Administered by
BlueCross BlueShield of New Mexico

New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority Advantage Value Plan

Account #: 296701
Group #: 296702

A guide to your Advantage Value Plan

481995.0119

CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE

Customer Service: —The 24/7 Nurseline can help when you have a **health** problem or concern. The 24/7 Nurseline is staffed by Registered Nurses who are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

24/7 Nurseline toll-free telephone number: 1-800-973-6329

When you have a **non-medical** benefit question or concern, call BCBSNM Monday through Friday from 6 A.M. - 8 P.M. and 8 A.M. - 5 P.M. on Saturdays and most holidays or visit the BCBSNM Customer Service department in Albuquerque. (If you need assistance outside normal business hours, you may call the Customer Service telephone number and leave a message. A Customer Service Advocate will return your call by 5 P.M. the next business day.) You may either call toll-free or visit the BCBSNM office in Albuquerque at:

Street address: 4373 Alexander Blvd. NE
Toll-free telephone number: 1-800-432-0750

Send all **written inquiries/Preauthorization requests** and submit **medical/surgical Claims*** to:

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico
PO Box 27630
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125-7630

Preauthorizations: Medical/Surgical Services—For Preauthorization requests, call a Health Services representative, Monday through Friday 8 A.M. - 5 P.M., Mountain Time. Written requests should be sent to the address given above. **Note:** If you need Preauthorization assistance between 5 P.M. and 8 A.M. or on weekends, call Customer Service. If you call after normal Customer Service hours, you will be asked to leave a message.

1-505-291-3585 or 1-800-325-8334

Mental Health and Chemical Dependency—For inquiries or Preauthorizations related to mental health or Chemical Dependency services, call the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU):

24 hours/day, 7 days/week: 1-888-898-0070 Send Claims* to:
Claims, Behavioral Health Unit
P.O. Box 27630
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125-7630

Website—For Provider network information, BCBSNM Drug List, Claim forms, and other information, or to e-mail your question to BCBSNM, visit the BCBSNM website at:

www.bcbsnm.com/nmrhca

***Exceptions to Claim Submission Procedures**—Claims for Health Care Services received from Providers that do not contract **directly** with BCBSNM, should be sent to the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plan in the state where services were received. **Note: Do not submit drug plan Claims to BCBSNM.** See *Section 8: Claim Payments and Appeals* for details on submitting Claims.

A Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

A message from

New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority (NMRHCA) (NOTE replace employee with retiree)

Welcome to the BlueAdvantage Value Plan, that is only available to members residing in the state of New Mexico. This is an in Network only Health Care Benefit Plan for eligible employees of **NMRHCA** and their Eligible Family Members. BlueCross and Blue Shield of New Mexico (BCBSNM), a Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, and an Independent License of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association is pleased to serve as the Claims Administrator for the **NMRHCA** self-funded Health Care Benefit Plan.

Please take some time to get to know your Health Care Benefit Plan coverage, including its benefit limits and exclusions, by reviewing this important document and any enclosures. Learning how this Plan works can help make the best use of your Health Care Benefits.

Note: This plan's benefit administrator BCBSNM and NMRHCA may change the benefits described in this Benefit Booklet. If that happens, BCBSNM or NMRHCA will notify you of those mutually agreed upon changes.

If you have any questions once you have read this Benefit Booklet, call us at the number listed on the back of your ID Card, or as listed in Customer Assistance on the inside front cover. It is important to all of us that you understand the protection this coverage gives you.

Thank you for selecting BCBSNM for your health care coverage. We look forward to working with you to provide personalized and affordable health care now and in the future.

Note: Under the NMRHCA Advantage Value Plan, you will receive benefits for **nonemergency** services only if you use a BCBSNM provider that is part of the Advantage Value Plan Network.

Sincerely,

NMRHCA

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SECTION 1: HOW TO USE THIS BENEFIT BOOKLET

This Benefit Booklet describes the medical/surgical, prescription drug, and mental health/chemical dependency coverage available to Members of this health care plan and the Plan's benefit limitations and exclusions.

- Always carry your current Plan ID Card issued by BCBSNM. When you arrive at the Provider's office or at the Hospital, show the receptionist your Plan ID Card.
- To find Doctors and Hospitals nearby, you may use the Internet (www.bcbsnm.com/nmrhca), make a phone call, or request a hard copy of a directory from BCBSNM. See details in *Section 3: How Your Plan Works.*
- Call BCBSNM (or the Behavioral Health Unit) for Preauthorization, if necessary. The phone numbers are on your Plan ID Card. *See Section 4: Preauthorizations* for details about the preauthorization process.
- Please read this Benefit Booklet and familiarize yourself with the details of your Plan before you need services. Doing so could save you time and money.
- **In an Emergency, call 911 or go directly to the nearest Hospital.**

DEFINITIONS

Throughout this Benefit Booklet, many words are used that have a specific meaning when applied to your health care coverage. When you come across these terms while reading this Benefit Booklet, please refer to *Section 10: Definitions,* for an explanation of the limitations or special conditions that may apply to your benefits.

IDENTIFICATION (ID) CARD

You will receive a BCBSNM Identification (ID) Card. The ID card contains your "Group" number and your identification number (including an alpha prefix) and tells Providers that you are entitled to benefits under this health care plan with BCBSNM.

Carry it with you. Do not let anyone who is not named in your coverage use your card to receive benefits. If you need an additional card or need to replace a lost card, contact a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate.

PROVIDER NETWORK DIRECTORY

The Provider network directory is available through the BCBSNM website at www.bcbsnm.com/nmrhca. It lists all NMRHCA Advantage Value Plan Providers and their qualifications. (If you want a paper copy of a provider network directory, you may request one from Customer Service. It will be mailed to you free of charge.) **Note:** Although Provider directories are current as of the date shown at the bottom of each page, they can change without notice. To verify a Provider's status or if you have any questions about the directory, contact a Customer Service Advocate or visit the BCBSNM website.

If required by applicable law, BCBSNM's access plan is available upon request, free of charge electronically, but printed copies are subject to charges for reasonable production and, if applicable, delivery costs.

DRUG PLAN BENEFITS

In addition to your benefit booklet, you will be sent a separately issued important information about your drug plan benefits or you can contact Express Scripts customer service at 1-800-498-4904 or website at www.express-scripts.com for more information.

LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

Each provision in *Section 5: Covered Services* not only describes what is covered, but may list some limitations and exclusions that specifically relate to a particular type of service. *Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions* lists limitations and exclusions that apply to *all* services.

PREAUTHORIZATION REQUIRED

To receive full benefits for some non-Emergency Admissions and certain medical/surgical services, you or your Provider must call the BCBSNM Health Services department **before** you receive treatment. Call Monday through Friday, 8 A.M. to

5 P.M., Mountain Standard Time. *See Section 4: Preauthorizations* for details. **Note:** Call Customer Service if you need preauthorization assistance after 5 P.M.

Emergency/Maternity Admission Notification

To receive full benefits for Emergency Hospital Admissions, you (or your Provider) should notify BCBSNM **within 48** hours of Admission, or as soon as reasonably possible following Admission. Call BCBSNM's Health Services department, Monday through Friday, 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., Mountain Standard Time. Also, if you have a routine delivery and stay in the Hospital **more than 48 hours**, or if you have a C-section delivery and stay in the Hospital **more than 96 hours**, you must call BCBSNM for Preauthorization before you are discharged.

Written Request Required

If a **written request** for Preauthorization is required in order for a service to be covered, you or your Provider should send the request, along with appropriate documentation, to:

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico
Attn: Health Services Department
P.O. Box 27630
Albuquerque, NM 87125-7630

Please ask your health care Provider to submit your request early enough to ensure that there is time to process the request before the date you are planning to receive services.

PREAUTHORIZATION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE

All Inpatient and specified Outpatient mental health and Chemical Dependency services must be preauthorized by the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) at the phone number below (also listed on the back of your ID Card). For services requiring Preauthorization, you or your Physician should call the BHU before you schedule treatment. The BHU will coordinate Covered Services with an In- network Provider near you. **If you do not call and receive Preauthorization before receiving non-Emergency services, benefits for services may be denied**. Call 7 days a week, 24 hours a day:

Toll-Free Phone Number: 1- 888- 898- 0070

HEALTH AND WELLNESS MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

BCBSNM and your employer have the right to offer programs for the purposes of medical management programs, quality improvement programs, and health behavior wellness, maintenance or improvement over and above the standard benefits provided by this Plan. These programs may allow for a reward, a contribution, a disincentive, a differential in premiums or a differential in medical, prescription drug or equipment Copayments, Coinsurance, Deductibles or costs, or a combination of incentives and/or disincentives for participation in any program offered or administered by BCBSNM or any retailer, Provider, or manufacturer chosen by BCBSNM to administer such program. Discount programs for various health behavior wellness or insurance- related items and services may also be available from time to time. For details of current discounts or other programs available, please contact a Customer Service representative by calling the phone number on the back of your ID card. Such programs may be discontinued with or without notice. Contact your employer for additional information regarding any value-based programs offered by your employer.

For individuals in wellness programs who are unable to participate in these incentives or disincentives due to an adverse health factor shall not be penalized based upon an adverse status and unless otherwise permitted by law. Blue Cross Blue Shield will allow a reasonable alternative to any individual for whom it is unreasonably difficult, due to a medical condition, to satisfy otherwise applicable wellness program standards.

Contact Blue Cross Blue Shield for additional information regarding any value-based programs offered by Blue Cross Blue Shield.

IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION SERVICES

As a Member, BCBSNM makes available at no additional cost to you, identity theft protection services, including credit monitoring, fraud detection, credit/identity repair and insurance to help protect your information. These identity theft protection services are currently provided by BCBSNM's designated outside vendor and acceptance or declination of these services is optional to Member. Members who wish to accept such identity theft protection services will need to individually enroll in the program online at www.bcbsnm.com or telephonically by calling the toll-free telephone number on your identification card. Services may automatically end when the person is no longer an eligible Member. Services may change or be discontinued at any time with or without notice and BCBSNM does not have guarantee that a particular vendor or service will be at any given time. The services are provided as a convenience and are not considered covered benefits under this benefit program.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

If you have any questions about your coverage, call or e-mail BCBSNM's Customer Service department. Customer Service Advocates are available Monday through Friday from 6 A.M. - 8 P.M. and 8 A.M. - 5 P.M., Mountain Standard Time on Saturdays and most holidays. If you need assistance outside normal business hours, you may call the Customer Service telephone number and leave a message. A Customer Service Advocate will return your call by 5 P.M. the next business day.

Customer Service representatives can help with the following:

- answer questions about your benefits
- assist with preauthorization requests
- check on a claim's status
- order a replacement ID card, provider directory, benefit booklet, or forms

For your convenience, the toll-free customer service number is printed at the bottom of every page in this benefit booklet. Refer to Customer Assistance on the inside cover of this booklet for important phone numbers, website, and mailing information. You can also e-mail the Customer Service unit via the BCBSNM website noted below:

In addition to accepting e-mail inquiries, the BCBSNM website contains valuable information about BCBSNM provider networks, and other Plan benefits. It also has various forms you can print off that could save you time when you need to file a claim.

