



An Independent Licensee of the
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

September 2017

Update: Important Information for Florida Blue Patients Affected by Hurricane Irma

9/7/17 Updates are underlined

Emergency Supply of Drugs and Access to Care (Updated 9/7/17)

In response to Governor Rick Scott declaring a State of Emergency in Florida, Florida Blue will temporarily allow members in all Florida counties to get an early refill of their medications. This bulletin has also been updated to include information about access to care for members during Hurricane Irma.

Prescriptions

Florida Blue Member Services has been notified and Prime Therapeutics has provided all in-network pharmacies authorization codes to fill a 30-day emergency supply upon request.

Access to Care

Below are some key messages relating to member access to care during Hurricane Irma:

- Non-emergency medical appointments should be rescheduled.
- Emergency services will be covered at in-network levels.
- Prior authorizations will continue to be worked as they come in.
- If a Florida Blue patient seeks care for a service without prior authorization, the service will be covered as long as the patient shows their valid Florida Blue member ID card.
- For pregnant women: If a pregnant woman is evacuated and she goes into labor, her services will be covered when she shows her valid Florida Blue member ID card.
- **For Medicare ONLY:**
- Claims that come in without prior authorization will be held and not denied.
 - Medicare follows a mandate to review the claim or case after the service but before the claim is paid.
 - Medicare dialysis patients can continue to receive treatment as long as the dialysis center is Medicare-certified.

Impacted Members and Timing

For two weeks, from September 5–19, all commercial and Medicare members are able to get an early refill of their prescriptions from in-network pharmacy providers. Members who go to an **out-of-network** provider may **not** be able to fill their prescriptions early.

Background

On September 4, Governor Rick Scott declared a State of Emergency in those areas and counties that may be impacted by Hurricane Irma. To support our members who live in areas affected by the governor's declaration and to comply with state law, Florida Blue and Prime will allow members to get their medications filled early upon request.

Accept Member ID Cards During Emergency and Natural Disasters

It's peak hurricane season and Irma is a looming threat. That means it's time to accept ID cards from Florida Blue or other Blue Plan members during an emergency or disaster like Irma – even if you're unable to communicate with us. Here are a few general guidelines to remember if you're unable to follow normal business procedures.

Accept the Card Guidelines

1. Verify member eligibility and benefits electronically through Availity^{®1}.
2. If you can't verify member eligibility and benefits electronically, contact the Florida Blue Provider Contact Center at **(800) 727-2227**.
3. If you're unable to verify member eligibility and benefits electronically or by phone:
 - Accept a valid Florida Blue ID card and picture ID (or)
 - Accept a Florida Blue universal application, acknowledgement/acceptance letter and picture ID
4. If you can't submit claims electronically:
 - Hold electronic claims for 14 calendar days or until service is restored.
 - If you convert electronic claims to paper claims, purge the electronic claims from your system to avoid duplicate claim submissions.

Authorizations

1. Authorizations and certifications can be entered and verified electronically through Availity.
2. If you're unable to verify or enter authorizations online, contact the Florida Blue utilization management center at **(800) 955-5692**.
3. If a national/statewide emergency or natural disaster occurs, we will send you information on how to obtain authorizations.
4. Remember to contact Florida Blue for retroactive approval/authorization once the emergency situation is over.

Electronic Alternatives

Florida Blue has clinical tools that are available anytime from anywhere with internet access. To increase coordination of care and patient satisfaction during an emergency situation, physicians can use up-to-date online capabilities through Availity's **Patient Care Summary**.

Patient Care Summary is a longitudinal care record that shows up to 24 months of your patients' medical claims history including diagnoses, procedures, prescriptions, lab results and laboratory services performed by all of their providers. Care reminders are also provided. You can access Availity at availity.com.

¹ Availity LLC is a joint venture, multi-payer company. Visit Availity.com to register.