Coronavirus & BCBSMA Pandemic Preparedness

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts is actively monitoring developments regarding the coronavirus. We are tracking guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and are in regular contact with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the broader health care community.

1. We have created a coronavirus resource page https://home.bluecrossma.com/coronavirus on our public site for members and customers. The site is being updated regularly and contains FAQs and links to other resources, including articles on the coronavirus, and measures to help prevent the spread of other common seasonal flu.

2. This site also includes useful links to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website << https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>> for the most up-to-date information on the coronavirus.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts has detailed business continuity plans in place to ensure our company’s readiness and ability to do business in the face of challenges posed by a potential pandemic.

3. BCBSMA has disaster response and pandemic preparedness plans in place. As we have in past outbreaks, we have begun to execute on these plans by gathering a response team, evolving our plan to meet the specific nature of this issue, and ensuring the processes are in place to address this event. Our plans and processes are designed to support our members, providers and accounts as well as maintain business continuity during an outbreak and through recovery.

4. The executive teams, infrastructure, and underlying systems to manage our business in a pandemic had been developed and are in place and functioning now.
When specific federal, state, and local thresholds are reached or directives issued, we will, or have already, executed specific sequences of interventions, including but not limited to:

a. Ongoing, specific communications to clients, providers, members, and business partners
b. Direct lines of communication with state and local leaders, and hospitals
c. Adjustments to utilization management/authorizations
d. Claims processing monitoring
e. Any needed adjustments to member service responses
f. Provider payments monitoring
g. Closing our offices and allowing staff to work from home as part of Infection control disaster readiness policies
h. Monitoring for specific utilization and condition patterns

5. More than 90% of our workforce is already mobile-enabled and can work remotely to support members, providers, and business partners. Our VPN (virtual private network) technology has been tested extensively and used numerous times in recent years during snowstorms.

6. We will support providers giving care, and members getting needed care for the coronavirus, when indicated. This includes testing, medication and vaccines if and when developed.

7. Our financial reserves are in place, in part, for just such an event. Reserves can be used to pay for health care services and fund our operations should there be an interruption in the flow of business revenue because of a disaster or pandemic. Our reserves are mandated and monitored by regulators. Periodic reviews of our reserves indicate we are in a strong position to lead and support all our constituents in an emergency.