

Provider Update



Settlement Commitment Initiatives

As part of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina's (BCBSNC) commitment to meeting all of the 2007 Thomas/Love class action settlement* requirements, we've been working diligently on a number of initiatives that are already completed and still others that are underway for delivery during 2008. The lawsuit addressed a number of issues between physicians and Blue Plans regarding claims processing and payment practices. The following is a review of our progress so far.

In 2007, BCBSNC:

- Developed a process permitting physicians to obtain a fee schedule for their 100 most commonly billed CPT® Codes
- Enhanced the medical necessity process to clearly identify which services have been certified prospectively and those that may be subject to retrospective review upon submission of claims
- Established the Joint Advisory Group (JAG)
- Added the original claims payment amount to overpayment refund invoices
- Created a BCBSNC Thomas Disclosures page on the public Web page for providers
- Added a secure BCBSNC Disclosures page in **Blue e**™

In January 2008, the Joint Advisory Group (JAG) held its 1st meeting and is on track to meet every six months thereafter. Improvements scheduled for implementation in June 2008 include:

- Publication of 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. This list will be posted on the provider secure site by logging into **Blue e**™.
- Updating the member's Explanation of Benefits (EOB) to include the full member name and ID number, with a message stating when a member's balance exists, which will be denoted in the column "Amount Provider may Bill You." The EOB will also contain language letting members know that they may be responsible for certain payments to non-participating providers.
- The provider Explanation of Payment (EOP) will be updated to include a column for submitted units and paid units and an address and phone number for providers to contact if they have questions about their payment.

Initiatives scheduled for the second half of 2008 include a new provider Appeals process and the addition of Thomas Prompt Pay interest. In 2009, BCBSNC will be making full fee schedules available in **Blue e**™, as well as creating the ability for providers to submit medical records electronically. More information related to these initiatives will be sent later this year.

We will continue these quarterly updates to inform you about changes related to the Thomas/Love Settlement. If you would like additional information, please visit our provider Web site at http://www.bcbsnc.com/providers/thomas_love/index.cfm, or contact your BCBSNC Network Management representative.

* In November 2007, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina communicated information related to the 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. BCBSNC joined the majority of other Blue Plans and state medical societies across the country to resolve a number of issues between physicians and Blue Plans regarding claims processing and payment practices.

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