



New Provider Contracting & Credentialing Process

In the near future BCBSMT will transition its credentialing processes to utilize the Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH) Universal Provider Data source (UPD), a nonprofit alliance of health plans and trade associations to electronically collect provider credentialing data. CAQH collaborates on initiatives that simplify healthcare administration for health plans and providers.

Providers may utilize the UPD at no cost.

In addition, BCBSMT will be implementing new in-house technology to handle its contracting and credentialing processes.

Initial Credentialing Process

Effective 9/11/14, when a new professional provider applies for network participation, existing providers adding additional providers to their practice contract must submit the Agreement "Add Sheet"/ Amendment B with the new provider's information. New providers not affiliated with an existing contracted practice must request a BCBSMT Provider Record ID by submitting a form, which will be provided on our website at bcbsmt.com. A new Fax number is being established for submittal of these forms, or they may be submitted via e-mail to HCSSPEC@bcbsmt.com

After receiving either form, BCBSMT will create a provider record and assign a provider i.d. in its system. BCBSMT will then add the provider to its roster with CAQH and for new providers not affiliated with an existing contracted practice, a contract will be sent and will need to be signed and returned. CAQH will send a registration letter including an assigned ID and instructions on how to register using the UPD. The provider is then able to access the UPD database via the Internet and enter the credentialing application. Only organization(s) the provider authorizes will have access to their data. The provider must authorize BCBSMT to view their credentials.

Providers that already utilize CAQH and are registered must simply authorize BCBSMT to view their credentials.

As you may recall, BCBSMT became a division of Health Care Service Corporation (HCSC) in August of 2013. BCBSMT is working in collaboration with our HCSC partners in the Texas Plan on the credentialing process. Staff in the

Texas office will collect additional information required and will verify the information supplied in the credentialing application.

BCBSMT's local Credentialing Committee, consisting of practicing healthcare providers in the state of Montana, will continue to review and approve the applications.

Once the credentialing process is complete, the credentialing approval letter is sent. The contract will be executed and a welcome letter will be sent along with a copy of the executed agreement and effective date of the contract.

As a reminder, **the effective date of the contract is the credentialing approval date. Effective dates are not backdated.** Please be sure to start the process prior to the provider's start of practice to avoid non-participating status.

Once the provider's credentialing information is entered into CAQH, the provider will receive an automatic reminder to review, update and attest to data accuracy once every four months.

Recredentialing Process

BCBSMT will access the UPD database for a provider's data during their scheduled recredentialing cycle every third year. CAQH will automatically transmit information to BCBSMT if information is complete & current. The provider will only receive a recredentialing notice if his/her information in the UPD is not current.

Effective September 1, 2014, CAQH will begin collecting the data required for the BCBSMT recredentialing for providers whose recredentialing is due in December 2014 and going forward. Providers will begin receiving recredentialing notices 6 months in advance of their recredentialing due date, if the provider has not recently updated the CAQH.

Benefits

Working with CAQH will make the credentialing process more uniform and ease your administrative processes, saving both time and money. It will eliminate the need to complete multiple credentialing applications for multiple health plans. Your information can be kept current at all times. You will only receive recredentialing notices if your information in the UPD is not current. The UPD online credentialing application process supports BCBSMT's administrative simplification and paper reduction efforts.

What Next?

If you are already registered with CAQH through your participation with another health plan, you will need to log in to the UPD database at <https://upd.caqh.org/oas> and add BCBSMT as one of the health plans authorized to access your information or select “global authorization.” This will allow BCBSMT to obtain your current credentialing information from the UPD database. You may do so at this time.

If you are not already registered with CAQH, 6 months in advance of your recredentialing due date, you will be rostered by BCBSMT and will receive notice that you are due for recredentialing and the letter will include your CAQH assigned ID and instructions on how to register using the UPD. You may then access the UPD database via the Internet and enter your credentialing application. **If you do not have Internet access**, you may call the CAQH Help Desk at (888) 599-1771 and complete the application by telephone. Supporting documentation for the credentialing process may be faxed to a specific toll-free fax number (866) 293-0414.

If you have a new provider that will be joining your practice, or are a new provider not affiliated with an existing contracted practice follow the current process until 9/10/14. **On and after 9/11/14**, follow the Initial Credentialing process defined above to obtain a BCBSMT provider record. Please account for time to complete the entire process prior to the provider’s start date. The process takes an average of 45 days to complete.

Resources

Please watch the BCBSMT Provider page at bcbsmt.com for more information in the future. The Provider page will be updated to provide resources to guide providers through the process.

For more information on the CAQH application process visit its web site at <http://www.caqh.org> . The CAQH Help Desk may be reached by phone at (888)599-1771 or e-mail at caqh.updhelp@acsgs.com