Website: www.bcbsnm.com

Behavioral Health Customer Service

When you have questions about your behavioral health benefits, call the BCBSNM Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) for assistance.

Toll-free: 1-888-898-0070

Deaf and Speech Disabled Assistance

Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and speech disabled callers may use the New Mexico Relay Network. Dialing **711** connects the caller to the state transfer relay service for TTY and voice calls.

Translation Assistance

If you need help communicating with BCBSNM, BCBSNM offers Spanish bilingual interpreters for members who call Customer Service. If you need multi-lingual services, call the Customer Service phone number on the back of your ID card.

After Hours Help

If you need or want help to file a complaint outside normal business hours, you may call Customer Service. Your call will be answered by an automatic phone system. You can use the system to:

- leave a message for BCBSNM to call you back on the next business day
- leave a message saying you have a complaint or appeal
- talk to a nurse at the 24/7 Nurseline right away if you have a health problem

24/7 Nurseline

If you can't reach your doctor, the free 24/7 Nurseline will connect you with a nurse who can help you decide if you need to go to the emergency room or urgent care center, or if you should make an appointment with your doctor. The Nurseline will also give you advice if you call your doctor and he or she can't see you right away when you think you might have an urgent problem. To learn more, call:

Toll-free: 1-800-973-6329

BCBSNM also has a phone library of more than 1000 health topics available through the Nurseline, including over 600 topics available in Spanish.

Special Beginnings®

This is a maternity program that helps you better understand and manage your pregnancy. You should enroll in the program within three months of becoming pregnant, by calling:

Toll-free: 1-888-421-7781

BLUE ACCESS FOR MEMBERS SM

To help Members track Claim payments, make health care choices, and reduce health care costs, BCBSNM maintains a flexible array of online programs and tools for health care plan Members. The online "Blue Access for Members" (BAM) tool provides convenient and secure access to Claim information and account management features and the Cost Estimator tool. While online, Members can also access a wide range of health and wellness programs and tools, including a health assessment and personalized health updates. To access these online programs, go to www.bcbsnm.com, log into Blue Access for Members and create a user ID and password for instant and secure access.

If you need help accessing the BAM site, call:

BAM Help Desk (toll- free): 1-888-706-0583
Help Desk Hours: Monday through Friday 6 A.M. - 9 P.M., Mountain Standard Time
Saturday 6 A.M. - 2:30 P.M. Mountain Standard Time

Note: Depending on your Group's coverage, you may not have access to all online features. Check with your benefits administrator or call Customer Service at the number on the back of your ID Card. BCBSNM uses data about program usage and Member feedback to make changes to online tools as needed. Therefore, programs and their rules are updated, added, or terminated, and may change without notice as new programs are designed and/or as our Members' needs change. We encourage you to enroll in BAM and check the online features available to you - and check back in as frequently as you like. BCBSNM is always looking for ways to add value to your health care plan and hope you will find the website helpful.

HEALTH CARE FRAUD INFORMATION

Health care and insurance fraud results in cost increases for health care plans. You can help; always:

- Be wary of offers to waive Copayments, Deductibles, or Coinsurance. These costs are passed on to you eventually.
- Be wary of mobile health testing labs. Ask what your health care insurance will be charged for the tests.
- Review the bills from your Providers and the *Explanation of Benefits* (EOB) you receive from BCBSNM. Verify that services for all charges were received. If there are any discrepancies, call a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate.
- Be very cautious about giving information about your health care insurance over the phone.

If you suspect fraud, contact the BCBSNM Fraud Hotline at 1-888-841-7998.

SECTION 2: ENROLLMENT AND TERMINATION INFORMATION

WHO IS ELIGIBLE

Each person who becomes eligible for coverage can apply by submitting an application to the NMRHCA within 31 days of becoming eligible. Eligibility conditions are mandated by the Retiree Health Care Act and are subject to periodic changes. You may call NMRHCA at 1-800-233-2576 or check the NMRHCA web site at www.nmrhca.state.nm.us for more information.

BCBSNM may request proof that a valid employer-employee relationship exists, if applicable, and/or that the applicant meets the eligibility requirements stated in the Administrative Services Agreement and the member's application.

No eligibility rules or variations in premium will be imposed on you based on your specific health status, medical condition, claims experience, receipt of health care, medical history, genetic information, evidence of insurability, disability, or any other health status-related factor. You will not be discriminated against for coverage under this Plan on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, gender identity or sexual orientation. Variations in the administration, processes, or benefits of this policy that are based on clinically indicated, reasonable medical management practices, or are part of permitted wellness incentives, disincentives and/or other programs do not constitute discrimination.

COVERAGE TYPES

Your coverage is one of the following types:

- Single (Individual) - Only the retiree (or his/her dependent) is covered.
- Two-Party - The retiree and one dependent (or any two dependents) are covered.
- Family - The retiree and his/her (or three or more dependents) are covered.

NOTE: Dependents are allowed to be covered under the non-Medicare NMRHCA Plan when the retiree (or surviving spouse) is covered under a NMRHCA Medicare program.

ELIGIBLE RETIREES

You are an eligible retiree (a retiree eligible to participate in the NMRHCA) if:

- You receive a disability or normal retirement benefit from public service in New Mexico with an NMRHCA participating employer, and
- You did one of the following:
  - You retired with a pension before your employer's effective date with NMRHCA program, or
  - You and/or your employer (on your behalf) made contributions to the NMRHCA fund from your employer's NMRHCA effective date until your date of retirement, or
  - You and/or your employer (on your behalf) made contributions to the NMRHCA fund for at least five years before your date of retirement.

ELIGIBLE FAMILY MEMBERS

Covered family member, covered spouse, covered child - An eligible spouse or eligible child (as defined below) who has applied for and been granted coverage under the subscriber's policy based on his/her family relationship to the subscriber.

Eligible family members - Family members of the subscriber, limited to the following persons:

- the subscriber's legal **spouse**

- the subscriber's eligible **child** through the end of the month in which the child reaches **age 26** (Once a covered child reaches age 26, the child is automatically removed from coverage and rates adjusted accordingly - unless the child is an eligible family member under this Plan due to a disability as described below.)
- the subscriber's **unmarried** child age 26 or older who was enrolled as the subscriber's covered child in this health plan at the time of reaching the age limit, and who is medically certified as **disabled,** chiefly dependent upon the subscriber for support and maintenance, and incapable of self-sustaining employment by reason of his/her disability. Such condition must be certified by a physician and BCBSNM. Also, a child may continue to be eligible for coverage age 26 or older only if the condition began before or during the month in which the child would lose coverage due to his/her age. BCBSNM must receive written notice of the disabling condition within 31 days of the child's attainment of the limiting age and subsequently, as may be required by BCBSNM, but not more frequently than annually after the two-year period following the Child's attainment of the limiting age of 26.
- the subscriber's **domestic partner** (NOTE: Not all governing bodies of the entities have approved allowing a participant's domestic partner and his/her children to be eligible for insurance coverage. Check with your benefits administrator for more information.)

Eligible child - The following family members of the subscriber through the end of the month during which the child turns age 26:

- natural or legally adopted child of the subscriber
- child placed in the subscriber's home for purposes of adoption (including a child for whom the subscriber is a party in a suit in which the adoption of the child by the subscriber is being sought)
- stepchild of the subscriber (or otherwise eligible child of a domestic partner, if domestic partners are covered under your benefit plan)
- child for whom the subscriber must provide coverage because of a court order or administrative order pursuant to state law

A child meeting the criteria above is an “eligible child” whether or not the subscriber is the custodial or noncustodial parent, and whether or not the eligible child is claimed on income tax, employed, married, attending school or residing in the subscriber's home, **except** that:

- once the subscriber is no longer a legal guardian of a child or there is no longer a court order to provide coverage to a child, the child must be eligible as a natural child, legally adopted child, or stepchild of the subscriber in order to retain eligibility as a family member under this health plan.

A **domestic partner** is a person of the same or opposite sex who meets all of the following criteria:

- shares your permanent residence and has resided with you for no less than one year;
- is not less than 18 years of age;
- is financially interdependent with you and has proven such interdependence by providing documentation of at least two of the following arrangements: common ownership of real property or a common leasehold interest in such property; community ownership of a motor vehicle; a joint bank account or a joint credit account; designation as a beneficiary for life insurance or retirement benefits or under your partner's will; assignment of a durable power of attorney or health care power of attorney; or such other proof as is considered by BCBSNM to be sufficient to establish financial interdependency under the circumstances of your particular case;
- is not a blood relative any closer than would prohibit legal marriage; and
- has signed jointly with you, a notarized affidavit which can be made available to BCBSNM on request.

In addition, you and your domestic partner will meet the terms of this definition as long as neither of you nor your domestic partner:

- has signed a domestic partner affidavit or declaration with any other person within 12 months prior to

designating each other as domestic partners hereunder;

- is currently legally married to another person; or
- has any other domestic partner, spouse, or spouse equivalent of the same or opposite sex.

You and your domestic partner must have registered as domestic partners if you reside in a state that provides for such registration. In any case, if your employer allows coverage for domestic partners and their children, BCBSNM will require a notarized *Affidavit of Domestic Partnership* and at least three corroborating documents:

- joint lease/mortgage or ownership of property
- jointly owned motor vehicle, bank or credit account (only one qualifies)
- domestic partner named as beneficiary of the participant's life insurance and/or retirement benefits, and/or as primary beneficiary under participant's will
- domestic partner assigned as power of attorney or legal designee by the employee
- both names on a utility bill and/or on an investment account

The federal government does not recognize domestic partners as qualified eligible family members and therefore, the premium paid for their coverage cannot be pre-tax. In addition, the retiree must pay tax on the portion of the premium paid by the employer for the domestic partner and his/her covered children. Retirees wanting to change benefit elections involving a domestic partner must adhere to the same rules regarding qualifying events.

NMRHCA may require acceptable proof (such as copies of income tax forms, legal adoption or legal guardianship papers, or court orders) that an individual qualifies as an eligible family member under this coverage. Unless listed as an eligible family member, no other family member, relative or person is eligible for coverage as a family member. Common-law spouses are **not** considered legal spouses; in order to be considered eligible for coverage, a common-law spouse must meet the definition of "domestic partner."

Information for Noncustodial Parents

When a child is covered by the Plan through the child's noncustodial parent, then **NMRHCA** will:

- provide such information to the custodial parent as may be necessary for the child to obtain benefits through the Plan;
- permit the custodial parent or the provider (with the custodial parent's approval) to submit claims for covered services with the approval of the noncustodial parent; and
- make payments on claims submitted in accordance with the above provision directly to the custodial parent, the provider, or the state Medicaid agency as applicable.

