or termination of employer contributions (even if the affected member continues such coverage by paying the amount previously paid by the employer). A loss of coverage may also occur if your employer ceased offering coverage to the particular class of workers or similarly situated individuals to which you belonged or terminated your benefit package option and no substitute Plan was offered. If the member is covered under a state or federal continuation policy due to prior employment, involuntary loss of coverage includes exhaustion of the maximum continuation time period. Involuntary loss of coverage does not include a loss of coverage due to the failure of the individual or member to pay premiums on a timely basis or termination of coverage for good cause.

**Late applicant** — Unless eligible for a special enrollment, applications from the following enrollees will be considered late:

- anyone not enrolled within 31 days of becoming eligible for coverage under this health care plan (e.g., a child added more than 31 days after legal adoption, a new spouse or stepchild added more than 31 days after marriage)
- anyone enrolling on the group’s initial BCBSNM enrollment date who was not covered under the group’s prior plan (but who was eligible for such coverage)
- anyone eligible but not enrolled during the group’s initial enrollment
- anyone who voluntarily terminates his/her coverage and applies for reinstatement of such coverage at a later date (except as provided under the USERRA of 1994)

**Licensed midwife** — A person who practices lay midwifery and is registered as a licensed midwife by the New Mexico Department of Health (or appropriate state regulatory body).

**Licensed practical nurse (L.P.N.)** — A nurse who has graduated from a formal practical nursing education program and is licensed by appropriate state authority.

**Maintenance medications** — Prescription drugs taken regularly to treat a chronic health condition, such as high blood pressure or diabetes.

**Managed health care plans** — A “managed health care plan” is a health plan that requires a member to use, or encourages a member to use, a “network” provider (your provider network is determined by the type of health plan you have, e.g., HMO. Your health plan may require you to use network providers in order to receive benefits. Therefore, your choice of provider under a managed health care plan determines the amount and kind of benefits you receive under your health care plan. Your BCBSNM health plan does not prevent you from choosing to receive services from a provider outside the network. The choice of provider is still up to you – but the health plan is not obligated to provide benefits for every service you seek to receive. You receive no benefits for nonemergency services received outside the network.

**Maternity** — Any condition that is related to pregnancy. Maternity care includes prenatal and postnatal care and care for the complications of pregnancy, such as ectopic pregnancy, spontaneous abortion (miscarriage), elective abortion or C-section. See “Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care” in Section 5: Covered Services for more information.
**Medicaid** — A state-funded program that provides medical care for indigent persons, as established under Title XIV of the Social Security Act of 1965, as amended.

**Medical detoxification** — Treatment in an acute care facility for withdrawal from the physiological effects of alcohol or drug abuse. (Detoxification usually takes about three days in an acute care facility.)

**Medical policy** — A coverage position developed by BCBSNM that summarizes the scientific knowledge currently available concerning new or existing technology, products, devices, procedures, treatment, services, supplies, or drugs and used by BCBSNM to adjudicate claims and provide benefits for covered Services. Medical policies are posted on the BCBSNM website for review or copies of specific medical policies may be requested in writing from a Customer Service Advocate.

**Medical supplies** — Expendable items (except prescription drugs) ordered by a physician or other professional provider, that are required for the treatment of an illness or accidental injury.

**Medically necessary, medical necessity** — See “Medically Necessary Services” in Section 5: Covered Services.

**Medicare** — The program of health care for the aged, end-stage renal disease (ESRD) patients and disabled persons established by Title XVIII of the Social Security Act of 1965, as amended.

**Member** — An enrollee (the subscriber or any eligible family member) who is enrolled for coverage and entitled to receive benefits under this Plan in accordance with the terms of the Group Master Contract. Throughout this benefit booklet, the terms “you” and “your” refer to each member.

**Mental disorder** — A clinically significant behavioral or psychological syndrome or condition that causes distress and disability and for which improvement can be expected with relatively short-term treatment. Mental disorder does not include developmental disabilities, autism or autism spectrum disorders, drug or alcohol abuse, or learning disabilities.

**Nonparticipating provider** — An appropriately licensed health care provider that has not contracted directly with a BCBS Plan to be a part of the BCBS HMO-Participating Provider Network.

