

## Utilization Management Department/Commercial and Medicare

Utilization management is the use of managed care techniques such as prior authorizations that allow health insurance companies to manage the cost of health care benefits by assessing its appropriateness before it is provided using evidence-based criteria or guidelines. Santé UM Department consists of Authorization Coordinators, Nurses and Doctors.

Authorizations should be submitted using the Quick Cap Provider Portal. In addition, authorization information or status inquiries can be obtained using the Provider Portal. The portal can be accessed using the following link:

<https://www.santephysicians.com/> Portal Issues can be reported to [portalsupport@santehealth.net](mailto:portalsupport@santehealth.net)

### **Services Requiring Prior Authorization**

- Bariatric Surgery
- Colonoscopy; EGD; Manometry
- Cosmetic/Reconstructive Surgery
- Durable Medical Equipment purchases over \$500 (Per line item)
- Durable Medical Equipment (All rentals, regardless of cost)
- Genetic Testing
- Home Health
- Home Infusion
- Infusions – Ambulatory
- Injections: Self-injectables
- Injections: In-office injectables
- MRI, MRA, CT and Pet scans
- Out of Plan Provider
- Sleep Studies
- Transplants (In conjunction with Health Plan programs)
- Varicose Vein Treatment
- Wound Care – Facility Based

### **UM Department Turn-around Times**

- **Routine requests** – when received with all required documentation, a routine request will be decided **within 5 business days**.
- **Expedited requests** – when received with all required documentation, an expedited request may be decided **as soon as 24 hours and no later than 72 hours**.

An expedited request should only be submitted in situations that are considered time sensitive. A time sensitive situation is defined as any situation in which waiting for the standard decision making process could result in seriously jeopardizing the member's life, health, or the ability to regain maximum function. Examples of time sensitive situations include but are not limited to severe pain and potential loss of life, limb, or major bodily function. **Scheduling matters are not reason for urgent submission.**

The following are situations & conditions where the above urgent criterion does not apply:

- Elective procedures
- DME for pre-existing conditions
- Injectable drugs for chronic conditions
- Advanced imaging for chronic conditions
- Specialty Referrals for chronic conditions
- Mobility Treatment/Devices
- Hearing Aids
- Sleep Studies
- Cranial Orthoses

To ensure our members are properly cared for, please follow the guidelines below when submitting your request:

- Check benefits and eligibility with the health plan
- Authorization form should be completed in full with all required fields
- All requests require clinical documentation to determine medical necessity
- Do not schedule appointments prior to authorization approval – we do not review for retroactive services

Prior authorization requests are reviewed by clinical and medical staff such as doctors and nurses. To meet state and national standards, the reviewer uses current clinical guidelines to decide if the request is medically necessary. When a prior authorization request is authorized, modified, or denied a copy of the guideline, protocol or other similar criteria, on which the decision was based, can be requested, by calling Santé Community Physicians at (559) 228-2905 or at the following Health Plan's websites:

Aetna <https://www.aetna.com/health-care-professionals/clinical-policy-bulletins.html>

Anthem Blue Cross <https://www.anthem.com/ca/provider/policies/clinical-guidelines/>

Blue Shield <https://www.blueshieldca.com/provider/authorizations/clinical-policies/medical-procedures/policy.sp>

Cigna <https://static.cigna.com/assets/chcp/resourceLibrary/coveragePolicies/index.html>

Health Net [https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en\\_us/providers/working-with-hn/medical\\_policies.html](https://www.healthnet.com/content/healthnet/en_us/providers/working-with-hn/medical_policies.html)

United Healthcare <https://www.uhcprovider.com/en/policies-protocols.html>

CMS: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/new-search/search.aspx>

AIM: <https://aimspecialtyhealth.com/resources/clinical-guidelines/>

**If your request is approved**, you will be notified of the approval via fax. This notice includes the member's information and authorization information such as the authorization number, valid dates, and the services approved. In some instances, you will need to forward this letter to the provider of services when applicable (DME vendor, hospital, specialist, etc.). A letter of approval will also be mailed to the member.

**If your request is modified or denied**, the provider will receive a copy of the member's notification letter via fax. This notice includes the member's information, authorization information, as well as listing the name and contact information for the practitioner responsible for this decision. The determination letter will be mailed to the member and includes important information such as their appeal rights if they do not agree with our decision.

### **Clinical Appeals**

Members can appeal their authorization denial by submitting an appeal to their health plan. Their appeal rights and instructions including the mailing address and telephone number are included in the member denial letter.

Providers can submit an appeal to the member's health plan on the member's behalf, or call the Santé Chief Medical Officer to request a Peer to Peer at (559) 228-4455.

