

Provider update

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) joined the majority of other Blue Plans and state medical societies across the country in settling a national class-action lawsuit known as the *Love, et al. v. Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, et al*, formerly *Thomas, et al. v. Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, et al*. The settlement resolved a number of past issues between physicians and Blue Plans regarding claims processing and payment.

Maintaining a strong relationship with our network physicians is integral to BCBSNC's corporate focus. In recent years, the company has automated a number of manual claims processes, enhanced online services and built the long-term strength of our technical systems. BCBSNC has made and is continuing to make enhancements to support greater transparency and operational efficiency. With a commitment to meeting all initiatives of the settlement, BCBSNC has established a compliance office to support the implementation and certification of settlement-related changes.

Listed below are changes we are making in the upcoming months:

December 2007

- Fee schedule disclosures:
In addition to complying with NC statutes regarding disclosures of fee schedules, BCBSNC also permits physicians to obtain the fee schedule for their 100 most commonly billed CPT[®] Codes. For more information, please visit our Web site at <http://www.bcbsnc.com>.
- Authorization notification:
To provide more information about the results of a prior review, the authorization notification process has been enhanced to clearly identify which services have been certified prospectively and which may be subject to retrospective review upon submission of claims for processing.
- Joint Advisory Group (JAG):
BCBSNC and the North Carolina Medical Society (NCMS) have jointly established a physician advisory group to discuss issues arising from or related to the relationships and interactions between and among physicians, their patients, and BCBSNC. This group will discuss physician issues, improvement of health care and clinical quality, improvement of communications, cooperation, and matters of clinical or administrative nature impacting interaction. The group will begin meeting in early 2008. A listing of JAG members, meeting dates and summaries will be posted on the provider secure site in mid-December by logging on to **Blue e.**SM

Coming 2008

- Significant edits:
A list of claims edits that are expected, on the initial adjudication of submitted claims, to result in the denial of or reduction in payment for a particular CPT[®] Code or HCPCS Level II Code more than two thousand (2000) times per year will be posted on the provider secure site by logging on to **Blue e.**SM
- Explanation of Benefits (EOB) summary of changes:
Display member ID number
Clarify message when a member balance exists "Amount Provider may Bill You"
Add language to the form letting members know that they may be responsible for certain payments to non-participating providers
Address and phone number added to the Notification of Payment (NOP) for providers to ask questions about their payments.

BCBSNC already complies with several provisions of the Thomas/Love settlement. Visit our provider Web site at http://wwwdev.bcbsnc.com/providers/thomas_love/index.cfm to find existing policies and information related to the following:

- Prior review/prior plan approval
- Medical policies
- How to submit changes to the provider directory
- Instructions for claim submission

We will continue with quarterly updates to inform you about changes related to the Thomas/Love Settlement.