**Occupational therapist** — A person registered to practice occupational therapy. An occupational therapist treats neuromuscular and psychological dysfunction caused by disease, trauma, congenital anomaly or prior therapeutic process through the use of specific tasks or goal-directed activities designed to improve functional performance of the patient.

**Occupational therapy** — The use of rehabilitative techniques to improve a patient’s functional ability to perform activities of daily living.

**Optometrist** — A doctor of optometry (O.D.) licensed to examine and test eyes and treat visual defects by prescribing and adapting corrective lenses and other optical aids.

**Orthopedic appliance** — An individualized rigid or semirigid support that eliminates, restricts, or supports motion of a weak, injured, deformed, or diseased body part; for example, functional hand or leg brace, Milwaukee brace, or fracture brace.

**Other valid coverage** — All other group and individual (or direct-pay) insurance policies or health care benefit plans (including Medicare, but excluding Indian Health Service and Medicaid coverages), that provide payments for medical services will be considered other valid coverage for purposes of coordinating benefits under this Plan.

**Other providers** — Clinical psychologists and the following masters-degreed psychotherapists (an independently licensed professional provider with either an M.A. or M.S. degree in psychology or counseling): licensed independent social workers (L.I.S.W.); licensed professional clinical mental health counselors (L.P.C.C.); masters-level registered nurse certified in psychiatric counseling (R.N.C.S.); licensed marriage and family therapist (L.M.F.T.). For chemical dependency services, a provider also includes a licensed alcohol and drug abuse counselor (L.A.D.A.C.).
Out-of-area services — Covered services that are provided to you when outside the BCBSNM HMO service area.

Out-of-pocket limit — The maximum total copayments that any one member will pay for basic health care services (as defined in federal and state regulations) in any calendar year will not exceed twice the annual premium.

Outpatient services — Medical/surgical services received in the outpatient department of a hospital, observation room, emergency room, ambulatory surgical facility, freestanding dialysis facility, or other covered outpatient treatment facility. Outpatient medical services include those hospital services that can reasonably be provided on an ambulatory basis and those preventive, medically necessary, diagnostic and treatment procedures prescribed by your attending physician. Such services may be provided at a hospital, a physician’s office, any other appropriate licensed facility, or at any other appropriate facility if the professional delivering the services is licensed to practice, is certified and is practicing under authority of the health care insurer, a medical group, an independent practice association, or other authority authorized by applicable New Mexico law.

Outpatient surgery — Any surgical services that is performed in an ambulatory surgical facility or the outpatient department of a hospital, but not including a procedure performed in an office or clinic. Outpatient surgery includes any procedure that requires the use of an ambulatory surgical facility or an outpatient hospital operating or recovery room.

Participating pharmacy — See the definition of “Provider.”

Participating provider — See definition of “HMO-participating provider,” earlier in this section.

Physical therapist — A licensed physical therapist. Where there is no licensure law, the physical therapist must be certified by the appropriate professional body. A physical therapist treats disease or accidental injury by physical and mechanical means (regulated exercise, water, light, or heat).

Physical therapy — The use of physical agents to treat disability resulting from disease or injury. Physical agents include heat, cold, electrical currents, ultrasound, ultraviolet radiation, and therapeutic exercise.

Physician — See definition of “Provider,” below.

Physician assistant — A graduate of a physician assistant or surgeon assistant program approved by a nationally recognized accreditation body or a skilled person who is currently certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, who is licensed in the state of New Mexico (or by the appropriate state regulatory body) to practice medicine under the supervision of a licensed physician.

Podiatrist — A licensed doctor of podiatric medicine (D.P.M.). A podiatrist treats conditions of the feet.

Practitioner of the healing arts — See definition of “Provider,” below.

Preauthorization — A requirement that you or your provider must obtain authorization from BCBSNM before you are admitted as an inpatient and before you receive certain types of services.

Predetermination — An advance confirmation, or “predetermination,” of benefits for a requested covered service. Predetermination does not guarantee benefits if the actual circumstances of the case differ from those originally described.

Pregnancy-related services — See definition of “Maternity,” earlier in the section.

