

August 2006

## Blue Health Records to the rescue

Quick access to a patient's complete medical history gives you the information you need in a timely manner when making important decisions. With just a few clicks of the mouse, you can retrieve a claims-based health record for most of your Blue Cross patients and get the whole picture fast.

We call it the **Blue Health Record**. It is your quick reference guide to:

- prescriptions your patient is taking or has taken recently
- illnesses and associated treatments
- surgeries performed
- immunizations and preventive health care received recently

Information provided in each Blue Health Record is based on claims submitted to Blue Cross by physicians, labs, pharmacies and hospitals. Each report provides a quick overview of the patient's health conditions,

combined with treatments associated with these conditions. Plus, new enhancements now make it even easier to gather important information from a patient's claims-based health history at a glance.

### Blue Health Records could be vital to you in caring for Blue Cross members

Providers with access to iLinkBLUE, our online provider tool, can obtain access to members' health record information upon obtaining a one-time prior approval.

Blue Health Records could be vital to you in caring for Blue Cross members in the aftermath of a natural disaster. These records are also useful to doctors treating new patients, as well as patients with complex health issues and chronic diseases. Facilities can also benefit from the use of Blue Health Records when treating emergency room patients.

To learn more on how to access members' Blue Health Records, please e-mail EDI Services at [ilinkblue.providerinfo@bcbsla.com](mailto:ilinkblue.providerinfo@bcbsla.com) or call the *LINKLine* at (225) 293-LINK (5465).

### In this issue...

#### Page 2 Provider Tip

- Be on the look-out for our e-mails
- Inpatient utilization review hours change
- We need your Medicare provider number
- Non-LPCF providers get credentialed

#### Page 3 National Provider Identifier (NPI) news

- Page 4 Providers can now access allowable charges and medical policies on iLinkBLUE
- Self-registration now available for iLinkBLUE

#### Page 5 Salute to Scrubs Night

- Allowable increases for select pediatric immunizations
- Time frame for filing claims

#### Page 6 Eye on fraud

- Immunotherapy policy on hold
- Blue Cross bids farewell to Dr. Carney
- Disease management: a big plus for patients!

#### Page 7 Medical policies update

#### Page 8 Update your provider information

For more information on becoming an iLinkBLUE provider turn to Page 4





# blues BEAT

## Provider Tip

To ensure that your claims are paid quickly, always remember to check members' ID cards to verify that you have the correct alpha prefix and member ID number on file.

## Be on the **LOOK**-out for our e-mails

If you have given Blue Cross your e-mail address, then you may have noticed our e-mails regarding current events here at Blue Cross. If you have not given us your e-mail address, now is the time to update your information. Also, if you have given us your e-mail address, but are not receiving our e-mails, please update your information.

If you have multiple e-mail addresses associated with your office, let us know the key contact person, such as an office manager or billing person, who could best distribute Blue Cross information to appropriate personnel within your office.

To update your provider information, please complete the form on Page 8.

## Inpatient utilization review hours change

Effective July 17, 2006, the Utilization Review RN staff is available to receive phone calls and faxes from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Previously the RN staff was available until 5 p.m.

This change gives our RN staff needed time to promptly respond to your requests. Always remember to provide complete information with your requests to help us provide you with efficient and timely responses.

## We need your Medicare provider number

The accuracy of the Medicare crossover process is contingent upon having each provider's most current Medicare provider number on file with Blue Cross. We use your Medicare provider number to identify and process your claims once they cross over from Medicare. It is vital that the Medicare provider number associated with your Blue Cross provider file matches the tax identification number Medicare has on file. For this reason, it is important that you contact us when changes are made to your Medicare provider number so that we can update our records accordingly.

Provider claims that cross over from Medicare with a Medicare provider number that is not in our files, or is unidentifiable, may delay for provider verification. If a provider match cannot be located on the Blue Cross provider file system, the claim cannot be paid to the provider, and payment will be made to the Blue Cross member.

To give us your current Medicare provider number, please complete the form on Page 8. You may also contact Ms. Valerie Nance in our EDI Operations department at (225) 295-2098 or e-mail [ediclearinghousesupport@bcbsla.com](mailto:ediclearinghousesupport@bcbsla.com). Please be sure to include your name, current Medicare provider number and current Blue Cross provider number.

## Non-LPCF providers get credentialed

The Credentialing Subcommittee recently approved a change to the current credentialing criteria specific to the requirement of Louisiana Patient's Compensation Fund (LPCF) participation. Blue Cross now allows providers who do not participate in LPCF to participate in our networks:

- 1 **If** your malpractice insurance policy limits of liability are at least 1 million occurrence/3 million aggregate,
- 2 **and** your insurance carrier has an A-rating by A.M. Best Company ([www.ambest.com](http://www.ambest.com)).