To request an appeal by telephone or in writing contact the Health Plan at the following locations:

#### **Aetna Health of California, Inc.**

Attn: Regional Medical Services  
Commercial Grievance & Appeals Unit  
P.O. Box 10169  
Van Nuys, CA 91410  
Telephone: 1-800-756-7039  
Fax: 1-860-754-5321  
Internet: [www.aetna.com](http://www.aetna.com)

#### **Aetna Senior**

Medicare Plan Grievance & Appeals Unit  
P.O. Box 14067  
Lexington, KY 40512  
Toll Free: 1-800-932-2159  
Fax: 1-909-476-5216 or 1-866-604-7092  
Internet: [www.aetna.com](http://www.aetna.com)

#### **Alignment Health Plan**

Attn: Appeals & Grievance Department  
1100 W. Town and Country Road, Suite 300  
Orange, CA 92868  
Telephone: 1-866-634-2247  
Fax: 1-323-201-5690  
Internet:  
<https://www.alignmenthealthplan.com>

#### **Anthem Blue Cross**

Attn: Grievance & Appeals Department  
P.O. Box 4310  
Woodland Hills, CA 91365-4310  
Telephone: 1-800-365-0609  
Fax: 1-818-234-1089  
Internet: [www.bluecrossca.com](http://www.bluecrossca.com)

#### **Blue Shield of California**

Attn: Member Appeals and Grievances  
P.O. Box 5588  
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762-0011  
Telephone: 1-800-424-6521  
Fax: 1-916-350-7585  
Internet: [www.mylifepath.com](http://www.mylifepath.com)

#### **Blue Shield 65 Plus HMO**

Appeals & Grievances Department  
P.O. Box 927  
Woodland Hills, CA 91365-9856  
Telephone: 1-800-776-4466  
Fax: 1-916-350-6510  
Internet:

#### **Brand New Day**

Appeal and Grievance Dept.  
5455 Garden Grove Blvd., 5th Floor  
Westminster, CA 92683  
Telephone: 1-866-255-4795  
Fax: 1-657-400-1217  
TTY/TDD: 1-866-321-5955

#### **CIGNA Health Care**

National Appeals Unit  
P.O. Box 5225  
Scranton, PA 18505-5225  
Telephone: 1-800-244-6224  
Fax: 1-800-988-4741

#### **Health Net of California, Inc.**

Medicare Appeals & Grievances  
P.O. Box 10344  
Van Nuys, CA 91410-0344  
Phone: 1-800-275-4737  
Fax: 1-877-713-6189

#### **UnitedHealthcare**

Appeals & Grievances Dept.  
Mail Stop CA 124-0157  
P.O. Box 6106  
Cypress, CA 90630  
Telephone: 1-800-228-2144  
Fax: 1-888-517-7113  
Internet: [www.unitedhealthcare.com](http://www.unitedhealthcare.com)

### **Common UM Denials**

- Cosmetic
- Not a plan benefit
- Inadequate medical justification
- Conservative treatment or required imaging (x-ray) prior to Complex Imaging requests
- Incomplete notes or lack of documentation
- Services can be provided by an in-plan provider
- Failure to see an in plan specialist prior to requesting OON
- Alternate service recommended
- Does not comply with UM guidelines

Santé Physicians Utilization Management department utilizes a hierarchy of criteria when making coverage determinations for each line of business. Depending on line of business, the following criteria may be used.

1. Eligibility and benefits (Evidence of Coverage)
2. State-specific and Federal guidelines or mandates
3. Health Plan Guidelines and Benefit Interpretation Policies
4. InterQual, Adult and Pediatric
5. Apollo Managed Care Guidelines
6. AIM Clinical Appropriateness Guidelines
7. National Comprehensive Cancer Network
8. Medical Group/IPA Policy
9. CMS Criteria (NCD, LCD, LCA, MBPM)

## Referrals

Primary Care Physicians (PCPs) act as care managers of their patients' health and are responsible for ensuring that their patients in need of medical care beyond their scope of practice are referred to appropriate Specialist Physicians, designated services or providers. Referral forms are available to be used by PCPs when directing patients to these providers.

This policy will not apply in situations where patients are seen on an emergent basis or when utilizing one of the self-referring options.

## Referral Process

A referral form template is provided to each PCP office to refer Santé HMO members to a specialist. The PCP may use the template provided by Santé or use his/her own referral form. If the PCP opts to use his/her own referral form, the referral form must contain, at a minimum, all information contained in the Santé referral form template. Referrals can also be sent electronically using EPIC.

