

Blue Impressions

CareFirst 
Family of health care plans

Dental News & Updates

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What's Happening?

Understanding CareFirst Medicare Advantage Dental HMO and PPO Networks

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield and CareFirst BlueChoice, Inc. (collectively CareFirst) is focused on creating accessible, affordable plans and services throughout a member's life. To further our mission, we entered the Medicare Advantage (MA) market in 2021.

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield is the shared business name of CareFirst of Maryland, Inc. and Group Hospitalization and Medical Services, Inc. CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Medicare Advantage is the shared business name of CareFirst Advantage, Inc. and CareFirst Advantage DSNP, Inc. CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Community Health Plan Maryland is the business name of CareFirst Community Partners, Inc. CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Community Health Plan District of Columbia is the business name of Trusted Health Plan (District of Columbia), Inc. In the District of Columbia and Maryland, CareFirst MedPlus is the business name of First Care, Inc. In Virginia, CareFirst MedPlus is the business name of First Care, Inc. of Maryland (used in VA by: First Care, Inc.). CareFirst of Maryland, Inc., Group Hospitalization and Medical Services, Inc., CareFirst Advantage, Inc., CareFirst Advantage DSNP, Inc., CareFirst Community Partners, Inc., Trusted Health Plan (District of Columbia), Inc., CareFirst BlueChoice, Inc., First Care, Inc., and The Dental Network, Inc. are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. BLUE CROSS®, BLUE SHIELD® and the Cross and Shield Symbols are registered service marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans.

MA is an “all-in-one” alternative purchase option to Original Medicare. These bundled plans include Part A, Part B and usually Part D, and may also include dental, vision and hearing. Plans may have lower out-of-pocket costs than Original Medicare. In many cases, your patients will need to see doctors who are in the MA plan's network.

Individual MA

CareFirst Advantage, Inc. is the entity that provides the network and products servicing our MA members. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) must approve the benefits offered and pays the insurer a fixed amount per enrollee to provide the approved benefits.

Employer Group MA

The Employer Group Waiver Program (EGWP) through CMS is a customized MA program that employers may choose to offer their retirees. Under Group MA arrangements, employers or unions contract with a private insurer to provide Medicare benefits and additional benefits to their Medicare-eligible retirees. CMS pays the insurer a fixed amount per enrollee to provide benefits. The employer/union and/or retiree pays for any additional benefits.

Individual Plans	Group Plans
<p><u>Network</u> The provider network for the CareFirst MA HMO is different than our commercial network.</p> <p><u>Covered Services</u> Our MA HMO dental plans are not dental HMO plans. Dental services are part of the member’s MA HMO medical plan.</p> <p>Core: Covers basic preventive dental care and treatment</p> <p>Enhanced: Covers preventive dental care and treatment, plus some benefits for minor palliative, minor restorative, periodontic and simple extraction services</p> <p>Enhanced Add-On: Covers additional comprehensive dental treatment, which includes major restorative and major oral surgical, endodontic, major periodontic, prosthodontic and non-routine dental care</p>	<p><u>Network</u> The provider network for CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Group Advantage is different than our commercial PPO network.</p> <p><u>Covered Services</u> Our MA PPO plan dental services are part of the member’s MA PPO medical plan. These plans cover more comprehensive dental treatment, which includes major restorative and major oral surgical, endodontic, major periodontic, prosthodontic and non-routine dental care.</p>

You must sign a separate agreement to be included in either of CareFirst’s MA networks. For additional information about joining our MA networks, please call 443-921-0676 or email us at medicareadvantagedentalcontractingteam@carefirst.com.

PPE and the Treatment of Hearing-Impaired Patients

Face masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) remain critical in protecting patients and combatting the spread of COVID-19 and other microorganisms. For the safety of everyone in your office, all dental staff should wear the best PPE available to them.