If you have previously been rejected or terminated from our networks for not meeting credentialing criteria specific to LPCF participation, you may be eligible to reapply. Providers must meet all credentialing criteria as defined on the Provider page of our website at [www.bcbsla.com](http://www.bcbsla.com).

Before making changes to your credentials, please check our website or contact us directly as it may affect your Blue Cross network participation. If you have any questions about this change or our credentialing process, please contact Network Operations at (800) 716-2299, option 2.

## NPI Fast Facts

### The NPI...

- ◆ is a 10-digit, intelligence-free (no personal information is included) numeric identifier;
- ◆ will replace your Blue Cross provider number for filing electronic and paper claims;
- ◆ will be the standard unique health identifier for health care providers;
- ◆ will not change regardless of job or relocation; and
- ◆ will create more efficient coordination of benefits transactions and simplify electronic transmissions.

## Applying for your NPI

It is important that you begin the process of obtaining your National Provider Identifier (NPI) as soon as possible. On May 23, 2007, the NPI will be required for all HIPAA transactions. That's less than a year away.

To learn more about applying for your NPI, view CMS' online information at [www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/npi/npiviewlet.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/npi/npiviewlet.asp).

Please note that when applying for your NPI, it is important that you correctly identify yourself as either a Type I or a Type II provider as outlined below:

**Type I Provider – individual provider** who renders health care or furnishes health care supplies to patients (e.g. physicians, dentists, nurses, chiropractors, therapists, etc.)

**Type II Provider – any organization** that renders health care or furnishes health care supplies to patients (e.g. hospitals, home health agencies, clinics, ambulance companies, durable medical equipment suppliers, pharmacies, etc.)

### You can apply for an NPI in one of three ways:

1. Apply online at [www.nppes.cms.hhs.gov](http://www.nppes.cms.hhs.gov).
2. Prepare and send a paper application form to the Enumerator. A copy of the application form, which includes the Enumerator's mailing address, can be found at [www.nppes.cms.hhs.gov](http://www.nppes.cms.hhs.gov). Health care providers may also call the Enumerator at (800) 465-3203 to request a blank application form.
3. Electronic File Interchange (EFI) is a process by which a health care provider or group of providers can have a particular organization apply for NPIs on their behalf. For details, visit the EFI section at [www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProvIdentStand](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProvIdentStand).

**Note: Blue Cross CANNOT APPLY for OR ASSIGN your NPI.**

## Already have an NPI? Let us know!

Getting your NPI is only the first step. You must also report your NPI to Blue Cross in a timely manner so that we can update your Blue Cross provider record(s) and incorporate your NPI into our claims processing system. It is equally important to report your NPI to other health plans, vendors and health care clearinghouses so they may also update your information.

When reporting your NPI to Blue Cross, please remember to report your individual NPI along with all affiliated clinic and facility NPIs. This will also help ensure that we are properly processing your claims without delays before the deadline.

**Please be aware that we will not accept your existing Blue Cross provider number after May 23, 2007.**

**Blue Cross will accept the new HCFA-1500 form beginning October 1, 2006 and the new UB-04 form by March 1, 2007.** Additionally, beginning in January 2007, providers who apply for a Blue Cross provider number or are undergoing recredentialing, regardless of network participation, must include their NPI(s) on their application.

## How do I notify Blue Cross of my NPI?

Please notify us using one of the following forms:

- ◆ Complete and return the form on Page 8 of this newsletter
- ◆ Blue Cross Provider Update Form (found under the forms library on our Provider Page at [www.bcbsla.com](http://www.bcbsla.com))
- ◆ Louisiana Standard Credentialing Application (LSCA)
- ◆ Blue Cross Recredentialing Application

**Providers can now access allowable charges and medical policies on iLinkBLUE!**

We've done it again! We are excited to announce that our iLinkBLUE *Provider Suite* has been enhanced to give providers access to even more information! Now, instead of spending valuable time requesting allowable charges and medical policies over the phone and waiting for them to be mailed, you can access them anytime, online.

Accessing allowable charges online by date of service will help reduce overpayments in refunds to members and ensure that you have the most up-to-date information to reconcile your accounts. For more on how to access your allowable charges online, visit our Provider page at [www.bcbsla.com](http://www.bcbsla.com).

**Please note** that this feature is not yet available to dentists, pain management providers, anesthesiologists and durable medical equipment providers. Instead, these providers may obtain a list of their allowable charges under the Manuals section of iLinkBLUE.