Preventive services — Professional services rendered for the early detection of asymptomatic illnesses or abnormalities and to prevent illness or other conditions.

Primary Care Provider (PCP) — HMO-participating providers who have signed special “Primary Care Provider” agreements with BCBSNM and are listed as “PCPs” in the provider directory or online provider finder. They include family and general practice, internal medicine, obstetrics/gynecology, and pediatric health care providers conveniently
located throughout New Mexico and along the New Mexico border of neighboring states. See the definition of “Provider” for more information. Other health care professionals may also provide primary care.

**Prosthetics or prosthetic device** — An externally attached or surgically implanted artificial substitute for an absent body part; for example, an artificial eye or limb.

**Provider** — A duly licensed hospital, physician, or other practitioner of the healing arts authorized to furnish health care services within the scope of licensure.

**Health care facility:** An institution providing health care services, including a hospital or other licensed inpatient center, an ambulatory surgical or treatment center, a skilled nursing facility, a home health care agency, a diagnostic laboratory or imaging center, and a rehabilitation or other therapeutic health setting.

**Physician:** A practitioner of the healing arts who is also a doctor of medicine (M.D.) or osteopathy (D.O.) and who is licensed to practice medicine under the laws of the state or jurisdiction where the services are provided.

**Practitioner of the healing arts:** Any physician, professional provider or other person holding a license or certificate provided for in Chapter 61, Article 4, 5, 6 or 14A NMSA 1978 authorizing the licensee to offer or undertake to diagnose, treat, or operate on, or prescribe for any human pain, injury, disease, deformity, physical, or mental condition.

**Professional provider:** A physician or health care practitioner, including a pharmacist, who is licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized by the state to provide health care services consistent with state law.

**Transplant provider:** These providers have contracted with BCBSNM through the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association to provide transplant services covered under this health plan. They belong to the “National BCBS Transplant Network.”

**Participating pharmacy:** A retail supplier that has contracted with BCBSNM or its authorized representatives to dispense prescription drugs and medicines, insulin, diabetic supplies, and nutritional products to members covered under the drug plan portion of this Plan and that has contractually accepted the terms and conditions as set forth by BCBSNM and/or its authorized representatives. Some participating pharmacies are contracted with BCBSNM to provide specialty drugs to members; these pharmacies are called “Specialty Pharmacy Providers” and some drugs must be dispensed by these specially contracted pharmacy providers in order to be covered.

**Psychiatric hospital** — A psychiatric facility licensed as an acute care facility or a psychiatric unit in a medical facility that is licensed as an acute care facility. Services are provided by or under the supervision of an organized staff of physicians. Continuous 24-hour nursing services are provided under the supervision of a registered nurse.

**Pulmonary rehabilitation** — An individualized, supervised physical conditioning program. Occupational therapists teach you how to pace yourself, conserve energy, and simplify tasks. Respiratory therapists train you in bronchial hygiene, proper use of inhalers, and proper breathing.

**Radiation therapy** — X-ray, radon, cobalt, betatron, telocobalt, and radioactive isotope treatment for malignant diseases and other medical conditions.

**Reconstructive surgery** — Reconstructive surgery improves or restores bodily function to the level experienced before the event that necessitated the surgery, or in the case of a congenital defect, to a level considered normal. Such surgeries may have a coincidental cosmetic effect.

**Registered nurse (R.N.)** — A nurse who has graduated from a formal program of nursing education (diploma school, associate degree or baccalaureate program) and is licensed by appropriate state authority.

**Rehabilitation hospital** — An appropriately licensed facility that provides rehabilitation care services on an inpatient basis. Rehabilitation care services consist of the combined use of a multidisciplinary team of physical, occupational, speech, and respiratory therapists, medical social workers, and rehabilitation nurses to enable patients disabled by illness or accidental injury to achieve the highest possible functional ability. Services are provided by or under the supervision of an organized staff of physicians. Continuous nursing services are provided under the supervision of a registered nurse.
Residential treatment center — A facility where the primary services are the provision of a room and board and constant supervision or a structured daily routine for a person who is impaired but whose condition does not require acute care hospitalization. Services of a residential treatment center are not covered under this Plan. See the “Noncovered Providers of Service” exclusion in Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions.