However, this presents new challenges for both providers and patients—especially those with speaking and hearing disabilities. To help provide the culturally competent and inclusive care your patients deserve, CareFirst has prepared some tips for treating the hearing-impaired:

- Ask all patients if they have any disabilities and be sure to inquire about sensory issues.
- Some patients may not consider hearing aids to be an important factor in their patient care. Identifying hearing aids actively used by your patients can help guide the exam in a way that's most effective for them.
- When speech patterns and lip movements are blocked by PPE, use other forms of communication to relay important information to your patients. Tools like hand motions and written communication using a notepad or whiteboard can be effective when treating hearing-impaired patients.
- Whenever possible, follow up with these patients after their visits to ensure they fully understand the procedures and aftercare instructions.

Adding a few extra steps to your care routine will go a long way in providing exceptional care to the hearing impaired.

Reminder: Access Your Most Current Fee Schedules on CareFirst Direct

In December, CareFirst notified dental providers of a fee schedule increase to take effect February 15, 2022.

To make sure you have your office's most current fee schedule, download it directly from CareFirst Direct. To do so, you'll need administrative access. The fee schedules posted on CareFirst Direct include all CDT procedures.

To download, follow these steps:

1. Log in to [CareFirst Direct](#).
2. Navigate to the **Fee Schedules** tab on your home page (to the right of "Eligibility and Benefits" and "Remittance/NOPs").
3. Select your provider's Tax ID and your office's address.
4. Select the desired networks.
5. Choose your procedure code selection.

Please note: Our national network, the National Dental GRID, uses our Traditional (GRID+) and Preferred (GRID) networks to apply payments for services rendered. BlueCross BlueShield FEP Dental uses our Traditional (GRID+) fee schedule.

To learn more about CareFirst Direct navigation and how it can help your office save time and resources, visit our [Learning and Engagement Center](#) or click [here](#).

Including Narratives with Your CareFirst Bone Graft and Guided Tissue Regeneration Claims

When submitting claims for bone grafts and guided tissue regenerations/barrier membranes, it's important to review [CareFirst's Dental Clinical Criteria](#) to know when these services meet the guidelines for benefit allocation. Be sure to include a narrative detailing the necessity of the graft or membrane along with your other supporting documentation. Without this information, your claim could be denied, resulting in a time-consuming appeal.

Benefits are approved when there is a significant defect in the alveolar bone, or the site presents with extensively compromised bone mass (osseous plate fenestration, dehiscence or fracture resulting in a major defect). Benefits are also allowed for grafting and barrier placement when adequate space between the sinus and an implant is needed; when there are thin, compromised osseous plates; or when an implant would otherwise impinge on the alveolar nerve canal.

Updates to Our Provider Education Website

In [September 2021](#), we shared that we had redesigned our Center for Provider Education website to meet the demand for high quality educational resources for you and your staff. Since the redesign, we saw an increase of 577% in users completing our on-demand training resources, with approximately 6,000 providers accessing our site and resources over 13,000 times. We are committed to continue bringing you the tools you need to do business with us.

What's New?

The following new on-demand trainings and webinars are tailored to your dental office's interactions with CareFirst:

- [CareFirst Advantage, Inc.'s Individual Medicare Advantage Guide for Dental Providers](#)
- [Submitting Claims for Dental Providers](#)

Throughout the year, you will start to see more learning opportunities tailored to you.

- Development of additional on-demand courses and live webinars focusing on topics such as behavioral health and cultural competency
- Additional continuing education course offerings
- Incorporation of a survey tool to help you more easily access the content you need
- Specialized training based on provider type
- Health insurance basics resources to assist those who may be new to topics like insurance types, cost sharing, claims, and products

As part of the enhancements, we have renamed the Center for Provider Education to the Learning and Engagement Center. Visit the renamed site at carefirst.com/learning.

We Want to Hear from You

We want to ensure that our Learning and Engagement Center meets your needs, which means we want to hear from you. Send an email to learning@carefirst.com with your ideas and suggestions of what you would like to see on the site.

Thank you for your continued partnership as we work to provide affordable and accessible care to CareFirst members.

Recognizing Dental Assistants and Hygienists

It takes more than just a dentist to make a dental practice work. Dental assistants and hygienists are an integral part of the team that provides your patients with outstanding care. This year, National Dental Assistants Week was March 6-12 and Dental Hygienists Week is coming up and starts April 10. In recognition of their many contributions, CareFirst would like to offer its sincere thanks to all the dental assistants and hygienists supporting good oral health every day. We can't smile without you!

