
COVID-19 Update Temporary Change to Admission Approval Process for Post-Acute Care

As the number of COVID-19 hospital admissions continues to rise, we understand your need to accelerate appropriate discharges and increase bed capacity. Effective Aug. 1, 2021 and until further notice, we are temporarily changing our prior authorization requirements for patients being transferred from acute hospital settings to skilled nursing facilities for post-acute care. This is for in-network skilled nursing facilities only and does not include long-term acute care facilities or inpatient rehabilitation.

Below are the temporary processes for Florida Blue Medicare and commercial lines of business. These temporary changes do not apply to the Federal Employee Program. **Update:** The changes also do not apply to members of other Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield plans who may have accessed your services through the BlueCard® system.

Florida Blue Medicare Process

CareCentrix manages post-acute care for Florida Blue Medicare members. The skilled nursing facility must notify CareCentrix of the admission by the end of the calendar day after admission. The first five days of the post-acute facility admission will be automatically approved.

CareCentrix will review the admission by the fifth day. This timely notification and review are still required to determine medical necessity of continued stay and ensure Florida Blue can assist with discharge planning for its members.

- This only applies to in-network skilled nursing facilities. Out-of-network providers will still be required to receive an authorization from CareCentrix.
- For in-network providers, follow the normal business process, but within the same day as admission, which includes these three options:
 - Call CareCentrix at **844-359-5386** from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. local time, including weekends. For all other hours and holidays, dial the above number and follow the appropriate prompts to leave a message. Messages left with the on-call service will be returned within one hour.
 - Fax the completed authorization request form to **877-240-0713**. This form is available on the CareCentrix HomeBridgeSM provider portal. The fax line is available during normal hours of operation.
 - Facilities using Allscripts/CarePort should follow these detailed instructions on how to set up CareCentrix in their system.
 - Additional information and resources are available on the CareCentrix HomeBridge portal at [carecentrixportal.com](https://www.carecentrixportal.com).

Commercial Lines of Business

Florida Blue is an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

The first five days of post-acute facility admission to a skilled nursing facility will be automatically approved. Skilled nursing facilities are still required to notify Florida Blue of a patient being transferred from an inpatient acute hospital setting to their facility by the end of the following business day. This timely notification and review are still required to determine medical necessity of continued stay and ensure Florida Blue can assist with discharge planning for its members.

Normal business processes for notification apply:

- Notifications can be entered and verified electronically through Availity^{®1} at [availity.com](https://www.availity.com).
- Fax any available clinical records including history and physical, labs, current medications, prior level of function, therapy notes and discharge plans to **305-716-2731**.

¹Availity, LLC is a multi-payer joint venture company. For more information or to register, visit [availity.com](https://www.availity.com)