Complete a referral form in its entirety when referring to an in-plan physician specialist, designated service or provider. (Do not complete a referral form for routine services, such as x-rays or lab work.) Referrals must include dates, diagnoses and diagnosis codes. Fax or mail a copy of the referral form to the Specialist Provider.

## NOTES:

Please contact Utilization Management for authorization of any non-plan provider. This ensures benefit compliance, use of contracted facilities, and negotiation of rates. DO NOT FILL OUT A REFERRAL FORM to a non-plan provider. This will obligate Santé to pay at non-plan rates, and the referring physician will be monetarily penalized.

Non-authorized elective services rendered by a non-plan provider, as a result of a Santé contracted physician referral, shall be approved for payment according to the following protocol:

- Services will be paid to the non-plan provider at non-plan rates.
- The referring Santé physician's future reimbursements will be debited the amount equal to the difference between payment made to the non-plan provider and the Santé contract reimbursement rate, not to exceed \$1000 for each unauthorized referral.
- Self-referral options are the only exception.

## Self-Referrals OBGYN Services

An HMO female member has the option of seeking obstetrical and gynecological physician services directly from a Santé OB/GYN or from a participating family practice physician, surgeon, or internist designated as providing OB/GYN services. Additionally, self-referral patient information must be communicated back to the patient's PCP of record. This includes:

- OB/GYN preventive care
- Pregnancy
- Gynecological complaint

OB/GYNs and other specialists treating a Santé HMO patient under this policy must remember to mark SELF-REFERRAL in box 19 of your HCFA form in lieu of submitting a Santé referral number and form.

## Medicare members Self-Referral

### Brand New Day

Members who wish to self-refer will call directly to Brand New Day member services. Brand New Day will complete a Santé prior authorization form with all the pertinent information and fax to Santé UM. Brand New Day will indicate on the form "Member Self-Referral"

Santé UM will treat the request as if received by the provider and the request will process the request accordingly.

## HMO Commercial Plans with Self-Referral Options

### Blue Shield

All Blue Shield HMO members may participate in the *Blue Shield Access +* enhancement. This enhancement allows the patient to self-refer to a Santé Specialist Physician or PCP, other than assigned PCP. Services included:

- Basic examinations/consultations/routine office based diagnostic and/or treatment procedures performed during the Access + visit
- Conventional x-rays (excluding diagnostic imaging, MRI, CT or bone density measurement) and laboratory services that may be provided in the physician's office or by Santé contracted radiology or lab providers
- Self-Referral copay is collected
- Send these claims to Santé, indicating Access + Benefit in field #19 on the HCFA 1500 form
- Patient must present both the Blue Shield HMO ID Card and the Access+ Specialist Card

### Anthem Blue Cross

All Anthem Blue Cross HMO Members may participate in the *Direct Access* enhancement. This enhancement allows the patient to self-refer to a Santé Specialist Physician in the following areas only:

- Allergy
- Dermatology
- Ear, Nose & Throat
- Obstetrics/Gynecology

#### Services included

- Medically necessary services that can be done in the Specialist's Office. Any care needed outside the Specialist's office must be coordinated through the PCP
- Normal copay is collected
- Number of visits are not limited
- Send these claims to Santé, indicating Direct Access in field #19 on the HCFA 1500 form
- No changes on Anthem Blue Cross ID Card
- Anthem Blue Cross POS plans offer this enhancement as well

## **Behavioral Health**

**A referral from the Primary Care Physician is not necessary** for members to access Behavioral Health Services services. The provider office can direct the member to contact the behavioral health administrators at the following numbers:  
*(Please keep in mind that the PCP may also contact the administrator)*

### **Aetna (Commercial)**

Contact "Aetna Member Services" number listed on the back of patient ID card and request assistance with a behavioral health referral

### **Aetna Senior**

BBMC (559) 437-1111

### **Alignment Health Plan**

BBMC (559) 437-1111

### **Anthem Blue Cross (Commercial)**

Behavioral Health Plan

1-800-677-6669

### **Blue Shield (Commercial)**

Magellan

1-877-263-9952

### **Blue Shield Senior**

BBMC (559) 437-1111

### **Brand New Day**

BBMC (559) 437-1111

### **Cigna**

Check Member ID Card – Carve out providers vary

### **Health Net (Commercial & Medicare)**

Managed Health Network

For urgent or emergent referrals: 888-426-0030 Self-referrals: Call phone number on back of ID card

### **UnitedHealthcare (Commercial)**

Optum Behavioral Health at 800-999-9585

### **UnitedHealthcare Medicare**

BBMC (559) 437-1111