

## Additional enhancements to the TurningPoint musculoskeletal surgical quality and safety management program

In the [June 2021 issue of The Record](#), we announced several enhancements to the TurningPoint Healthcare Solutions LLC musculoskeletal surgical quality and safety management program.

Since then, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Blue Care Network and TurningPoint have identified several opportunities to enhance the pain management portion of the program. Changes include:

- Updating medical policies for several pain management procedures
- Updating questionnaires for pain management procedures
- Removing prior authorization requirements for select procedures

### Changes to TurningPoint medical policies for some pain management procedures

As of May 25, 2021, TurningPoint updated pain management medical policies to align more closely with Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services guidelines. Pain management medical policies have been updated as follows.

Note: TurningPoint applies CMS local and national coverage determination guidelines for Medicare Plus Blue<sup>SM</sup> and BCN Advantage<sup>SM</sup> members. For more information about the criteria TurningPoint uses to make determinations on authorization requests for pain management procedures for all members, see this [news item on the ereferrals.bcbsm.com website](#).

#### Frequency of sessions allowed for epidural steroid injections

Previous policy	Updated policy
Allowed a total of 3 ESI injection sessions in a 6-month period <b>regardless of region</b> (cervical / thoracic or lumbar)	Allows 3 injection sessions in a 6-month period <b>per episode of pain per region</b> (cervical / thoracic or lumbar)

### Number of levels allowed per session for epidural steroid injections

Previous policy	Updated policy
Allowed 1 ESI level regardless of type	Number of levels allowed depends on type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 level is allowed for caudal, interlaminar or bilateral transforaminal</li> <li>2 levels are allowed for unilateral transforaminal</li> </ul>

### Time frame requirements for conservative treatments

Previous policies	Updated policies
Required 6 weeks of conservative treatment for epidural steroid injections, facet joint injections and sacroiliac joint injections	Requires only 4 weeks of conservative treatment for epidural steroid injections, facet joint injections and sacroiliac joint injections

### Pain management questionnaire updates

As of May 31, 2021, we stopped requiring answers to the following questions on the questionnaires within the TurningPoint Provider Portal and pain management fax forms:

- What is the patient's current health status?
- Activities of daily living (ADL) functional status
- For a BMI over 30, which weight loss activities have been documented?

Soon, we'll remove these questions from the questionnaires.

### Removing prior authorization requirements for select procedures

For dates of service on or after July 1, 2021, we won't require prior authorization for the following procedure codes for refilling and recharging pain pumps: \*62367, \*62368, \*62369 and \*62370.

### Additional information

As a reminder, TurningPoint manages authorizations for orthopedic, pain management and spinal procedures for the following groups and members:

- Blue Cross commercial\*\* — All fully insured groups, select self-funded groups and all members with individual coverage
- Medicare Plus Blue members

## Provider alert

Blue Cross commercial, Medicare Plus Blue<sup>SM</sup>,  
Blue Care Network commercial and BCN Advantage<sup>SM</sup>

**Category: Authorizations/referrals**

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- BCN commercial members
- BCN Advantage members

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**\*\*To determine whether you need to submit prior authorization requests for Blue Cross commercial members, see the document titled [Determining whether Blue Cross commercial members require prior authorization for musculoskeletal surgeries and related procedures](#).**