Dependents Who Are Not Eligible - Your spouse or children are not eligible while on active duty in the armed forces of any country or covered under NMRHCA as a retiree or a dependent of another retiree.

It is your responsibility to notify the NMRHCA (who will then notify BCBSNM) of any change in your coverage status, including a name or address change or any additions or removals of a dependent (spouse or child). If you have any questions about a dependent's eligibility, contact the NMRHCA at 1-800-233-2576 for details. Forms are posted on the NMRHCA web site at www.nmrhca.state.nm.us.

RIGHT TO SURVIVORSHIP

An eligible dependent of a decease eligible retiree/vested-active employee may be covered under the health plan in the same terms and conditions as would apply if the retiree were still living. The surviving dependent is enrolled (or re- enrolled) under his/her own identification number and is assessed the appropriate dependent rate for medical plan premium contributions. This is called right of survivorship, and it will continue to be offered to the eligible spouse until his/her death or the eligible dependent until his/her death, marriage, or ineligibility. Eligible dependents of the surviving spouse or child are not eligible for this program unless they are related to the deceased retiree as described under Eligible Dependents, in this section of the booklet. For example, if a surviving spouse remarries, his/her new spouse is not eligible for this program.

MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE MEMBERS

Within three months before you or your spouse become age 65, or if you or a covered dependent qualified for Medicare benefits for any other reason, contact the local Social Security office to establish Medicare eligibility. The NMRHCA will send you information about your coverage options about one month before the month in which you turn age 65. If you are eligible for premium-free Medicare Part A and elect to decline or cancel a Medicare Part B benefit to which you are entitle, you will automatically be enrolled in the BCBSNM Medicare Supplement Plan, and you will be responsible for paying all charges normally payable by Medicare Part B.

If you did not contribute a minimum of 40 quarters to Social Security through an employer, you may not be entitle to premium-free Medicare Part A and NMRHCA will not penalize you for not enrolling in Part A. You will still be eligible for Part B benefits, whether you enroll in Medicare Part A or not. Therefore, if you are not entitle to premium-free Medicare Part A but take Part B benefits, you can enroll in any NMRHCA non-Medicare PPO Plan with BCBSNM.

You also have the option of purchasing Medicare Part A. (Contact your Benefits Office to find out how much purchasing Medicare Part A would cost you. The amount is determined by the number of quarters you paid into social Security over your lifetime.) If you wish to purchase Medicare part A, you must provide NMRHCA written notice from the Social Society Administration indicting why you are not eligible for premium-free Medicare Part A.

APPLYING FOR COVERAGE

An eligible person can apply for coverage, including for his/her eligible family members, by submitting an enrollment/change form to **NMRHCA within 31 days** after becoming eligible according to the terms of the Administrative Services Agreement**. Note: NMRHCA** cannot use genetic information or require genetic testing in order to determine or to limit or deny coverage.

WHEN COVERAGE BEGINS

NMRHCA will determine your effective date of coverage according to the provisions of the Administrative Services Agreement.

This Plan does not cover any service received before your effective date of coverage (which, for eligible family members, may be later than the subscriber's effective date). Also, if your prior coverage has an extension of benefits provision, this Plan will not cover those charges incurred after your effective date that are covered under the prior benefit plan.

CHANGES TO COVERAGE

After initial enrollment, you may need to add eligible family members to, or remove them from your coverage, update your address, or switch from Individual to Family coverage, or vice versa.

Your ability to change coverage types (e.g., from Family to Individual coverage, etc.) will depend on the rules and regulations set forth by NMRHCA. Please contact NMRHCA to find out when you can change your coverage type or remove a person from your coverage.

ADDING A FAMILY MEMBER TO COVERAGE

You may apply for coverage of your eligible dependents, which may mean changing from Single (individual) to Two-Party or Family coverage.

For eligible dependents who are newly eligible due to an event such as marriage, newborn child, or adopted child, you need to apply for dependent coverage before or within 31 days of the event. If you do not apply within the 31 days, you will not be able to apply until the next open enrollment period designated by the NMRHCA

LATE APPLICANT

A late applicant may enroll during the open enrollment period as designed by the NMRHCA. Exception: When an eligible retiree, spouse, or dependent was receiving group health coverage through a third party and involuntarily loses the coverage due to a change in eligibility status, the eligible retiree, spouse, or dependent may enroll in the NMRHCA Plan for which he/she is eligible. In such cases, if the loss of coverage was not caused by any neglect or wrong doing by the eligible retiree, spouse, or dependent, he/she may enroll within 31 days of the change of status without being considered a late applicant.

An involuntary loss of coverage includes the following circumstances: loss of other coverage due to legal separation, divorce, death, reaching a dependent child age limit, moving out of a service area, termination of employment, reduction in hours, or termination of employer contributions (even if the affected member continues such coverage by paying the amount previously paid by the employer.) A loss of coverage may also occur if your employer ceased offering coverage to the particular class of workers or similarly situated individuals to which you belonged or terminated your benefit package option, and no substitute plan was offered. If the member is covered under a state or federal continuation policy due to prior employment, involuntary loss of coverage includes exhaustion of the maximum continuation time period. Involuntary loss of coverage does not include a loss of coverage due to the failure of the individual or member to pay premiums on a timely basis or termination of coverage for cause. You are also considered to have experienced a loss in coverage if you reach a lifetime benefit maximum under another employer's health care plan.

Application for coverage from late applicants will be accepted only during your group's open enrollment period, except as described under “Switch Enrollment,” provision of the Section 2.

Late applicants may not enroll until the next annual open enrollment period.

SWITCH ENROLLMENT

Application for special enrollment must be made within 31 days of losing other coverage or experiencing a change in family status in order to qualify you and/or your eligible family member for a special enrollment or special switch enrollment right (switch enrollment by be available to members who are offered more than one benefit plan option). A Qualifying change in family status may occur when a retiree acquires a new dependent through marriage, birth, adoption, or placement for adoption. Please contact NMRHCA for details about special enrollment privileges that apply to you and your eligible family members.

NOTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND ADDRESS CHANGES

The subscriber must notify **NMRHCA within 31 days** following any changes that may affect his/her or a family member's eligibility, including a change to a covered family member's name or address, by indicating such changes on an enrollment/change form and submitting it to **NMRHCA.** (Members covered under federal continuation must submit enrollment/change forms directly to the COBRA administrator.)

REMOVING DEPENDENTS

When you lose a covered dependent through marriage, death, divorce, annulment, or legal separation, coverage ceases at the end of the month following the date of the event that caused the covered dependent to lose eligibility. If a covered dependent becomes ineligible because of age or recovery from mental or physical disability, coverage ceases at the end of the month.

The retiree is responsible for submitting an application to remove the dependent from coverage. Call NMRHCA at 1- 800-233-2576 for the necessary form or download a copy from NMRHCA web site at www.nmrhca.state.nm.us.

State Continuation Coverage

Employees covered under the group Plan are responsible for completing and submitting signed enrollment/change forms to BCBSNM.

COVERAGE TERMINATION

Coverage under a NMRHCA Plan terminates when:

- the retiree or covered dependent ceases to be eligible; or
- the NMRHCA ceases to provide health care benefits; or
- the retiree or surviving dependent fails to make any required premium payment for coverage when due; or
- there is a material failure by the retiree or covered dependent to abide by the rules and/or policies and procedures of the NMRHCA and/or the Plan in which the member is enrolled; or
- a retiree requests cancellation of any or all plans (the effective date of cancellation will depend on the date NMRHCA received the written request); or
- the retiree dies (right of survivorship will continue to be offered to the retiree's eligible dependents spouse until his/her death, and to the retiree' eligible dependents until their death, marriage, or ineligibility).

A member is usually required to switch from the PPO Plan to a Medicare plan (i.e., BCBSNM Medicare Supplement Plan) when he/she becomes eligible for Medicare as primary coverage (a member may retain this PPO Plan coverage and be secondary under Medicare for a limited amount of time if he/she is eligible for Medicare due to having end-stage renal disease). Contact NMRHCA at 1-800-233-2576 for more information.

Unless stated otherwise, if you do not elect or do not qualify for continuation coverage (see "How to Continue Coverage"), coverage ends at the end of the month following the earliest of the date:

- When the subscriber moves to a primary residence or place of employment **outside the geographic area** serviced by BCBSNM. (See "Guest Membership," later in this section, if you are moving temporarily for 90-180 days or "How to Continue Coverage," later in this section if the move is permanent or longer than 180 days.)

HOW TO CONTINUE COVERAGE

If you lose coverage under this Plan, you may be able to continue coverage for a limited period of time. **Note:** There is no special enrollment under these provisions. You must enroll timely to qualify for continued coverage.

Continuation Coverage

Your group may be subject to the provisions for continuation of plan coverage under federal law (COBRA or USERRA). If so, retirees and their covered family members excluding domestic partners who lose eligibility under this group health care plan may be able to continue as members for a limited period of time by purchasing the continuation coverage described below. You must pay premiums from the date of loss of group coverage.

You are not eligible to enroll for continuation coverage if:

- the employer stops offering this coverage to its retirees, *or*
- you do not elect continuation coverage in a timely fashion.

In addition, if you elect state continuation coverage, you may not later enroll in federal continuation coverage refer to *Appendix A: Continuation Coverage Rights under COBRA* or contact your benefits administrator for details about enrolling in continuation coverage.

Continuation Benefits

Continuation coverage is identical to the coverage a similarly situated regular member has. If the coverage for regular members changes, your continuation coverage will reflect the same change. For example, if the Plan's deductible or other cost-sharing amounts change for regular members, yours will change by the same amount.

Federal Continuation (COBRA)

Unless approved in writing by BCBSNM, the following persons may **not** enroll in this continued coverage option:

- one who **voluntarily** terminated coverage while still eligible (*Involuntary termination* includes loss of coverage under the following situations only: legal separation, divorce, loss of eligible child eligibility status, death of the subscriber, termination of employment, reduction in hours, or termination of employer contributions. Any other reason is considered voluntary.)
- a covered family member who was removed from coverage by the subscriber while the family member was still eligible
- any member whose BCBSNM health care coverage was terminated for good cause

Continuation coverage under federal law ends on the **earliest** of the following dates or any of the applicable dates listed under "Coverage Termination" earlier in this section:

- the first of the month when you become entitled to Medicare
- when the employer discontinues offering this Plan to retirees (If this Plan is replaced by another health care plan, continuation coverage will also be replaced by the new Plan.)
- when you become covered under another group health care plan
- when the continuation period expires (If this employer's Plan is still being administered by BCBSNM, you will have the option of changing to the conversion coverage provided by BCBSNM and described under "Conversion to Individual Coverage.")

State Continuation Coverage

A subscriber and his/her covered family members may continue Plan coverage for six months after losing coverage for any reason other than nonpayment of premium or termination of the entire group, if your group is eligible for such coverage. (See your Benefits Administrator for more information.) BCBSNM must receive the application for state continuation coverage **within 31 days** after group coverage is lost.