Researching medical policies online is easy, too. Providers can search for approved and current medical policies using an index that lists policies in alphabetical order. Online access gives 24-hour availability to medical policies to help in determining coverage eligibility. We will continue to add newly approved and/or revised medical policies to iLinkBLUE. Because medical technology is constantly evolving, our medical policies are regularly reviewed, often resulting in updates or revisions, so check iLinkBLUE frequently for the latest and most current policies.

**Self-registration now available for iLinkBLUE**

Blue Cross is working diligently to make signing up for iLinkBLUE quick and easy. One step forward in this process is that providers can now self-register online. This takes the place of completing a hardcopy security access form. Upon receiving your electronic registration, Blue Cross will assign each new user with a unique User ID and a temporary password.

To self-register as a new user, follow the simple steps below:

- Go to [www.bcbsla.com/ilinkblue](http://www.bcbsla.com/ilinkblue) and select "New User? Click here"
- Enter all of the appropriate information to create your user name (Please note that each user, regardless of provider number, must complete this process.)
- Make a note of your user name
- A temporary password will be mailed via PIN mailer to the provider's correspondence address
- AFTER you have your user name AND temporary password, go to [www.bcbsla.com/ilinkblue](http://www.bcbsla.com/ilinkblue) and log on

**Not an iLinkBLUE provider? Sign up today!**

iLinkBLUE is a secure, online self-service tool that is free to providers and offers 24-hour access to:

- ✓ coverage information
- ✓ claims entry and research
- ✓ fee schedules
- ✓ authorization reports
- ✓ remittance advices
- ✓ medical policies
- ✓ online manuals
- ✓ Blue Health Records
- ✓ BlueCard® out-of-area services

Getting access to iLinkBLUE is simple. You can apply for this free service by calling the *LINKLine* at (225) 293-LINK (5465) or e-mail us at [ilinkblue.providerinfo@bcbsla.com](mailto:ilinkblue.providerinfo@bcbsla.com).

**Visit [www.bcbsla.com/ilinkblue](http://www.bcbsla.com/ilinkblue) for an online demonstration.**

**easy  
+ free  
- time  
EFT**

**Electronic Funds Transfer and iLinkBLUE: The right equation for your office!**

EFT means faster payment and no more waiting for mail delivery or time-consuming bank deposits. With EFT, Blue Cross deposits your payment directly into your checking or savings account. EFT, like iLinkBLUE, is a free service to providers. For more information on EFT, call the *LINKLine* at (225) 293-LINK (5465) or e-mail [ilinkblue.providerinfo@bcbsla.com](mailto:ilinkblue.providerinfo@bcbsla.com).



## SALUTE TO SCRUBS NIGHT

On June 20, 2006, members of New Orleans' medical community attended a Zephyrs game in their scrubs as they were honored at the Blue Cross sponsored **SALUTE TO SCRUBS NIGHT**. Dr. Steve Levine, medical director for the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at Children's Hospital and self-described "big baseball fan," threw the game's first pitch.

Dr. Levine directed the care and safe evacuation of 20 seriously ill children from Children's Hospital during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Levine and his staff first "vertically evacuated" their patients from the first floor of their hospital to higher levels. They soon realized they would have to get the children – some seriously ill – out of the hospital and out of the city. He and his staff got every one of their young patients safely transported to other hospitals.

In addition to honoring Dr. Levine and his staff, Salute to Scrubs Night honored all of New Orleans' medical community, including doctors, nurses and other medical professionals. "We are proud to sponsor Salute to Scrubs Night and to thank and honor all of the 'medical heroes' who went above and beyond the call of duty," said Richard Williams, senior vice president of provider and community relations at Blue Cross.

Blue Cross would like to extend a **BIG THANKS** to all who contributed to making **SALUTE TO SCRUBS NIGHT** a success!

*Blue Cross attendees included (pictured above from left): Nick Daigle-provider relations manager, Lisa Latino-network development representative, Doreen Prejean-network development specialist, Paige Carriere and Paula Rome-network development representatives, Candy Williard-provider relations representative, Kaci Ramirez-BlueCard interplan coordinator and Dawn Cantrell-provider network administration vice president*

### Allowable increases for select pediatric immunizations

Recently, Blue Cross received a number of requests to review the allowable charges for pediatric immunizations due to rapidly rising costs of the vaccine. We are pleased to announce that increases were made to select pediatric vaccinations, effective for claims with dates of service on and after June 1, 2006. Below are the new allowable charges with the corresponding pediatric immunization CPT® codes:

- 90707 – \$46.31
- 90716 – \$77.60
- 90645 – \$24.75
- 90633 – \$28.60
- 90632 – \$56.20

If you have any questions about these increases, please contact a Network Development representative by calling our Baton Rouge office at (800) 716-2299, option 1.

