Quest Diagnostics Lab Transition

Frequently Asked Questions

Overview

Why is BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee making this change?

VSHP has experienced double-digit growth in laboratory expenditures during the past year – greater than 25 percent growth in one region over 12 months. This trend is clearly not sustainable. In addition, we have an obligation to keep the cost of care in check, especially within the state’s publicly funded TennCare program. These lab changes are being made in response to these factors.

When does this program go into effect?

The Quest lab program began July 1, meaning providers should be sending all relevant labs to Quest Diagnostics already. However, based on feedback from our provider community, VSHP elected to delay the date that non-compliant lab claims will begin denying until October 1, 2012.

Can we still perform certain lab tests ourselves?

Yes. Outpatient lab testing for members covered by VSHP should be referred to Quest Diagnostics with the following limited exceptions:

1. Lab testing included on the approved Exclusion List can be performed by other providers. The Exclusion List is posted on the provider section of our website at www.VSHPTN.com/providers

2. Lab testing conducted for Emergency room-based labs and Outpatient observation labs can still be provided by other providers

3. The Exclusion List also excludes certain pediatric, pathology and obstetrical lab tests (see list for specific codes).

4. Proprietary lab test not available through Quest Diagnostics (i.e. BRAC Analysis) can be performed by other providers

5. Outpatient dialysis clinics are excluded from the Quest program as well.
Will this be implemented for commercial members? What about other lines of business?

No decision made at this point, but that is a possibility that we are considering. We will evaluate that decision once we have implemented this change within VSHP.

I have my own staffed lab that can handle these types of services. Why make the change?

We’ve experienced double-digit growth in this area, and have an obligation under our contract with the state to manage costs within the TennCare program. Quest offered significantly lower rates for lab services under this arrangement than we pay currently. Given rate pressures and our obligation to reduce costs wherever possible under our state contract, this is an appropriate step for us to take without negatively impacting patient care.

How is inpatient lab affected by this change?

Inpatient lab services are not affected by this program. The program requirements do apply to all other outpatient lab services with exception of:

- Services included on the Exclusion List
- Proprietary labs not provided by Quest
- Outpatient dialysis clinics

Will I still get paid for the specimen collection?

Yes, specimen collection will be reimbursed at current contracted levels as well as procedures on the Exclusion List that are performed in the office setting. The specimen collection codes on the Exclusion List are 36415, 36416, 36591, and 36592.

How quickly will Quest provide lab results?

Quest will deliver 97 percent of lab results within 24 hours. Based on their experience with similar efforts, 80 percent of results are ready by 8 am the next morning.

Will courier services be provided in both rural and urban areas?

Yes. Quest schedules their own couriers to pick up specimens at a provider’s office – free of charge - based on the time preferred by the ordering MD. This includes both rural and urban pick up.
Will VSHP set up a hotline for physicians offices to get answers to questions and/or report problems/concerns (slow performance/nonperformance; quality concerns, etc.)?

Providers may contact Quest Support 24/7/365 to report problems at 866-MY-QUEST (866-697-8378), which is a comprehensive physician and patient service line from Quest. Providers will also be able to contact VSHP provider service lines or local BCBST provider field representatives to report problems and concerns with Quest.

Do other TennCare managed care companies use a similar approach to lab services?

We understand other health plans have established preferred arrangements with labs in recent years, where in- and out-of-network rates are paid.

How will OON/OOS services be handled?

Claims will be paid as long as an OON authorization is obtained.

How will TPL claims be handled?

TPL claims will be excluded from the Quest program.

Are dual eligible members included in this program?

Dual Eligible members will be excluded from the Quest program.

How will dialysis clinics be handled?

Outpatient dialysis clinics will be excluded from the Quest program.

Are undocumented aliens included in this program?

Undocumented aliens will be excluded from the Quest program.
**Exclusion List**

**Will VSHP change or add services to the Exclusion List?**

The Exclusion List details the lab services that are not required to be sent to Quest. We created the Exclusion List to include tests that are time sensitive, including the ER setting, and/or for certain pediatric, pathology, OB or observation services.

The Exclusion List incorporates feedback we received from the provider community since the introduction of this effort. As a result, the Exclusion List is smaller than originally proposed; however, we believe these changes allow health care professionals greater flexibility to administer appropriate care while still allowing VSHP to achieve its goals.

As a reminder, the intent of the categorical exclusions referenced above and the Exclusion List is to exclude lab testing that requires near immediate results or are not otherwise clinically appropriate to send to Quest Diagnostics for testing. All other outpatient labs performed on behalf of VSHP members should be sent to Quest Diagnostics for processing.

Going forward, we do not expect to grow the Exclusion List significantly, but that list will be reviewed annually. The currently Exclusion List is posted at [www.vshptn.com/providers](http://www.vshptn.com/providers).

**What is the process for obtaining stat labs? Will physicians be allowed to send tests to a local lab/hospital?**

A list of codes excluded from the Quest program (the Exclusion List) is published at [www.vshptn.com/providers](http://www.vshptn.com/providers). Codes on this list, codes for services delivered in the emergency room, or codes for pathology, OB or observation services can be performed by the provider or labs other than Quest.