Respiratory therapist — A person qualified for employment in the field of respiratory therapy. A respiratory therapist assists patients with breathing problems.

Routine newborn care — Care of a child immediately following his/her birth that includes:
- routine hospital nursery services, including alpha-fetoprotein IV screening
- routine medical care in the hospital after delivery
- pediatrician
- services related to circumcision of a male newborn
- standby care at a C-section procedure

Routine patient care cost — For purposes of the cancer clinical trial benefit described under “Rehabilitation and Other Therapy” in Section 5: Covered Services, a “routine patient care cost” means a medical service or treatment that is covered under a health plan that would be covered if you were receiving standard cancer treatment, or an FDA-approved drug provided to you during a cancer clinical trial, but only to the extent that the drug is not paid for by the manufacturer, distributor, or supplier of the drug. Note: For a covered cancer clinical trial, it is not necessary for the FDA to approve the drug for use in treating your particular condition. A routine patient care cost does not include the cost of any investigational drug, device or procedure, the cost of a non-health care service that you must receive as a result of your participation in the cancer clinical trial, costs for managing the research, costs that would not be covered or that would not be rendered if non-investigational treatments were provided, or costs paid or not charged for by the trial providers.

Routine screening colonoscopy/mammogram — Tests to screen for occult colorectal and/or breast cancer in persons who, at the time of testing, are not known to have active cancer of the colon or breast, respectively. (If there is a history of colon or breast cancer, for the purposes of the “Preventive Services” benefit, a cancer is no longer active if there has been no treatment for it and no evidence of recurrence for the previous three years.) Routine screening tests are performed at defined intervals based on recommendations of national organizations as summarized in the BCBSNM Preventive Care Guidelines. Routine screening tests do not include tests (sometimes called “surveillance testing”) intended to monitor the current status or progression of a cancer that is already diagnosed.

Routine screening mammography does not include “diagnostic mammography” which is a mammogram done after an abnormal finding has first been detected, or screening the opposite breast when the other breast has cancer. Routine colonoscopy does not include colonoscopy done for follow-up of colon cancer. A colonoscopy is still considered screening if, during the colonoscopy, previously unknown polyps were removed. Colonoscopies performed to remove known polyps are not routine screening colonoscopies. Routine screening colonoscopy does not include upper endoscopy (esophagastroduodenal endoscopy), sigmoidoscopy, or computerized tomographic colonography (sometimes referred to as “virtual colonoscopy”).

Note: BCBSNM Preventive Care Guidelines may be found at the BCBSNM website:

www.bcbsnm.com/Members/Health and Wellness

Service area — BCBSNM’s service area is the geographic area where BCBSNM is licensed to conduct business (all counties in New Mexico).

Short-term rehabilitation — Inpatient, outpatient, office- and home-based occupational, physical, and speech therapy techniques that are medically necessary to restore and improve lost bodily functions following illness or accidental injury. (This does not include services provided as part of an approved home health or hospice admission, which are subject to separate benefit limitations and exclusions, and does not include alcohol or drug abuse rehabilitation.)
Skilled nursing care — Care that can be provided only by someone with at least the qualifications of a licensed practical nurse (L.P.N.) or registered nurse (R.N.).

Skilled nursing facility — A facility or part of a facility that:
- is licensed in accordance with state or local law; and
- is a Medicare-participating facility; and
- is primarily engaged in providing skilled nursing care to inpatients under the supervision of a duly licensed physician; and
- provides continuous 24-hour nursing service by or under the supervision of a registered nurse; and
- does not include any facility that is primarily a rest home, a facility for the care of the aged, or for treatment of drug abuse, mental disorder, tuberculosis, or for intermediate, custodial or educational care.

Sound natural teeth — Teeth that are whole, without impairment, without periodontal or other conditions and not in need of treatment for any reason other than accidental injury. Teeth with crowns or restorations (even if required due to a previous injury) are not sound natural teeth. Therefore, injury to a restored tooth will not be covered as an accident-related expense. (Your provider must submit x-rays taken before the dental or surgical procedure in order for BCBSNM to determine whether the tooth was “sound.”)

