

New Commercial Prior Authorization Process

Version 6, updated Aug. 7, 2025

Key Messages and FAQs for Providers

Background

Effective September 2025, we'll be using Cohere technology to review prior authorization requests for Commercial members. This doesn't apply to other lines of business at this time, but other lines of business will start using Cohere technology soon (not including FEP).

Providers will continue to send prior authorization requests for Commercial members through Availity® using the Prior Authorization Tool (PAT). Requests will be routed to Cohere via PAT.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How will providers submit prior authorizations for Commercial members?

Providers should continue to send Commercial prior authorization requests through Availity using PAT. Requests will be automatically routed to Cohere.

Q: What if a provider doesn't have access to Availity?

Providers who don't have access to Availity can submit their prior authorization requests by:

- Calling our Provider Service Line at **1-800-924-7141**
- Faxing the forms to us at **1-866-558-0789**

Q. How can providers register for Availity?

Providers can register for an account at Availity.com.

Q: Where can providers find prior authorization forms?

Prior authorization forms can be found at provider.bcbst.com under **Documents & Forms**. Then, under **Authorizations & Appeals**.

Q: Why is the group showing up as out of network?

Enter an individual provider number as the **Requesting Provider**. The group number may show as out of network. Enter the individual provider number or search for the individual provider number by clicking the orange magnifying glass.

Q: The provider is trying to use the group number as the facility, but it's showing as out of network.

Only facilities, home health companies and durable medical equipment (DME) providers can be entered in the facility field.

Q: Why do the Approved Units show more than what was originally requested?

We update the units to support all accommodating claims for the procedure. For example, outpatient surgery would be the facility and surgeon's claims.

Q: Why is the system asking for a facility for home health and DME?

Cohere technology loads home health agencies and DME providers as facilities. The servicing provider and ordering provider should be loaded as the ordering provider for these authorizations.

Q: The provider started an authorization, but the system is saying it isn't required.

Providers should check the member's **Eligibility & Benefits** first to see if the authorization is required. If "yes" is indicated under the Prior Authorization Requirements section, an authorization is required. If "no" is listed, an authorization isn't required.

Q: How do providers submit a peer-to-peer request?

This process isn't changing. Providers interested in a peer-to-peer request should continue to submit a request through the PAT tool in Availity.

Q: How do providers check the status of a prior authorization?

This process isn't changing. The status of authorizations can be viewed on the **Auth Inquiry/Clinical Update** section of the PAT.

Q: How do providers view authorization letters for commercial members?

This process isn't changing. Letters can only be viewed on the **Auth Inquiry/Clinical Update** section of the PAT. Letters won't be visible in the Cohere portal.

Q. If a provider submits an authorization that typically goes to another vendor, is that process changing?

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

No. Some authorizations, like musculoskeletal (MSK), are sent to other vendors, like Turning Point. These processes won't be changing. If certain authorization types are sent to specific vendors for review, they'll continue that process.

Q: Who can providers contact for more information?

If providers have questions about submitting prior authorizations through Availity, they can call **(423) 535-5717, option 2**, or contact their [eBusiness Regional Marketing Consultant](#):

- **West:** Vivian Williams, (901) 544-2622, Vivian_Williams@bcbst.com
- **Middle:** Faye Mangold, (615) 426-9122, Faye_Mangold@bcbst.com
- **East:** Faith Daniel, (423) 535-6795, Faith_Daniel@bcbst.com