**Does the Exclusion List mean the codes contained on that list are excluded from this change, or are these the only lab tests that should be sent to Quest?**

The Exclusion List is a listing of lab procedures that can still be done in the provider’s office. These tests, and tests that are performed in an emergency room setting or for OB, pathology or observation services, do not have to be sent to Quest.

**How are labs on the Exclusion List paid?**

Lab tests included on the Exclusion List are paid at the current contracted rate.
If a provider collects the specimen, that provider will always bill for the specimen collection. If a lab test is on the Exclusion List or is an excluded service category (ER, OB, pathology, observation), the provider would bill as normal and be paid at the contracted rate. If the lab is not on the Exclusion List or an excluded service category, then the lab should go to Quest for processing and Quest will bill VSHP.

**How are labs performed in the emergency room paid?**

Lab tests performed in the emergency room are paid at the current contracted rate.

**Working With Quest Diagnostics**

**Do I have to have Care360 installed in my office to order labs and receive results?**

Care360 is a free, internet-based lab ordering and reporting system so no special software or computer hardware is required. A Quest Diagnostics representative will help providers who do not currently use Quest establish an account. This includes providing the web-link to the ordering and reporting system, conducting training for office staff and supplying the materials necessary to order lab tests.

**What if I still need help establishing my Care360 account or have other questions?**

You may contact Quest directly at 866-MY-QUEST (866-697-8378) to schedule an appointment or to receive answers to your questions.

**How quickly will Quest provide lab results?**

Quest will deliver 97 percent of lab results within 24 hours. Based on their experience with similar efforts, 80 percent of results are ready by 8 am the next morning.

**Can lab results reported by Quest integrate with my Electronic Medical Record?**

Yes. Quest currently works with more than 400 electronic medical record systems and has agreed to build interfaces with EMRs of Tennessee providers. Contact your network manager to discuss establishing an interface and Quest’s technical team will contact you to handle this interface.
**Will lock boxes be provided for after-hours pickup?**

Quest routinely provides lab drop boxes for after hours specimen pick up. During office visits with providers who do not currently use Quest, Quest representatives will work out details related to specimen pick up based on the preference of the ordering physician. This includes the option for after-hours pickup.

**How are results transmitted (mail/fax/email)? Will there be any routine results (pap, urine, etc.) where patients will have a call-in number to obtain results?**

Quest offers Care360 as an internet-based ordering and reporting system that requires no special software or computer hardware. Often, test results can be transmitted securely through Care360 directly to most practice management systems. For providers not already utilizing Care360, Quest representatives will help providers establish accounts and train staff on the ordering and reporting system. Quest has identified VSHP network providers who do not currently utilize Care360 and has outreached to these providers and made their offices to offer assistance prior to implementation. Results can also be received via Fax, Quest Courier or US Mail. Physicians can also receive results remotely via smart phones or call the Quest customer service center at 866-MY-QUEST.

*Without physician authorization:* State law does not permit Quest to report lab results directly to the patient. Patient lab results are best obtained by the patient contacting the ordering physician.

**Will Quest offer every test needed, or will there be a process in place to handle rare/specialty testing that might not be handled by Quest?**

Proprietary lab tests not available through Quest are excluded from the program (i.e. BRAC Analysis). Proprietary test codes will be included on the Exclusion List and BCBST will contract directly with those esoteric labs to perform their patented testing. Additionally, outpatient dialysis clinics will be excluded from the Quest program. Out-of-network labs will be paid as long as an authorization is obtained by the ordering physician.

**Does Quest contract with pathologists to interpret the lab results or do they do their own interpretations?**

Quest employs their own pathologists to interpret the tests.
Does Quest pick up the draws from the physician offices or do I have to use UPS to send to Quest?

Quest schedules their own couriers to pick up the specimens at a provider’s office based on the time preferred by the ordering physician.

Will Quest be prepared to handle the additional work load as a result of this change?

Yes, VSHP has inquired extensively about Quest’s capabilities to perform these services and has confidence that additional capacity can be managed well. Additionally, VSHP sought multiple references from other payers implementing the same process with Quest and received very positive feedback and recommendations.

How do physician practices obtain ordering physician forms?

Quest will supply the forms to the practices. Forms will not be required if the practices use the Quest Care360 website to order tests or obtain results.

Resources

What resources are available if I have questions?

The notice and Exclusion List that were sent to providers who treat members enrolled in BlueCare and TennCareSelect are available on the provider section of our website at www.VSHPTN.com/providers. That site also includes training videos for using the Care360 system and a list of frequently asked questions.

Health care providers who have questions can either call Quest at 866-MY-QUEST (866-697-8378) or call their BCBST provider network manager.

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<tr>
<th>Regional Office</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chattanooga</td>
<td>(423) 535-6307</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson</td>
<td>(731) 664-4127</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johnson City</td>
<td>(865) 588-4640</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knoxville</td>
<td>(865) 588-4640</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memphis</td>
<td>(901) 544-2399</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nashville</td>
<td>(615) 386-8630</td>
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Health care providers not currently using Quest Diagnostics for lab services will need to establish a Quest Lab Ordering and Reporting account. To request a Quest lab ordering and reporting account, providers should call 866-MY-QUEST (866-697-8378) Option 1, then Option 8. Quest has dedicated representatives available to assist in establishing those accounts.