Special care unit — A designated unit that has concentrated facilities, equipment and supportive services to provide an intensive level of care for critically ill patients. Examples of special care units are intensive care unit (ICU), cardiac care unit (CCU), subintensive care unit, and isolation room.

Special enrollment — When an otherwise eligible employee or eligible family member did not enroll in the Plan when initially eligible, there are certain instances (or “qualifying events”) during which the employee and his/her eligible family members, if any, may enroll in the Plan at a later date - or more than 31 days after becoming eligible - and not considered late applicants. The “special enrollment” period is the period of time during which an otherwise late applicant may apply for coverage outside the annual open enrollment period and/or without increasing the pre-existing conditions waiting period, if any, under your Plan.

Special medical foods — Nutritional substances in any form that are consumed or administered internally under the supervision of a physician, specifically processed or formulated to be distinct in one or more nutrients present in natural food; intended for the medical and nutritional management of patients with limited capacity to metabolize ordinary foodstuffs, or certain nutrients contained in ordinary foodstuffs, or who have other specific nutrient requirements as established by medical evaluation; and essential to optimize growth, health, and metabolic homeostasis. Special medical foods are covered only when prescribed by a physician for treatment of genetic orders of metabolism, and the member is under the physician’s ongoing care. Special medical foods are not for use by the general public and may not be available in stores or supermarkets. Special medical foods are not those foods included in a health diet intended to decrease the risk of disease, such as reduced-fat foods, low sodium foods, or weight loss products.

Specialty pharmacy provider — See definition of “Participating Pharmacy.”

Speech therapist — A speech pathologist certified by the American Speech and Hearing Association. A speech therapist assists patients in overcoming speech disorders.

Speech therapy — Services used for the diagnosis and treatment of speech and language disorders.

Subscriber — The individual whose employment or other status, except for family dependency, is the basis for enrollment eligibility, or in the case of a direct-pay contract, the person in whose name the contract is issued. The term “subscriber” may also encompass other persons in a nonemployee relationship with the employer, group, or business if specified in the Group Master Contract (e.g., COBRA members).

Summary of Benefits — The separately issued schedule that defines your coinsurance requirements, deductible, out-of-pocket limit, and annual or lifetime benefits, and provides an overview of covered services.
**Surgical services** — Any of a variety of technical procedures for treatment or diagnosis of anatomical disease or accidental injury including, but not limited to: cutting; microsurgery (use of scopes); laser procedures; grafting, suturing, castings; treatment of fractures and dislocations; electrical, chemical, or medical destruction of tissue; endoscopic examinations; anesthetic epidural procedures; other invasive procedures. Benefits for surgical services also include usual and related local anesthesia, necessary assistant surgeon expenses, and pre- and post-operative care, including recasting.

**Temporomandibular joint (TMJ) syndrome** — A condition that may include painful temporomandibular joints, tenderness in the muscles that move the jaw, clicking of joints, and limitation of jaw movement.

**Terminally ill patient** — A patient with a life expectancy of **six months or less**, as certified in writing by the attending physician.

**Tertiary care facility** — A hospital unit that provides complete perinatal care (occurring in the period shortly before and after birth) and intensive care of intrapartum (occurring during childbirth or delivery) and perinatal high-risk patients. This hospital unit also has responsibilities for coordination of transport, communication and data analysis systems for the geographic area served.

**Totally disabled** — A member (subscriber or eligible family member) who is prevented, solely because of illness or accidental injury, from engaging in substantial gainful employment or is incapable of doing most of the normal tasks and activities for that person’s age and family status.

**Transplant** — A surgical process that involves the removal of an organ from one person and placement of the organ into another. Transplant can also mean removal of organs or tissue from a person for the purpose of treatment and re-implanting the removed organ or tissue into the same person.

**Transplant-related services** — Any hospitalizations and medical or surgical services related to a covered transplant or retransplant and any subsequent hospitalizations and medical or surgical services related to a covered transplant or retransplant, and received within one year of the transplant or retransplant.

**Unit** — A “unit” for purposes of defining benefit limits for short-term rehabilitation and psychotherapy for mental disorders, is equivalent to one inpatient hospital day, one outpatient therapy visit, or one office- or home-based therapy visit (when not part of an approved home health or hospice admission, which are subject to separate benefit limitations and exclusions). When applied to the psychotherapy benefit for mental disorders, a “unit” also includes one partial hospitalization day or one intensive outpatient therapy visit.