State continuation coverage ends on the **earliest** of the following dates or of the applicable dates listed under "Coverage Termination" earlier in this section:

- when the employer discontinues offering this Plan to employees (If this Plan is replaced by another health care plan, continuation coverage will also be replaced by the new Plan.)
- when the continuation period expires (If this employer's Plan is still being administered by BCBSNM, you will have the option of changing to the conversion coverage provided by BCBSNM and described under "Conversion to Individual Coverage.")

If you are entitled to both Parts A and B of Medicare, your state continuation coverage option is limited to a Medicare Supplement Plan administered by BCBSNM. (The options for members under age 65 are limited.) Call a Customer Service Advocate for more information.

Premium Payments

Subscribers under federal COBRA continuation coverage must pay premiums to the COBRA administrator. Subscribers under state continuation coverage pay premiums to BCBSNM. Contact your benefits administrator for an application for coverage and details.

USERRA Continuation Coverage

Retirees and their covered family members who lose group coverage because the retiree is absent from work due to military service may be able to continue coverage for **up to 24 months** after the absence begins. Contact your benefits administrator for details about the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA).

SECTION 3: HOW YOUR PLAN WORKS

BENEFIT CHOICES

NMRHCA Advantage Value Plan is a health care plan that provides benefits under agreement with an exclusive network of Contracted Providers.

At A Glance

Contracted Provider Services	Noncontracted Provider Services
•You pay an annual deductible and a lower percentage of covered charges (coinsurance) after the deductible is met (for exception, see last item, below). •You have a lower annual out-of-pocket limit. •The provider files claims for you. •The provider will not bill you for amounts above the covered charge. * •Contracted providers that contract directly with BCBSNM will obtain necessary Preauthorizations for you. •Primary Preferred Provider (PPP) office visit charges are not subject to deductible. You pay only a fixed-dollar copay (see "Cost-Sharing Features" for details). Other services of a PPP and services of a non-PPP Contracted provider are subject to deductible and coinsurance.	•You pay a higher annual deductible and a higher coinsurance percentage. •You have a higher annual out-of-pocket limit to meet for Noncontracted Provider benefit level. •You may need to file claims. •You may have to pay amounts above the covered charge. ***** •You are responsible for admission review and other Preauthorizations. •Some benefits are not available unless services are received from a Contracted provider. See your *Summary of Benefits* for those services not covered at the Noncontracted Provider benefit level. •Noncontracted provider services are not eligible for the PPP office visit copayment - even if required due to an emergency.

CONTRACTED PROVIDERS VERSUS NONCONTRACTED PROVIDERS

Contracted Providers are health care professionals and facilities that have Contracted with BCBSNM, a BCBSNM contractor or subcontractor, or another BCBS Plan as "Preferred" Providers. These Providers have agreed to provide health care for Plan Members and accept the Plan's payment for a Covered Service plus the Member's share of the Covered Charge (i.e., Deductible(s), Coinsurance, and/or Copayment, if any) as payment in full.

Noncontracted Providers are Providers that have not Contracted with BCBSNM, either directly or indirectly, to be part of the "Preferred Provider" network. (These Providers may have "Participating Provider" agreements, but are **not** considered Preferred Providers. See "Filing Claims" in *Section 8: Claim Payments and Appeals* for more information.) Unless listed as an exception under "Exceptions for Noncontracted Providers," services of Out of Network or Nonpreferred Providers are not covered except for an emergency or Urgent Care while traveling.

When you receive treatment or schedule a surgery or Admission, ask each of your Providers if he/she is a Contracted Provider. (A Physician's or other Provider's contract may be separate from the Facility's contract.)

Unless listed under "Exceptions for Noncontracted Providers," benefits are not available for nonemergency services received from a Noncontracted Provider.

Pursuant to 13.10.22.8C. (1) NMAC, a Member shall not be held liable for payment of services if a BCBSNM

Participating Provider mistakenly makes a referral to a Non-Participating Provider, unless BCBSNM has notified the Member in writing concerning the use of Non-Participating Providers and informed the Member that BCBSNM will not be responsible for future payment to the Non-Participating Provider.

Covered Charges
*For covered charges related to claims from providers that contract directly with BCBSNM, see "Covered Charges" in *Section 8: Claims Payments and Appeals.*
*For covered charges related to claims from out-of-network providers, see "Exceptions for Nonpreferred Providers" later in this *Section 3: How Your Plan Works.*
*For covered charges related to claims from providers outside New Mexico, see "BlueCard" in *Section 8: Claims Payments and Appeals*

PROVIDER DIRECTORY AND ONLINE PROVIDER FINDER®

When you need medical care, there are a variety of ways you can choose a Primary Preferred Provider (PPP) or other Contracted Provider in your area. You can also access mental health Providers (including those specializing in Chemical Dependency) and Participating Pharmacies. **Note:** Only those Providers listed under Family Practice, General Practice, Oriental Medicine, Internal Medicine, Gynecology, Obstetrics/Gynecology and Pediatrics are considered Primary Preferred Providers (PPPs). See "Cost-Sharing Features," later in this section for details.

Whichever method you choose, the Provider directory gives each Provider's specialty, the language spoken in the office, the office hours, and other information such as whether the office is handicapped accessible. (To find this information on the website directory, click on the doctor's name once you have found one you want to know more about.) The website directory also gives you a map to the Provider's office.

Although Provider directories are current as of the date shown at the bottom of each page of a printed directory or as of the date an Internet site was last updated, the network and/or a particular Provider's status can change without notice. To verify a Provider's current status, request a current directory, request a paper copy of a directory (free of charge), or if you have any questions about the directory, contact a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate. It is also a good idea to speak with a Provider's office staff directly to verify whether or not they belong to the NMRHCA Advantage Value Plan Provider network before making an appointment.

Web- Based BCBSNM Provider Finder

To find a Contracted Provider in New Mexico or along the border of neighboring states, please visit the *Provider Finder* section of the BCBSNM website for a list of Network Providers:

www.bcbsnm.com/nmrhca

The website is the most up- to- date resource for finding Providers and also has an Internet link to the national Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association website for services outside New Mexico. Website directories also include maps and directions to Provider locations.

Paper Provider Network Directory

If you want a paper copy of a *NMRHCA Advantage Value Plan Network Directory*, you may request one from BCBSNM Customer Service and it will be mailed to you free of charge.

Providers Outside New Mexico

You are only covered for Emergency care and urgent care outside of the state of New Mexico while traveling.

Exceptions for Noncontracted Providers

There are four instances in which the services of a Noncontracted Provider may be eligible for coverage:

Emergency Care

If you visit a Noncontracted Provider for Emergency Care services, you will receive benefits for the initial treatment, which includes Emergency room services and, if you are hospitalized **within 48 hours** of an Emergency, the related inpatient hospitalization. (Office/Urgent Care Facility services are not considered "Emergency Care" for purposes of this provision.)

For follow- up care (which is no longer considered Emergency Care) and for all other non-Emergency Care, you will receive no benefit for the services of a Noncontracted Provider, except as specified below. (See "Emergency and Urgent Care" in *Section 5: Covered Services* for more information.)

Ancillary Providers

Once you have obtained Preauthorization for an inpatient Admission to a Contracted Hospital or treatment Facility, your Contracted Physician or Hospital will make every effort to ensure that you receive ancillary services from other Contracted Providers. If you receive Covered Services from a Contracted Physician for Outpatient Surgery or inpatient medical/surgical care in a Contracted Hospital or treatment Facility, services of a Noncontracted Provider radiologist, anesthesiologist, or pathologist will be paid at the Contracted Provider level and you will not be responsible for any amounts over the Covered Charge (these are the only three specialties covered under this provision).

If a **Noncontracted** surgeon provides your care or you are admitted to a Noncontracted Hospital or other treatment Facility, you **will** be responsible for any services received from other Noncontracted Providers during the Admission or procedure. I

Transition of Care

This provision applies to both Continuity of Care and Transition of Care. If your health care Provider leaves the Advantage Value Plan network (for reasons other than medical competence or professional behavior), BCBSNM may authorize you to continue an ongoing course of treatment with the Provider for a transitional period of time of not less than 30 days. (If necessary and ordered by the treating Provider, BCBSNM may also authorize transitional care from other out- of- network Providers.) An ongoing course of treatment will include, but is not limited to: (1) Treatment for a life- threatening condition, defined as a disease or condition for which likelihood of death is probable unless the course of the disease or condition is interrupted; (2) Treatment for a serious acute condition, defined as a disease or condition requiring complex ongoing care which the covered person is currently receiving, such as chemotherapy, radiation therapy or post- operative visits; (3) The second or third trimester of pregnancy, through the postpartum period; or (4) An ongoing course of treatment for a health condition for which a treating physician or health care provider attests that discontinuing care by that physician or health care provider would worsen the condition or interfere with anticipated outcomes. The period will be sufficient to permit coordinated transition planning consistent with your condition and needs. Special provisions may apply if the required transitional period exceeds 30 days. Call the BCBSNM Customer Service department for details.

If Medically Necessary Covered Services are not available through Network Professional Providers, BCBSNM and the Network Professional Provider will refer you to an out- of- network Professional Provider. However, the payment for the out- of- network Provider will **not** exceed the payment that would have been made in the absence of any referral.

These are the only instances in which the services of a Noncontracted Provider will be covered.

CALENDAR YEAR

A Calendar Year is a period of one year which begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of the same year. The initial Calendar Year is from a Member's Effective Date of Coverage through December 31 of the same year, which may be less

than 12 months.

BENEFIT LIMITS

There is no general lifetime maximum benefit under this Plan. However, certain services have separate benefit limits per Admission or per Calendar Year. (See the *Summary of Benefits* for details.)

Benefits are determined based upon the coverage in effect on the day a service is received, an item is purchased, or a health care expense is incurred. For Inpatient Services, benefits are based upon the coverage in effect on the date of Admission, except that if you are an inpatient at the time your coverage either begins or ends, benefits for the Admission will be available only for those Covered Services received on and after your Effective Date of Coverage or those received before your termination date.

COST-SHARING FEATURES

For some services, you will pay only a fixed- dollar amount copayment for covered charges. In other cases, you will have to meet a deductible and pay a percentage of the covered charge (Contracted providers will not bill you for amounts in excess of the covered charge). When you receive a number of services during a single visit or procedure, you may have to pay both a copayment and a deductible (if applicable) plus a percentage of the covered charges that are not included in the copayment. Refer to your Summary of Benefits for details.

YOUR DEDUCTIBLE

Your Deductible is the amount of Covered Charges that you must pay in a Calendar Year before this Plan begins to pay its share of the covered charges you incur during the same calendar year. If the deductible amount remains the same during the calendar year, you pay it only once each calendar year, and it applies to covered services subject to the deductible and coinsurance you receive during that calendar year.