*CPT is a registered trademark of the American Medical Association*

### Time frame for filing claims

Here at Blue Cross, we understand that life is short and your time is valuable. That is why we would like to remind you of the time frames for filing claims.



Did you know that from the time you see our member, the clock starts ticking and you have 15 months from the date of service to file a claim? New claims with a date of service older than 15 months are denied for timely filing, and the member cannot be held accountable for paying the services.

We understand that members and providers may not always agree with how Blue Cross processed a claim. When you need Blue Cross to review how a claim was processed and believe an adjustment may be due, call the *BlueLine* at (800) 392-4076 or submit a Reimbursement Review Form within 15 months of the date of payment. On the form you will need to outline the issue and include supporting documentation along with a hard copy claim. Describing the issue and attaching all necessary documents will reduce the time it takes to review your claim and adjust payment, if applicable. A copy of the Reimbursement Review Form can be found on the Provider page of our website at [www.bcbsla.com/web/provider/forms\\_library.asp](http://www.bcbsla.com/web/provider/forms_library.asp).

If we denied a claim, you can submit an appeal on behalf of the member. The member (and thus the provider) has 180 days from the date the claim was processed to file an appeal. Appeals filed beyond 180 days will not be considered as timely filed appeals.



## Eye on fraud

We have received another report of someone claiming to be a Blue Cross employee contacting providers in the Shreveport-area medical community and requesting Social Security and tax ID numbers.

We would like to remind you that such information is not requested by Blue Cross over the telephone, but instead would be requested in writing on our company letterhead.

You and your office can follow these steps in protecting your identity:

- ❑ Ask for the caller's name and phone number and offer to have someone call him/her back
- ❑ Ask the caller for the name, address and phone number of the company for whom he/she works
- ❑ Be extremely cautious of giving out private information over the telephone to anyone

If you have encountered an attempt at identify theft, please call the Blue Cross Privacy Office at (225) 298-1751 or our 24-hour hotline at (800) 392-9249 where you can confidentially report any possible fraud or abuse. Callers can choose to remain anonymous when calling. To learn more about our fraud efforts, please visit [www.bcbsla.com](http://www.bcbsla.com).

## Immunotherapy policy on hold

Recently, we notified you of the implementation of the Blue Cross policy for allergen immunotherapy that was based on billing guidelines from the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS).

There have been some concerns in regard to the CMS guidelines among the providers most affected. In the spirit of collaboration with the physician community, the effective date of this policy has been delayed until further notice. We will update you on our billing policy after we have had sufficient time to confer with some of our network providers on this subject.

## Blue Cross bids farewell to Dr. Carney

Dr. Jim Carney has served as vice president and chief medical officer for Blue Cross for the past three years. He has been instrumental in developing and enhancing our medical management programs during his tenure. After much consideration, Dr. Carney has decided to relocate to North Carolina to be closer to his family. His resignation will be effective on August 21, 2006. Although it will be difficult to replace Dr. Carney, we respect the fact that he has chosen to make this change. We wish him the best of luck in all of his future endeavors. He will be missed.

## Disease management:

*a big plus for patients!*

Recently one of our Disease Management nurses worked with a Blue Cross member who has a rare Type B insulin-resistant syndrome. Blue Cross' **Ms. Marina Brown, RN, diabetes disease management nurse**, worked with this patient after Hurricane Katrina.

The patient had been previously evaluated at a medical center in California but continued having major problems controlling blood sugar levels after returning to Louisiana in 2005. The patient often required over 3,000 units of insulin a day.

Due to Hurricane Katrina, the patient evacuated from Louisiana, living for a while in Florida and then in Mississippi. During this time, the patient continued to have markedly erratic blood sugars ranging from 60-400 within an hour of diagnosed levels, with continuous glucose monitoring.

Ms. Brown worked with our medical director, Dr. Mary Doyle, to obtain subspecialty treatment for this patient. Dr. Doyle contacted an endocrinology colleague in Boston, Mass., Dr. Josephine Albano, who provided Dr. Doyle with information regarding appropriate referrals for this complicated case. The patient was referred to Dr. Phillip Gorden, an expert on this rare syndrome at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The patient was admitted shortly thereafter to NIH and began responding very well to the therapies administered there. The patient has continued to do well since being discharged and is now off all insulin and will continue to have regular NIH supervision as part of an ongoing treatment plan.