**Urgent care** — Medically necessary health care services received for an unforeseen condition that is not life-threatening. This condition does, however, require prompt medical attention to prevent a serious deterioration in your health (e.g., high fever, cuts requiring stitches).

**Utilization management** — A system for reviewing the appropriate and efficient allocation of medical services and hospital resources given or proposed to be given to a patient or group of patients.

**Well-child care** — Periodic health and developmental assessments and screenings, immunizations, and physical exams provided to children who have no symptoms of current illness as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF).
APPENDIX A: CONTINUATION COVERAGE RIGHTS UNDER COBRA

This notice contains important information about your possible right to COBRA continuation coverage, which is a temporary extension of coverage under this group health care plan. The right to COBRA continuation coverage was created by a federal law, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA), for certain larger group employers. COBRA continuation coverage may be available to you and to other members of your family who are covered under the health care plan when you would otherwise lose your group health coverage. Contact your employer to determine if you or your group are eligible for COBRA continuation coverage.

This notice generally explains:

- COBRA continuation coverage;
- when it may become available to you and your family if your group is subject to the provisions of COBRA; and
- what you need to do to protect your right to receive it.

This notice gives only a summary of COBRA continuation coverage rights. For more information about the rights and obligations under the Plan and under federal law, contact the Plan administrator or see Section 2: Enrollment and Termination Information of this benefit booklet.

The Plan administrator of the Plan is named by the employer or by the group health plan. Either the Plan administrator or a third party named by the Plan administrator is responsible for administering COBRA continuation coverage. Contact your Plan administrator for the name, address, and telephone number of the party responsible for administering your COBRA continuation coverage.

COBRA CONTINUATION COVERAGE

COBRA continuation coverage is a continuation of health care plan coverage when coverage would otherwise end because of a life event known as a “qualifying event.” Specific qualifying events are listed later in this notice. COBRA continuation coverage must be offered to each person who is a “qualified beneficiary.” A qualified beneficiary is someone who will lose coverage under the health care plan because of a qualifying event. Depending on the type of qualifying event, employees, spouses of employees, and eligible children of employees may be qualified beneficiaries. Under the Plan, generally most qualified beneficiaries who elect COBRA continuation coverage must pay for COBRA continuation coverage. Contact the employer and/or COBRA administrator for specific information for your Plan.

If you are an employee, you will become a qualified beneficiary if you will lose your coverage under the Plan because either one of the following qualifying events happens:

- your hours of employment are reduced; or
- your employment ends for any reason other than your gross misconduct.

If you are the spouse of an employee, you will become a qualified beneficiary if you will lose your coverage under the Plan because any of the following qualifying events happens:

- your spouse dies;
- your spouse’s hours of employment are reduced;
- your spouse’s employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
- your spouse becomes enrolled in Medicare (Part A, Part B or both); or
- you become divorced or legally separated from your spouse.

Your eligible children will become qualified beneficiaries if they lose coverage under the Plan because any of the following qualifying events happens and if your group is subject to the provisions of COBRA:

- the parent-employee dies;
- the parent-employee’s hours of employment are reduced;
- the parent-employee’s employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
- the parent-employee becomes enrolled in Medicare (Part A, Part B or both);
the parents become divorced or legally separated; or
- the child stops being eligible for coverage under the Plan as an “eligible child”.

If the Plan provides health care coverage to retired employees, the following applies: Sometimes, filing a proceeding in bankruptcy under title 11 of the United States Code can be a qualifying event. If a proceeding in bankruptcy is filed with respect to the employer, and that bankruptcy results in the loss of coverage of any retiree covered under the Plan, the retiree is a qualified beneficiary with respect to the bankruptcy. The retiree’s spouse, surviving spouse and eligible children will also be qualified beneficiaries if bankruptcy results in the loss of their coverage under the Plan.

The Plan will offer COBRA continuation coverage to qualified beneficiaries only after the Plan administrator has been notified that a qualifying event has occurred.