Individual Deductible

The individual deductible is listed on the *Summary of Benefits*. Once a Member's Deductible payments for Covered Services reach the individual Deductible amount, this Plan will begin paying its share of that Member's Covered Charges for the rest of the Calendar Year.

What Is Not Subject to the Deductible

The following are **not applied** to the annual deductible:

- *Smoking/Tobacco Cessation*
- fixed-dollar copayments or services with no charge
- preventive services
- lab tests, x-rays, and other diagnostic tests
- MRI, MRA~~,~~ CT scans, PET scans performed in an Office or Free-Standing Radiology
- Colonoscopies
- Physical Therapy obtained as alternative to Surgery
- Urgent Care Facility
- Emergency Room/Observation Room Treatment

Admissions Spanning Two Calendar Years

If a deductible has been met while you are an inpatient and the admission continues into a new calendar year, no additional deductible is applied to that admission's covered services. However, all other services received during the new calendar year are subject to the deductible for the new calendar year.

Timely Filing Reminder

Most benefits are payable only after BCBSNM's records show that the applicable deductible has been met. Contracted Providers will file Claims for you and must submit them within a specified amount of time (usually 180 days).

COPAYMENTS

Copayments are the fixed- dollar amount of a covered charge that you pay for certain services as specified on the separately issued *Summary of Benefits*.

Office Visit Copayment

When you receive **office services** from a Contracted provider, you pay only a fixed-dollar amount (or copayment), for his/her covered **office visit charge**. The copayments for "Primary Preferred Provider" (PPP) and PPO Specialist office visits are listed on the Summary of Benefits. However, all other services received during the office visit (such as physical therapy or chemotherapy) will be subject to regular deductible and/or coinsurance requirements and/or to an additional copayment as listed on the Summary of Benefits.

Besides office visits, other services are also subject to a copayment amount. See the Summary of Benefits.

Primary Preferred Provider (PPP) is a preferred provider in one of the following medical specialties only: Family Practice; General Practice; Oriental Medicine; Internal Medicine; Obstetrics/Gynecology; Gynecology; or Pediatrics. PPPs do not include physicians specializing in any other fields such as Obstetrics only, Geriatrics, Pediatric Surgery or Pediatric Allergy.

Contracted (PPO) Specialist is a practitioner of the healing arts who is in the Preferred Provider Network - but does not belong to one of the specialties defined above as being for a "Primary Preferred Provider" (or "PPP"). A PPO Specialist does not include hospitals or other treatment facilities, urgent care facilities, pharmacies, equipment suppliers, ambulance companies, or similar ancillary health care providers.

COINSURANCE

For some covered services, you must pay a percentage of covered charges as "coinsurance." After your share has been calculated, this Plan pays the rest of the covered charge, up to maximum benefit limits, if any.

OUT-OF-POCKET LIMIT

The Out-of-Pocket Limit is the maximum amount of Deductibles, Coinsurance, and Copayments that you pay for most Covered Services in a Calendar Year. After the Out-of-Pocket Limit is reached, this Plan pays 100 percent of most of your Covered Charges for the rest of the Calendar Year, not to exceed any benefit limits.

Individual Limits

Once your Coinsurance and Copayment amounts reach the individual amount indicated on the *Summary of Benefits*, this Plan pays 100 percent of most of your Covered Charges for the rest of the Calendar Year.

What Is Not Included in the Out-of-Pocket Limits

The following amounts are not applied to the out-of-pocket limits and are not eligible for 100 percent payment under this provision:

- amounts in excess of covered charges
- noncovered expenses

See the Summary of Benefits for your deductible amounts, copayments, coinsurance percentages and ***Out- of-Pocket Limit*** *amounts.*

CHANGES TO THE COST SHARING AMOUNTS

Copayments, coinsurance percentage amounts, deductibles, and out-of-pocket limits may change during a calendar year. If changes are made, the change applies only to services received after the change goes into effect (for inpatient services, benefits are determined based on the date you are admitted to the facility). You will be notified if changes are made to this Plan.

If your group increases the deductible or out-of-pocket limit amounts during a calendar year, the new amounts must be met during the same calendar year. For example, if you have met your deductible and your group changes to a higher deductible, you will not receive benefit payments for services received after the change went into effect until the increased deductible is met.

If your group decreases the deductible or out-of-pocket limit amounts, you will not receive a refund for amounts applied to the higher deductible or out-of-pocket limit.

SECTION 4: PREAUTHORIZATIONS

Preauthorizations are a requirement that you or your Provider must obtain authorization from BCBSNM before you are admitted as an inpatient or receive certain types of services.

In order to receive benefits:

- services must be covered and Medically Necessary;
- services must not be excluded; and
- the procedures described in this section must be followed regardless of where services are rendered or by whom.

Preauthorization determines only the Medical Necessity of a specific service and/or an Admission and an allowable length of stay. Preauthorization does not guarantee your eligibility for coverage, that benefit payment will be made, or that you will receive benefits. Eligibility and benefits are based on the date you receive the services. Services not listed as covered, excluded services, services received after your termination date under this Plan, and services that are not Medically Necessary will be denied.

Medically Necessary/Medical Necessity is defined as Health Care Services determined by a Provider, in consultation with BCBSNM, to be appropriate or necessary, according to any applicable generally accepted principles and practices of good medical care or practice guidelines developed by the federal government, national or professional medical societies, boards and associations, or any applicable clinical protocols or practice guidelines developed by BCBSNM consistent with such federal, national, and professional practice guidelines, for the diagnosis or direct care and treatment of a physical, behavioral, or mental health condition, illness, injury, or disease.

Please note:

Preauthorization is a requirement that you or your Provider must obtain authorization from BCBSNM before you are admitted as an inpatient and before you receive certain types of services.

Even when this Plan is not your primary coverage, these Preauthorization procedures must be followed. Failure to do so may result in a denial of benefits.

Most Preauthorization requests will be evaluated and you and/or the Provider notified of BCBSNM's decision within 5 days of receiving the request (within 24 hours for Urgent Care requests). If requested services are not approved, the notice will include: 1) the reasons for denial; 2) a reference to the health care plan provisions on which the denial is based; and 3) an explanation of how you may appeal the decision if you do not agree with the denial (see ***Section 8: Claims Payments and Appeals***) and "If Your Preauthorization Request is Denied" later in this section).

Retroactive approvals will not be given, except for Emergency and Maternity- related Admissions, and you may be responsible for the charges if Preauthorization is not obtained before the service is received.

HOW THE PREAUTHORIZATION PROCEDURE WORKS

When you or your Provider call, BCBSNM's Health Services representative will ask for information about your medical condition, the proposed treatment plan, and the estimated length of stay (if you are being admitted). The Health Services representative will evaluate the information and notify the requesting Provider (usually at the time of the call) if benefits for the proposed hospitalization or other services are preauthorized. If the Admission or other services are not preauthorized, you may appeal the decision as explained in ***Section 8: Claims Payments and Appeals***.

SERVICES OF ADVANTAGE VALUE PLAN CONTRACTED PROVIDERS

If the attending Physician is an Advantage Value Plan Contracting Provider, obtaining Preauthorization is not your responsibility —it is the Provider's. PCPs and other Advantage Value Plan Contracted Providers contracting with BCBSNM must obtain Preauthorization from BCBSNM (or from the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU), when applicable) in the following circumstances:

- when recommending any non-Emergency Admission, re-Admission, or transfer

- when a covered newborn stays in the Hospital longer than the mother
- before providing or recommending a service listed under "Other Preauthorizations," later in this section
- before recommending that you go to a Noncontracted Provider for whose services you expect to receive benefits (Such requests may be denied.)

BCBSNM will advise you if a Preauthorization request is denied.

NONCONTRACTING PROVIDERS OR PROVIDERS OUTSIDE THE NETWORK

Except in emergencies, BCBSNM must preauthorize a visit to a Noncontracting Provider. If Preauthorization is not obtained before a visit to a Noncontracting Provider, benefits will not be available for the services.

Care received from a Noncontracting Provider without a BCBSNM Preauthorization is covered only if a delay in reaching an Advantage Value Plan Contracted Provider would result in death or disfigurement, jeopardize your health, or seriously impair the function of any bodily organ or part.

BCBSNM may deny a request to preauthorize a visit to a Noncontracting Provider. Any nonemergency services received from a Noncontracting Provider must be unavailable from an Advantage Value Plan Contracted Provider. If services are available within the BCBSNM Advantage Value Plan Contracting network, BCBSNM will not preauthorize a visit to a Noncontracting Provider. If an Advantage Value Plan Contracting Provider is available in another city, you may have to travel to that city to receive benefits for nonemergency care. Also, this Plan does not cover services received outside the United States, unless there is an Emergency.

Most Preauthorizations may be requested over the telephone. If a *written* request is needed, have your Provider call a Health Services representative for instructions for filing a written request for Preauthorization. The Provider may call on your behalf, but it is your responsibility to ensure that BCBSNM is called when receiving out- of- network services.

If a Noncontracting Provider or Provider Outside the Network Recommends Services

Under very special medical circumstances, BCBSNM may preauthorize a visit to a Noncontracting Provider. If a Provider recommends an Admission or a service that requires Preauthorization, the Provider is not obligated to obtain the Preauthorization for you. In such cases, it is your responsibility to ensure that Preauthorization is obtained. If Preauthorization is not obtained before services are received, you will be entirely responsible for the charges.

INPATIENT PREAUTHORIZATION

Preauthorization is required for all Admissions before you are admitted to the Hospital or other inpatient treatment Facility (e.g., Skilled Nursing Facility, Residential Treatment Center, physical rehabilitation Facility, long- term acute care (LTAC). If you are receiving services at an out-of-network Facility (or from an in- network Facility outside New Mexico) and you do not obtain authorization within the time limits indicated in the table below, benefits for covered Facility services will be denied as explained under *"Not Obtaining Inpatient Preauthorization"* below.

Type of inpatient Admission, re-Admission, or transfer:	**When to obtain inpatient Admission Preauthorization:**
Non-Emergency	Before the patient is admitted.
Emergency, non-Maternity	Within 48 hours of the Admission. If the patient's condition makes it impossible to call within 48 hours, call as soon as possible.
Maternity-related (including eligible newborns when the mother is not covered)	Before the mother's Maternity due date, soon after pregnancy is confirmed. BCBSNM must be notified as soon as possible if the mother's stay is greater than 48 hours for a routine delivery or greater than 96 hours for a C- section delivery.