Blue Cross wishes to thank Dr. Josephine Albano and



**Dr. Mary Doyle & Marina Brown, RN**

Dr. Phillip Gorden for their assistance in helping our member. We also want to recognize Ms. Marina Brown, RN, and Dr. Mary Doyle for a job well done!



# medical policies update



Now Available  
in iLinkBLUE!

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana continuously develops and revises medical policies in response to rapidly changing medical technology. Our commitment is to update the provider community as medical policies are adopted and/or revised. Please see the following updated medical policies below:

## New medical policy guidelines

Effective Date	Medical Policy Coverage Guideline	Coverage Eligibility
June 21, 2006	Human Growth Hormones	Eligible for coverage with criteria
Aug. 1, 2006	Recombinant Human Erythropoietin: Epoetin (Epogen® and Procrit®) and Darbepoetin (Aranesp®)	Eligible for coverage
Nov. 1, 2006	Genetic Testing for Familial Alzheimer's Disease	Investigational
Nov. 1, 2006	Genetic Testing for Germline Mutations of the RET Proto-Oncogene in Medullary Carcinoma of the Thyroid	Eligible for coverage with criteria Investigational
Nov. 1, 2006	Genetic Testing for Inherited Susceptibility to Colon Cancer Including Microsatellite Instability	Eligible for coverage with criteria Investigational

## Changes to coverage eligibility of recently reviewed guidelines

Effective Date	Medical Policy Coverage Guideline	Coverage Eligibility
June 21, 2006	Biventricular Pacemakers and Biventricular Pacemakers with Automatic Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillators for the Treatment of CHF	Combined device may be considered medically necessary in patients who meet criteria for the biventricular pacemaker alone.
June 21, 2006	Intravenous Immune Globulin	Vivaglobin® FDA indications may be eligible for coverage.
June 21, 2006	Osteochondral Autografts and Allografts in the Treatment of Focal Articular Cartilage Lesions	Criteria expanded for autograft to include coverage eligibility if patient is over 50 and no arthritis is evident on X-ray, and deleted requirements that previous surgery for knees had been performed or there was an intact meniscus.
June 21, 2006	Ultraviolet Light, Including Laser Therapy, for Skin Conditions	UVA and UVB have been removed from guideline. PUVA may be eligible for coverage for: vitiligo, mycosis fungoides, or severe disabling psoriasis that has not responded to other forms of conservative therapy (e.g., topical corticosteroids, coal/tar preparations and ultraviolet light).  Xenon chloride excimer laser therapy for phototherapeutic treatment of psoriasis continues to be to be investigational.
June 21, 2006	Vacuum-Assisted Closure of Chronic Wounds (Negative Pressure Wound Therapy)	Patient selection criteria expanded to include coverage eligibility for dehisced wounds of significant size.
Sept. 1, 2006	Diagnosis of Sleep Related Disorders and Management of Sleep Apnea	Services for Actigraphy considered investigational.
Nov. 1, 2006	Non Invasive Measurements of Cardiac Hemodynamics (Thoracic Bioimpedance in the Outpatient Setting)	Title revised to reflect changes in technology addressed in policy. Thoracic bioimpedance remains investigational and Inert Gas Rebreathing was added as investigational.

If you have questions about our medical policies or if you would like a copy of a specific policy, you can now go online to view and print medical policies through iLinkBLUE at [www.bcbsla.com/ilinkblue](http://www.bcbsla.com/ilinkblue). Non-iLinkBLUE providers may call the *BlueLine* at (800) 392-4076 to request medical policies.

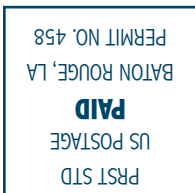
(See Page 4 for more on how to become an iLinkBLUE provider.)

## Update your provider information

Blue Cross would like to know if your office has an **NPI**, **updated Medicare provider number**, **fax number** and/or **e-mail address**. We need your most current information for our provider database to ensure that your claims are processed correctly and that you are eligible to receive our online communications, notifying you of important information such as reimbursement changes, policy updates and other current events. Please complete the information below and fax your response to (225) 297-2750, Attn: Provider Network Administration. You may also e-mail us at [network.administration@bcbsla.com](mailto:network.administration@bcbsla.com).

Provider Name	Blue Cross Provider Number
National Provider Identifier (NPI)	Medicare Provider Number
Person Completing This Form	Phone Number
<b>For Correspondence Address Information</b>	
Fax Number	E-mail Address
<b>For Physical Address Information</b>	
Fax Number	E-mail Address
<b>For Billing Address Information</b>	
Fax Number	E-mail Address

*Our home, Louisiana.*



network  
P. O. BOX 98029 • BATON ROUGE, LA 70898-9029

