

IMPORTANT REMINDER ABOUT YOUR INSURANCE COVERAGE

UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS OF RECEIVING CARE FROM PROVIDERS OUTSIDE THE NETWORK

What is a provider network?

A provider network is a list of doctors, health care providers, and hospitals that your insurance plan (Blue Cross Blue Shield) has negotiated and contracted with to provide medical care and services at reasonable, mutually agreed upon prices. These providers are called “network providers” or “in-network providers”, and this widespread network gives you access to safe, quality and affordable healthcare. The purpose of the network is to keep your costs down.



What is an out-of-network provider and what are the financial risks for receiving care out-of-network?

A Provider that hasn't contracted or agreed on pricing with your insurance plan is called an “out-of-network provider”. Providers outside the network have chosen not to enter into fee agreements or offer discount arrangements to BCBS covered members, they have not agreed on “reasonable and customary” charges and this leaves the patient without the protection offered by insurance network discounts. If you choose to receive care from a Provider outside the BCBS network, you will pay much higher medical costs and pay significantly higher out-of-pocket expenses. This is because out-of-network providers can bill the patient at any cost.

! Is my out-of-network deductible higher?

Yes, if you receive care from an out-of-network provider, your deductible is 3x higher than the in-network deductible.

! How does the 60/40 Cost Sharing work if I choose a Provider outside the network?

In addition to higher costs for receiving out-of-network care, it is also important to understand that the out-of-network 60/40 cost sharing only applies to “allowable charges”. Allowable charges refers to “reasonable and customary” costs as defined by BCBS for a covered service. Because BCBS is unable to contain costs outside their network, they will ONLY cover 60% of “reasonable and customary” costs for services you receive, they will NOT cover 60% of the full amount you are billed by an out-of-network provider. You will be exposing yourself to greater financial risks. Remember, Providers outside the network can bill you at any cost, you will not receive insurance discounts and you will not be protected from unreasonably high medical bills. Essentially you could be responsible for the majority of the charges billed by an out-of-network provider.

Be Proactive: Know the Facts

Your benefit will be significantly more by staying within the BCBS network. However, if you feel you require care from a Provider who is outside the network, be aware of the risk and know the facts. Before making the decision to see an out-of-network provider, you are advised to call BCBS customer service and receive guidance on how your costs could be impacted. Also, before you receive treatment, you should ask the out-of-network provider for a break down of charges you will be responsible for paying.

Link for Provider Search www.BCBSLA.com