NOT OBTAINING INPATIENT PREAUTHORIZATION

If you or your Provider do not receive Preauthorization for inpatient benefits, but you choose to be hospitalized anyway, no benefits may be paid as indicated in the table below:

If, based on a review of the Claim:	Then:
The Admission was not for a Covered Service.	Benefits for the Facility and all related services will be denied. *
The Admission was for an item listed under "Other Preauthorizations," (e.g., elective Admissions).	Benefits for the Facility and all related services may be denied. *
The Admission was for any other Covered Service but hospitalization was not Medically Necessary.	Benefits may be denied for room, board, and other charges that are not Medically Necessary. *
The Admission was for a Medically Necessary Covered Service.	Benefits for the Facility's Covered Services may be denied. *

* Noncovered and denied services are not applied to any Deductible or Out-of-Pocket Limit. You are responsible for paying this amount for out- of- network services.

Inpatient Preauthorization requirements may affect the amounts that this Plan pays for Inpatient Services, but they do not deny your right to be admitted to any Facility and to choose your services.

OTHER PREAUTHORIZATIONS

In addition to Preauthorization review for all non-Emergency Inpatient Services, Preauthorization is required for certain other services listed below. Most Preauthorizations may be requested over the telephone. If a written request is needed, have your Provider call a Health Services representative for instructions for filing a written request for Preauthorization. An out-of-network Provider, or an out-of-state Network Provider may call on your behalf, but it is your responsibility to ensure that BCBSNM is called. Advantage Value Plan Providers that contract directly with BCBSNM are responsible for requesting all necessary Preauthorizations for you. (See *"Inpatient Preauthorization"* (or similar heading) for further information regarding inpatient Preauthorization requirements.)

If Preauthorization is not obtained for the following services and any related services, the service will be reviewed for Medical Necessity and subject to one of the following actions in the chart below:

No Preauthorization Received:	Claim Disposition: Preferred	Claim Disposition: Nonpreferred
Service is Medically Necessary	Claim is paid based on Member's benefit plan	Claim is paid based on Member's benefit plan
Service is not Medically Necessary	Claim is denied; Member is held harmless	Claim is denied; Member is held harmless

Services that require Preauthorization:

- All inpatient Hospital Admissions
- The following Outpatient Services and procedures:
  - Home Health Care Services and home I.V. services
  - home infusion therapy (HIT), excluding antibiotics
  - outpatient infusion drugs
  - home hemodialysis
  - home Hospice services
  - Radiation Therapy
  - transitional care benefits
  - Dialysis
  - certain injections, including but not limited to intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG)
  - molecular genetic testing
  - Outpatient Surgery performed at a Hospital or Ambulatory Surgical Facility for out-of-network services only
  - Transplant Procedures including pre-transplant evaluations
  - **Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT):**
    - Bone Conduction Hearing Aids
    - Cochlear Implant
    - Nasal and Sinus Surgery
  - **Gastroenterology (Stomach):**
    - Gastric Electrical Stimulation (GES)
  - **Neurological:**
    - Deep Brain Stimulation
    - Sacral Nerve Neuromodulation/Stimulation
    - Vagus Nerve Stimulation (VNS)
  - **Orthopedic Musculoskeletal:**
    - Artificial Intervertebral Disc
    - Autologous Chondrocyte Implantation (ACI) for Focal Articular Cartilage Lesions
    - Femoroacetabular Impingement (FAI) Syndrome
    - Functional Neuromuscular Electrical Stimulation (FNMES)
    - Joint and Spine Surgery
    - Lumbar Spinal Fusion
    - Meniscal Allografts and Other Meniscal Implants
    - Orthopedic Applications of Stem-Cell Therapy
  - **Pain Management:**
    - Occipital Nerve Stimulation
    - Surgical Deactivation of Headache Trigger Sites
    - Interventional Pain Management
    - Percutaneous and Implanted Nerve Stimulation and Neuromodulation
    - Spinal Cord Stimulation
  - **Radiology:**
    - Advanced Imaging Services- CT, CTA, MRI, MRA, PET, PET/CT, and Nuclear Medicine (excludes Cardiac Advanced Imaging)

- **Sleep Medicine:**
  - Sleep Study (Facility based polysomnography/pap titration)
- **Surgical Procedures:**
  - Orthognathic Surgery
  - Mastopexy
  - Reduction Mammoplasty; Breast Reduction
- **Wound Care:**
  - Hyperbaric Oxygen (HBO2) Therapy

For specific details about the Preauthorization requirement for the above referenced Outpatient Services, please call Customer Service at the number on the back of your Identification Card. BCBSNM reserves the right to no longer require Preauthorization during the Calendar Year. Updates to the list of services requiring Preauthorization may be confirmed by calling Customer Service.

All services, including those for which Preauthorization is required, must meet the standards of Medical Necessity criteria described in ***Section 5: Covered Services***, "Medically Necessary Services," and will not be covered, if excluded, for any reason. Some services requiring Preauthorization may not be approved for payment (for example, due to being Experimental, Investigational or Unproven, or not Medically Necessary). Services requiring Preauthorization are subject to review and change by BCBSNM.

The Preauthorization requirements noted above do not apply to mandated benefits, unless permitted by law and stated in the provisions of a specific mandated benefit. The Medical Necessity requirements noted above do not apply to mandated benefits, unless permitted by law.

It is strongly recommended that you request a Predetermination for benefits for high- cost services in order to reduce the likelihood of benefits being denied after charges are incurred. See "Advance Benefit Information/Predetermination" later in this section for further information.

PREAUTHORIZATION OF MENTAL HEALTH/CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY SERVICES

All inpatient mental health and Chemical Dependency services must be preauthorized by the BCBSNM Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) at the phone number listed on the back of your ID Card. Preauthorization is also required for the following Outpatient Services for treatment of Mental Disorder and/or Chemical Dependency:

- psychological testing
- neuropsychological testing
- Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) treatment
- electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)
- repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation
- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapies

Preauthorization is not required for group, individual, or family therapy outpatient office visits to a Physician or other Professional Provider licensed to perform Covered Services under this health plan.

For services needing Preauthorization, you or your health care Provider should call the BHU before you schedule treatment.

NOTE: Your Provider may be asked to submit clinical information in order to obtain Preauthorization for the services you are planning to receive. Services may be authorized or may be denied based on the clinical information received. (*Clinical information* is information based on actual observation and treatment of a particular patient.)

If you or your Provider do not call for Preauthorization of non-Emergency Inpatient Services, benefits for covered,

Medically Necessary Inpatient Facility care may be denied. If Inpatient Services received without Preauthorization are determined to be not Medically Necessary or not eligible for coverage under your Plan for any other reason, the Admission and all related services will be denied. In such cases, you may be responsible for all charges.

If Preauthorization is not obtained before you receive psychological testing, IOP treatment, neuropsychological testing, electroconvulsive therapy repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation or Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapies, your Claims may be denied if it is not Medically Necessary. In such cases, you may be responsible for all charges. Therefore, you should make sure that you (or your Provider) have obtained Preauthorization for Outpatient Services before you start treatment.

Use the chart below to determine the appropriate contact for your situation.

Summary of Contact Information for Preauthorization, Customer Service, Claim Submission and Appeal (or Reconsideration) Processes for Medical/Surgical and Behavioral Health Services:			
Process:	**Type of Service:**	**Phone:**	**Send to:**
Request Preauthorization	Medical/Surgical	1-800-325-8334	BCBSNM P.O. Box 27630 Albuquerque, NM 87125-7630
	Mental Health/ Chemical Dependency	1-888-898-0070	BH Unit P.O. Box 27630 Albuquerque, NM 87125-7630
Customer Service Inquiry	Medical/Surgical	1-800-432-0750	BCBSNM P.O. Box 27630 Albuquerque, NM 87125-7630
	Mental Health/ Chemical Dependency	1-888-898-0070	BH Unit P.O. Box 27630 Albuquerque, NM 87125-7630
Submit Claim (post-service)	Medical/Surgical		BCBSNM P.O. Box 27630 Albuquerque, NM 87125-7630
	Mental Health/ Chemical Dependency		BH Unit P.O. Box 27630 Albuquerque, NM 87125-7630
Request appeal or reconsideration of Claim or Preauthorization decision	Medical/Surgical	1-800-205-9926	BCBSNM Appeals Unit P.O. Box 27630 Albuquerque, NM 87125-7630
	Mental Health/ Chemical Dependency	1-888-898-0070	BCBSNM Appeals Unit P.O. Box 27630 Albuquerque, NM 87125-7630

IF YOUR PREAUTHORIZATION REQUEST IS DENIED

BCBSNM has established written procedures for reviewing and resolving your concerns. There are two different procedures depending upon the type of issue involved - pre- service or post- service. This is a summary of the procedures that apply to Preauthorization requests ("pre- service Claims"). For appeals involving post- service Claims payments or denials, see ***Section 8: Claims Payment and Appeals***.

If you are dissatisfied at any time during the process described below, you may file an appeal. You may designate a representative to act for you in the review and appeal procedures. Your designation of a representative must be in writing in order to protect against

disclosure of information about you except to your authorized representative. If you make an inquiry or request an appeal under the following procedures, you will not be subject to retaliatory action by BCBSNM.

If you have an inquiry or a concern about any Preauthorization request, call your Customer Service Advocate for assistance. Many complaints or problems can be handled informally by calling or writing BCBSNM Customer Service. If you make an oral complaint, a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate will assist you.

ADVANCE BENEFIT INFORMATION/PREDETERMINATION

If you want to know what benefits will be paid before receiving services or filing a Claim, BCBSNM may require a written request. BCBSNM may also require additional information and a written statement from the Provider identifying the circumstances of the case and the specific services that will be provided. An advance confirmation/Predetermination of benefits does not guarantee benefits if the actual circumstances of the case differ from those originally described. When submitted, Claims are reviewed according to the terms of this Benefit Booklet, your eligibility, or any other coverage that applies on the date of service.

UTILIZATION REVIEW/QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Medical records, Claims, and requests for Covered Services may be reviewed to establish that the services are/were Medically Necessary, delivered in the appropriate setting, and consistent with the condition reported and with generally accepted standards of medical and surgical practice in the area where performed and according to the findings and opinions of BCBSNM's professional consultants. Utilization Management decisions are based only on appropriateness of care and service. BCBSNM does not reward Providers or other individuals conducting utilization review for denying coverage or services and does not offer incentives to utilization review decision-makers to encourage underutilization.

SECTION 5: COVERED SERVICES

This section describes the services and supplies covered by this group health care plan, subject to the limitations and exclusions in *Section 3: How Your Plan Works* and *Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions.* All payments are based on covered charges as determined by BCBSNM.

Reminder: It is to your financial advantage to receive care from Primary Preferred Providers (PPPs) and other Contracted Providers.

MEDICALLY NECESSARY SERVICES

A service or supply is medically necessary when it is provided to diagnose or treat a covered medical condition, is a service or supply that is covered under this Plan, and is determined by BCBSNM's medical director (in consultation with your provider) to meet all of the following conditions:

- it is medical in nature;
- it is recommended by the treating physician;
- it is the most appropriate supply or level of service, taking into consideration:
  - potential benefits;
  - potential harms;
  - cost, when choosing between alternatives that are equally effective; and
  - cost effectiveness, when compared to the alternative services or supplies;
- it is known to be effective in improving health outcomes as determined by credible scientific evidence published in the peer-reviewed medical literature (for established services or supplies, professional standards and expert opinion may also be taken into account); and
- it is not for the convenience of the member, the treating physician, the hospital, or any other health care provider.

