

BCBS MN Announces New Appeals Policy affecting Prior Authorization Requirements for Physical Therapy Services – Effective June 3, 2019.

The MN PT Association is pleased to inform members that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota announced a new Appeals Policy which includes a change to the prior authorization requirement for physical therapy services. The updated policy, *Final OP Therapy and Chiro PA Changes Bulletin P34-19.pdf* can be accessed at the BCBS MN website using the link <http://bit.ly/2Ud3AMk>

BCBS MN is supportive of access by their members to conservative care providers, which includes physical therapist services, and wanted to lower the barriers to access of physical therapist services. It is the MNPTA's understanding that concerns about variability of physical therapy practice and utilization of physical therapy services remains a focus, therefore the utilization management program of SecureCare will continue.

The MN PT Association's Payer Advocacy Workgroup, a workgroup of the State Government Affairs and Payment Committees, have participated in ongoing meetings with BCBS MN and other payers in the state. The purpose of these meetings is to promote the value of physical therapist services provided by physical therapists and physical therapist assistants and share concerns related to access or care as a result of therapy coverage policies.

MNPTA believes that access to physical therapist services is an important strategy in helping to favorably bend the cost curve of health care in Minnesota. There is strong research evidence to support that physical therapy reduces the total cost of care for various conditions commonly treated in physical therapy. Physical therapist services play a key role in the reduction of the use of opioids and have been recommended by the CDC as an effective non-pharmacological provider in the treatment of pain in many patient conditions.ⁱ

As a valued member the MN APTA and Payer Advocacy Workgroup appreciates your feedback and input on payer or payment changes impacting your practice. Please feel free to reach out to info@mnapta.org, or contact the workgroup at <https://www.mnapta.org/page/ContactPayorAdvocacy>

ⁱAmerican Physical Therapy Association. PT in Motion News 6-20-2018. http://www.apta.org/uploadedFiles/APTAorg/Advocacy/Federal/Legislative_Issues/Opioid/APTAOpioidWhitePaper.pdf