Education & Training Resources

Updates to the Dental Provider Manual and Other Clinical Resources

CareFirst is committed to giving providers the tools needed to do business with us easily, so they can focus on giving their patients the best care. To keep you aware of changes and improvements, CareFirst has updated our Dental Provider Manual, Dental Clinical Criteria and Reference Guide for Required Attachments. Please note the changes below.

[Dental Provider Manual:](#)

Updates were made to [Chapter 8: Medicare Advantage](#) and are summarized as follows:

- Addition of Group Medicare Advantage to the overview and networks sections
- Addition of Group Medicare Advantage Member ID Cards
- New section on Billing and Payment

[Dental Clinical Criteria:](#)

- Added additional information emphasizing the importance of electronic data interchange (EDI) adoption for your office
- There are updates to the clinical criteria across the board that are itemized by procedure type.

[Reference Guide for Required Attachments:](#)

- Clarified the supporting documentation requirements for D8070-D8090 for ACA plans, indicating that all attachments be submitted digitally
- Added supporting documentation requirements for D9951-D9952 for ACA plans
- Updated the supporting documentation requirements for codes D6058 through D6123

Coding Corner

2022 ADA Changes for Interceptive Orthodontic Services

In January 2022, the American Dental Association (ADA) deleted the following CDT codes:

D8050	Interceptive Orthodontic Treatment of the Primary Dentition
D8060	Interceptive Orthodontic Treatment of the Transitional Dentition

The following is from the American Association of Orthodontists¹ (AAO):

With the deletion of the Interceptive Orthodontic Treatment codes and the revision of the Limited Orthodontic Treatment descriptor, the AAO hopes any ambiguity and redundancy will be eliminated, as the procedures previously described as 'interceptive' were thought to be substantively similar clinically to the Limited Orthodontic Treatment procedures.

Limited Orthodontic Treatment:

Orthodontic treatment utilizing any therapeutic modality with a limited objective or scale of treatment. Treatment may occur in any stage of dental development or dentition.

The objective may be limited by:

- Not involving the entire dentition
- Not attempting to address the full scope of the existing or developing orthodontic problem
- Mitigating an aspect of a greater malocclusion (i.e., crossbite, overjet, overbite, arch length, anterior alignment, one phase of multi-phase treatment, treatment prior to permanent dentition, etc.) – (resulting in) a decision to forego comprehensive treatment

D8010	Limited Orthodontic Treatment of the Primary Dentition
D8020	Limited Orthodontic Treatment of the Transitional Dentition
D8030	Limited Orthodontic Treatment of the Adolescent Dentition
D8040	Limited Orthodontic Treatment of the Adult Dentition

¹ American Association of Orthodontists-Interceptive Orthodontic Treatment
<http://www2.aaoinfo.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2022-At-A-Glance-Guide-NEW.pdf>

CareFirst Policy Change to D4921

Please note the new **CareFirst policy change** when citing the following CDT code:

D4921 – Gingival Irrigation, per quadrant

Gingival irrigation continues to be researched to determine clinical significance and efficacy. The latest [studies](#) conclude that there is insufficient research evidence to support gingival irrigation as an adjunct to scaling and root planing, in treating chronic periodontitis.

Policy Change-CareFirst considers gingival irrigation **inclusive** to the primary periodontal treatment and effective June 1, 2022, will not allow payment for irrigation in addition to the primary periodontal treatment. If gingival irrigation is performed as a standalone procedure, CareFirst will not offer benefits for that treatment. If performed on a member who agrees to the standalone service, the member will bear full liability for its cost.

CareFirst Office Closings

Holiday Closings

CareFirst, CareFirst BlueChoice and The Dental Network will be closed on the following dates:

- Monday, May 30–Memorial Day
- Monday, June 20–Juneteenth (Observed)

You should expect to see higher-than-normal wait times the day after a holiday. We encourage you to use our self-service tools, [CareFirst Direct](#) and [CareFirst on Call](#), for claim status, eligibility and benefits.