All services must be eligible for benefits as described in this section, not listed as an exclusion and must meet all of the conditions of "medically necessary" as defined above in order to be covered.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

This Plan covers ambulance services in an emergency (e.g., cardiac arrest, stroke). When you cannot be safely transported by any other means in a nonemergency situation, this Plan also covers medically necessary ambulance transportation to a hospital with appropriate facilities, or from one hospital to another.

Air Ambulance

Ground ambulance is usually the approved method of transportation. This Plan covers air ambulance only when terrain, distance, or your physical condition requires the use of air ambulance services or for high-risk maternity and newborn transport to tertiary care facilities. To be covered, nonemergency air ambulance services require **preauthorization** from BCBSNM.

BCBSNM determines on a case-by-case basis when air ambulance is covered. If BCBSNM determines that ground ambulance services could have been used, benefits are limited to the cost of ground ambulance services.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- commercial transport, private aviation, or air taxi services
- services not specifically listed as covered, such as private automobile, public transportation, or wheelchair ambulance
- services ordered only because other transportation was not available, or for your convenience

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

For a member **19 years old or younger** (or, if enrolled in high school, 22 years old or younger), this Plan covers the habilitative and rehabilitative service of autism spectrum disorder through speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and applied behavioral analysis (ABA). Providers must be credentialed to provide such therapy.

Treatment must be prescribed by the member's treating physician in accordance with a treatment plan. Treatment must be **Preauthorized** by BCBSNM to determine that the services are to be performed in accordance with such a treatment plan; if services are received but were not approved as part of the treatment plan, benefits for services will be denied. Services not preauthorized by BCBSNM must be performed in accordance with a treatment plan and must be medically necessary or benefits for such services will be denied. **Note:** Habilitative services are defined as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy and other health care services that help you keep, learn, or improve skills and functioning for daily living, as prescribed by your physician pursuant to a treatment plan. Examples include therapy for a child who isn't walking or talking at the expected age and includes therapy to enhance the ability of a child to function with a congenital, genetic or early acquired disorder. These services may include physical therapy and occupational therapy, speech language pathology, or other services for people with disabilities in a variety of inpatient and/or outpatient settings, with coverage as described in this booklet.

Services are subject to usual member cost-sharing features such as deductible, coinsurance, copayments, and out-of-pocket limits - based on place of treatment, type of service, and whether preauthorization was obtained from BCBSNM. All services are subject to the *General Limitations and Exclusions* except where explicitly mentioned as being an exception. This benefit is subject to the other general provisions of the health plan, including but not limited to: coordination of benefits, Contracted Provider agreements, restrictions on health care services, including review of medical necessity, case management, and other managed care provisions.

Regardless of the type of therapy received, claims for services related to autism spectrum disorder should be mailed to BCBSNM - **not** to the behavioral health services administrator.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- any experimental, long-term, or maintenance treatments unless listed above
- medically unnecessary or nonhabilitative services under any circumstance
- any services received under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and related state laws that place responsibility on state and local school boards for providing specialized education and related services to children 3 to 22 years old who have autism spectrum disorder
- services not in accordance with a treatment plan
- respite services or care
- Sensory Integration Therapy (SIT) or Auditory Integration Therapy (AIT)
- music therapy, vision therapy, or touch or massage therapy
- floor time
- facilitated communication
- elimination diets; nutritional supplements; intravenous immune globulin infusion; secretin infusion
- chelation therapy
- hippotherapy, animal therapy, or art therapy

DENTAL-RELATED SERVICES AND ORAL SURGERY

The following services are the only dental-related services and oral surgery procedures covered under this Plan. When alternative procedures or devices are available, benefits are based upon the most cost-effective, medically appropriate procedure or device available.

Dental and Facial Accidents

Benefits for covered services for the treatment of accidental injuries to the jaw, mouth, face or sound natural teeth are

generally subject to the same limitations, exclusions and member cost-sharing provisions that would apply to similar services when not dental-related (e.g., x-rays, medical supplies, surgical services).

To be covered, *initial* treatment for the accidental injury must be sought **within 72 hours** of the accident and any services required after the initial treatment must be associated with the initial accident in order to be covered. (For treatment of TMJ or CMJ injuries, see "TMJ/CMJ Services.")

Facility Charges

This Plan covers inpatient and outpatient hospital expenses for dental-related services **only** if the patient is under age six or has a nondental, hazardous physical condition (e.g., heart disease or hemophilia) that makes hospitalization medically necessary. All hospital services for dental-related and oral surgery services must be **preauthorized** by BCBSNM. **Note:** The dentist's services for the procedure will not be covered unless listed as eligible for coverage in this section.

Reminder: If hospital covered services are recommended by a Noncontracted (out-of-network) provider, you are responsible for assuring that your provider obtains preauthorization for outpatient covered services or benefits may be reduced or denied. (See *Section 4: Preauthorizations*.)

Oral Surgery

This Plan covers the following oral surgical procedures only:

- medically necessary orthognathic surgery
- external or intraoral cutting and draining of cellulitis (not including treatment of dental-related abscesses)
- incision of accessory sinuses, salivary glands or ducts
- lingual frenectomy
- removal or biopsy of tumors or cysts of the jaws, cheeks, lips, tongue, roof or floor of mouth when pathological examination is required

TMJ/CMJ Services

This Plan covers standard diagnostic, therapeutic, surgical and nonsurgical treatments of temporomandibular joint (TMJ) and craniomandibular joint (CMJ) disorders or accidental injuries. Treatment may include orthodontic appliances and treatment, crowns, bridges, or dentures **only if** required because of an accidental injury to sound natural teeth involving the temporomandibular or craniomandibular joint.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover oral or dental procedures not specifically listed as covered, such as, but not limited to:

- surgeon's or dentist's charges for noncovered dental services
- hospitalization or general anesthesia for the patient's or provider's convenience
- any service related to a dental procedure that is not medically necessary
- any service related to a dental procedure that is excluded under this Plan for reasons other than being dental-related, even if hospitalization and/or general anesthesia is medically necessary for the procedure being received (e.g., cosmetic procedures, experimental procedures, services received after coverage termination, work-related injuries, etc.)
- nonstandard services (diagnostic, therapeutic, or surgical)
- removal of tori, exostoses, or impacted teeth
- procedures involving orthodontic care, the teeth, dental implants, periodontal disease, noncovered services, or preparing the mouth for dentures
- duplicate or "spare" appliances
- personalized restorations, cosmetic replacement of serviceable restorations, or materials (such as precious

metals) that are more expensive than necessary to restore damaged teeth

- dental treatment or surgery, such as extraction of teeth or application or cost of devices or splints, unless required due to an accidental injury and covered under "Dental and Facial Accidents" or "TMJ/CMJ Services"
- dentures, artificial devices and/or bone grafts for denture wear, including implants

DIABETIC SERVICES

Diabetic persons are entitled to the same benefits for medically necessary covered services as are other members under the health care plan. For special coverage details, such as for insulin, glucose monitors and educational services, refer to the applicable provisions as noted below. **Note:** This Plan will also cover items not specifically listed as covered when new and improved equipment, appliances and prescription drugs for the treatment and management of diabetes are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

For insulin and over-the-counter diabetic supplies, including glucose meters, contact Express Scripts for more information.

For durable medical equipment, see "Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics."

For educational services and diabetes management services, see "Physician Visits/Medical Care."

EMERGENCY CARE AND URGENT CARE

Emergency Care

This Plan covers medical or surgical procedures, treatments, or services delivered after the sudden onset of what reasonably appears to be a medical condition with symptoms of sufficient severity, including severe pain, that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected by a reasonable layperson to result in jeopardy to his/her health; serious impairment of bodily functions; serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part, or disfigurement. (In addition, services must be received in an emergency room, trauma center, or ambulance to qualify as an emergency.) Examples of emergency conditions include, but are not limited to: heart attack or suspected heart attack, coma, loss of respiration, stroke, acute appendicitis, severe allergic reaction, or poisoning.

Emergency Room Services

Use of an emergency center for nonemergency care is NOT covered. However, services will not be denied if you, in good faith and possessing average knowledge of health and medicine, seek care for what reasonably appears to be an emergency — even if your condition is later determined to be nonemergency.

Acute emergency care is available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. If services are received in an emergency room or other trauma center, the condition and treatment must meet the definition of emergency care in order to be covered. Services received in an emergency room that do not meet the definition of emergency care may be reviewed for appropriateness and may be denied.

If you visit a Noncontracted provider for emergency care, the Contracted Provider benefit is applied only to the initial treatment, which includes emergency room services and, if you are hospitalized **within 48 hours** of an emergency, the related inpatient hospitalization. Once you are discharged, covered follow-up care from a Noncontracted

provider is paid at the Noncontracted provider benefit level. (Services received in an office or urgent care facility are

not considered emergency care for purposes of this provision.)

Emergency Admission Notification

To ensure that benefits are correctly paid and that an admission you believe is emergency-related will be covered, you or your physician or hospital should notify BCBSNM as soon as reasonably possible following admission.

Follow-Up Care

For all follow-up care (which is no longer considered emergency care) and for all other nonemergency care, you will receive the nonpreferred provider benefit for the covered services of a Noncontracted provider, even if a contract provider is **not** available to perform the service.

Urgent Care

This Plan covers urgent care services, which means medically necessary medical or surgical procedures, treatments, or services received for an unforeseen condition that is *not* life-threatening. The condition does, however, require prompt medical attention to prevent a serious deterioration in your health (e.g., high fever, cuts requiring stitches).
Urgent care is covered as any other type of service. However, if services are received in an emergency room or other trauma center, the condition and treatment must meet the definition of emergency care in order to be covered.

HEARING AIDS/RELATED SERVICES

This Plan covers the cost of hearing aids, the fitting and dispensing fees for hearing aids and ear molds, limited to

$2,200 every 36 months for members under 21 years old and $500 every 36 months for members over age 21. This 36-month benefit period begins on the date the first covered hearing aid-related service is received and payable under this provision and ends 36 months later. The next benefit period begins 36 months after the first hearing aid-related service (e.g., fitting cost, ear mold, etc.) OR on the date the next hearing aid-related service, whichever length of time is greater.
Benefits for hearing aid-related services payable under this provision are not subject to any coinsurance amount. Benefits for hearing aid-related services will be provided at **100 percent** of the covered charges. (Other covered services, such as hearing examinations and audiometric testing related to a hearing aid need for members under 21 years old are subject to the usual plan coinsurance provisions for office services and diagnostic testing. Benefits for these additional services are not applied to the 36-month maximum benefit available for hearing aids.)**.**

HOME HEALTH CARE/HOME I.V. SERVICES

Conditions and Limitations of Coverage

If you are homebound (unable to receive medical care on an outpatient basis), this Plan covers home health care services and home I.V. services provided under the direction of a physician. Nursing management must be through a home health care agency approved by BCBSNM. A *visit* is one period of home health service of up to four hours.