The employer must notify the Plan administrator within 30 days when the qualifying event is:
- the end of employment;
- the reduction of hours of employment;
- the death of the employee;
- with respect to a retired employee health coverage, commencement of a proceeding in bankruptcy with respect to the employer; or
- the enrollment of the employee in Medicare (Part A, Part B or both).

For the other qualifying events (divorce or legal separation of the employee and spouse or an eligible child losing eligibility for coverage as an eligible child), you must notify the Plan administrator. The Plan requires you to notify the Plan administrator within 60 days after the qualifying event occurs. Contact your employer and/or the COBRA administrator for procedures for this notice, including a description of any required information or documentation.

Once the Plan administrator receives notice that a qualifying event has occurred, COBRA continuation coverage will be offered to each of the qualified beneficiaries. For each qualified beneficiary who elects COBRA continuation coverage, COBRA continuation coverage will begin on the date that Plan coverage would otherwise have been lost.

COBRA continuation coverage is a temporary continuation of coverage. COBRA continuation coverage may last for up to 36 months when the qualifying event is:
- the death of the employee;
- the enrollment of the employee in Medicare (Part A, Part B or both);
- your divorce or legal separation; or
- an eligible child losing eligibility as an eligible child.

When the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction in hours of employment, COBRA continuation coverage lasts for up to 18 months. There are two ways in which this 18-month period of COBRA continuation can be extended:

**Disability Extension of 18-month Period of Continuation Coverage**

If you or anyone in your family covered under the Plan is determined by the Social Security Administration to be disabled at any time during the first 60 days of COBRA continuation coverage and you notify the Plan administrator in a timely fashion, you and your entire family can receive up to an additional 11 months of COBRA continuation coverage, for a total maximum of 29 months. You must make sure that your Plan administrator is notified of the Social Security Administration’s determination within 60 days of the date of the determination and before the end of the 18-month period of COBRA continuation coverage. Contact your employer and/or the COBRA administrator for procedures for this notice, including a description of any required information or documentation.

**Second Qualifying Event Extension of 18-Month Period of Continuation Coverage**

If your family experiences another qualifying event while receiving COBRA continuation coverage, the spouse and eligible children in your family can get additional months of COBRA continuation coverage, up to a maximum of 36 months. This extension is available to the spouse and eligible children if the former employee dies, enrolls in
Medicare (Part A, Part B or both), or gets divorced or legally separated. The extension is also available to an eligible child when that child stops being eligible under the Plan as an eligible child.

In all of these cases, you must make sure that the Plan administrator is notified of the second qualifying event **within 60 days** of the second qualifying event. Contact your employer and/or the COBRA administrator for procedures for this notice, including a description of any required information or documentation.

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS**

If you have questions about COBRA continuation coverage, contact the Plan administrator or the nearest Regional or District Office of the U. S. Department of Labor’s Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA). Addresses and phone numbers of Regional and District EBSA Offices are available through EBSA’s Web site at www.dol.gov/ebsa.

In order to protect your family’s rights, you should keep the Plan administrator informed of any changes in the addresses of family members. You should also keep a copy, for your records, of any notices you send to your Plan administrator.

**PLAN CONTACT INFORMATION**

Contact your employer for the name, address and telephone number of the party responsible for administering your COBRA continuation coverage.
New Mexico HMO Service Area
Acceptance of coverage under this benefit booklet constitutes acceptance of its terms, conditions, limitations, and exclusions. Members are bound by all of the terms of this benefit booklet.

The legal agreement between your employer (or association) and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico (BCBSNM) includes the following documents:

- this benefit booklet and any amendments, riders, or endorsements;
- the Application form(s) for the subscriber and his/her family members;
- the members’ identification cards; and
- the Summary of Benefits

In additions, your employer (or association) has important documents that are part of the legal agreement:

- the Group Master Application from the employer; and
- The Group Master Contract between BCBSNM and the employer or association.

The above documents constitute the entire legal agreement between BCBSNM and the employer. No change or modification to the agreement will be valid unless it is in writing and signed by an officer of BCBSNM. No agent or employee of BCBSNM has authority to change this benefit booklet or waive any of its provisions. You will be notified of any changes to this benefit booklet at least 30 days before the changes become effective.