Preauthorization Required

Before you receive home health care services or home I.V. therapy, you, your physician or home health care agency must obtain **preauthorization** from BCBSNM. **This Plan does not cover home health care services or home I.V. services without preauthorization.**

Covered Services

This Plan covers the following services, subject to the limitations and conditions above, when provided by an approved home health care agency during a covered visit in your home:

- skilled nursing care provided on an intermittent basis by a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse
- physical, occupational, or respiratory therapy provided by licensed or certified physical, occupational, or respiratory therapists

- speech therapy provided by a speech pathologist or an American Speech and Hearing Association certified therapist
- intravenous medications and other prescription drugs ordinarily not available through a retail pharmacy if **preauthorization** is received from BCBSNM (If drugs are not provided by the home health care agency, contact Express Scripts for more information.)
- drugs, medicines, or laboratory services that would have been covered during an inpatient admission
- enteral nutritional supplies (e.g., bags, tubing) (For enteral nutritional formulas, contact Express Scripts for more information.)
- medical supplies
- skilled services by a qualified aide to do such things as change dressings and check blood pressure, pulse, and temperature
- incontinence supplies ($200 monthly maximum)

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- care provided primarily for you or your family's convenience
- homemaking services or care that consists mostly of bathing, feeding, exercising, preparing meals for, moving, giving medications to, or acting as a sitter for the patient (See the "Custodial Care" exclusion in *Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions*.)
- services provided by a nurse who ordinarily resides in your home or is a member of your immediate family
- private duty nursing

HOSPICE CARE SERVICES

Conditions and Limitations

This Plan covers inpatient and home hospice services for a terminally ill member received during a hospice benefit period when provided by a hospice program approved by BCBSNM. If you need an extension of the hospice benefit period, the hospice agency must provide a new treatment plan and the attending physician must recertify your condition to BCBSNM. (See definition of a hospice benefit period in *Section 10* for more information.)

Preauthorization Required

Before you receive hospice care, your attending physician or the hospice agency must request **preauthorization** from BCBSNM. **Hospice care services are not covered without preauthorization.** See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Covered Services

This Plan covers the following services, subject to the conditions and limitations under the hospice care benefit:

- visits from hospice physicians
- skilled nursing care by a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse
- physical and occupational therapy by licensed or certified physical or occupational therapists
- speech therapy provided by an American Speech and Hearing Association certified therapist
- medical supplies (If supplies are *not* provided by the hospice agency, see "Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics.")
- drugs and medications for the terminally ill patient (If drugs are *not* provided by the hospice agency, contact Express Scripts for more information.)
- medical social services provided by a qualified individual with a degree in social work, psychology, or counseling, or the documented equivalent in a combination of education, training and experience (Such services must be recommended by a physician to help the member or his/her family deal with a specified

medical condition.)

- services of a home health aide under the supervision of a registered nurse and in conjunction with skilled nursing care
- nutritional guidance and support, such as intravenous feeding and hyperalimentation
- respite care for a period **not to exceed five continuous days** for **every 60 days** of hospice care and **no more than two respite care periods** during each hospice benefit period (*Respite care* provides a brief break from total care-giving by the family.)

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- food, housing, or delivered meals
- medical transportation
- homemaker and housekeeping services
- comfort items
- private duty nursing
- supportive services provided to the family of a terminally ill patient when the patient is not a member of this Plan
- care or services received after the member's coverage terminates

HOSPITAL/OTHER FACILITY SERVICES

Blood Services

This Plan covers the processing, transporting, handling, and administration of blood and blood components. This Plan covers directed donor or autologous blood storage fees only when the blood is used during a scheduled surgical procedure. This Plan does **not** cover blood replaced through donor credit.

Inpatient Services

Preauthorization Required

If hospitalization is recommended by a Noncontracted provider or you are outside New Mexico, **you are responsible** for obtaining preauthorization. If you do not follow the inpatient preauthorization procedures, benefits for covered facility services will be **reduced** or **denied** as explained in *Section 4: Preauthorizations.*

Covered Services

For acute inpatient medical or surgical care received during a covered hospital admission, this Plan covers semiprivate room and board or special care unit (e.g., ICU, CCU) expenses and other medically necessary services provided by the facility. If you have a private room for any reason other than isolation, covered room expenses are limited to the average semiprivate room rate, whether or not a semiprivate room is available. BCBSNM must give **preauthorization** for medically necessary private room charges to be covered. See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Medical Detoxification

This Plan also covers medically necessary services related to medical detoxification from the effects of alcohol or drug abuse. Detoxification is the treatment in an acute care facility for withdrawal from the physiological effects of alcohol or drug abuse, which usually takes about three days in an acute care facility. Benefits for detoxification services are the same as for any other acute medical/surgical condition. Preauthorization is required for all inpatient hospitalizations. See "Psychotherapy (Mental Health and Chemical Dependency)" for information about benefits for chemical dependency rehabilitation. See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- transplants or related services when transplant received at a facility that does not contract directly with a BCBSNM Contracted provider or through a BCBS transplant network. (See "Transplant Services" for more information.)
- admissions related to noncovered services or procedures
- custodial care facility admissions

Outpatient or Observation Services

Coverage for outpatient or observation services and related physician or other professional provider services for the treatment of illness or accidental injury depends on the type of service received (for example, see "Lab, X-Ray, Other Diagnostic Services" or "Emergency and Urgent Care").

LAB, X-RAY, OTHER DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

For invasive diagnostic procedures such as biopsies and endoscopies or any procedure that requires the use of an operating or recovery room, see "Surgery and Related Services."

This Plan covers diagnostic services, including but not limited to, preadmission testing, that are related to an illness or accidental injury. Covered services include:

- x-ray and radiology services, ultrasound, and imaging studies
- laboratory and pathology tests
- EKG, EEG, and other electronic diagnostic medical procedures
- genetic testing with **preauthorization** from BCBSNM (Tests such as amniocentesis or ultrasound to determine the gender of an unborn child are not covered; see "Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care.")
- infertility-related testing with **preauthorization** from BCBSNM (See "Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care.")
- PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scans, cardiac CT scans with **preauthorization** from BCBSNM
- MRIs
- psychological or neuropsychological testing with **preauthorization** from BCBSNM
- audiometric (hearing) and vision tests for the diagnosis and/or treatment of an accidental injury or an illness

Note: All services, including those for which preauthorization is required, must meet the standards of medical necessity criteria established by BCBSNM and will not be covered if excluded for any reason under this Plan. **Some services requiring preauthorization will not be approved for payment.**

MATERNITY/REPRODUCTIVE SERVICES AND NEWBORN CARE

Like benefits for other conditions, member cost-sharing amounts for pregnancy, family planning, infertility, and newborn care are based on the place of service and type of service received.

Family Planning and Infertility-Related Services

For preventive oral contraceptive coverage and contraceptive devices purchased from a pharmacy, contact Express Scripts for more information.

Family Planning

Covered family planning services include FDA-approved devices and other procedures such as:

- health education and family planning counseling
- follow-up care for trouble you may have from using a birth control method that a family planning provider gave you
- birth control pills (covered under the drug plan provision)
- pregnancy testing and counseling
- injection of Depo-Provera for birth control purposes
- diaphragm, including fitting
- IUDs or cervical caps, including fitting, insertion, and removal
- surgical sterilization procedures such as vasectomies and tubal ligations

Infertility-Related Services

This Plan covers the following infertility-related treatments when **preauthorization** is received from BCBSNM. (**Note:** the following procedures only *secondarily* treat infertility):

- surgical treatments such as opening an obstructed fallopian tube, epididymis, or vas deferens when the obstruction is **not** the result of a surgical sterilization
- replacement of deficient, naturally occurring hormones **if** there is documented evidence of a deficiency of the hormone being replaced

The above services are the **only** infertility-related treatments that will be considered for benefit payment.
Diagnostic *testing*, when **preauthorization** is received from BCBSNM, is covered only to diagnose the cause of infertility. (See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.) Once the cause has been established and the treatment determined to be noncovered, no further testing is covered. For example, this Plan will cover lab tests to monitor hormone levels following the hormone replacement treatment listed as covered above. However, daily ultrasounds to monitor ova maturation are **not** covered since the testing is being used to monitor a noncovered infertility treatment.

Exclusions

In addition to services not listed as covered above, this Plan does **not** cover:

- contraceptive devices that do not require a prescription, including over-the-counter contraceptive products such as condoms and spermicide
- sterilization reversal for males or females
- infertility treatments and related services, such as hormonal manipulation and excess hormones to increase the production of mature ova for fertilization
- Gamete Intrafallopian Transfer (GIFT)
- Zygote Intrafallopian Transfer (ZIFT)
- cost of donor sperm
- artificial conception or insemination; fertilization and/or growth of a fetus outside the mother's body in an artificial environment, such as in-vivo or in-vitro (test tube) fertilization, and embryo transfer; drugs for induced ovulation; or other artificial methods of conception

Pregnancy-Related/Maternity Services

If you are pregnant, you should call BCBSNM before your maternity due date, soon after your pregnancy is confirmed. BCBSNM must be notified as soon as possible if the mother's stay is greater than **48 hours** for a routine delivery or greater than **96 hours** for a C-section delivery. If not notified, benefits for covered facility services may be reduced by $300.

A covered daughter also has coverage for pregnancy-related services. However, if the parent of the newborn *is* a covered child of the subscriber (i.e., the newborn is the subscriber's grandchild), benefits are **not** available for the newborn except for the first 48 hours of routine newborn care (or 96 hours in the case of a C-section).

Covered Services

Covered pregnancy-related services include:

- hospital or other facility charges for semiprivate room and board and ancillary services, including the use of labor, delivery, and recovery rooms (This Plan covers all medically necessary hospitalization, including at least 48 hours of inpatient care following a vaginal delivery and 96 hours following a C-section delivery. **Note:** Newborns who are not eligible for coverage under this Plan will not be covered beyond the 48 or 96 hours required under federal law.)
- routine or complicated delivery, including prenatal and postnatal medical care of an obstetrician, certified nurse-midwife or licensed midwife (Expenses for prenatal and postnatal care are included in the total covered charge for the actual delivery or completion of pregnancy.) **Note:** Home births are not covered unless the provider has a contract with his/her local BCBS Plan and is credentialed to provide the service.
- pregnancy-related diagnostic tests, including genetic testing or counseling if **preauthorized** by BCBSNM (Services must be sought due to a family history of a gender-linked genetic disorder or to diagnose a possible congenital defect caused by a present, external factor that increases risk, such as advanced maternal age or alcohol abuse. For example, tests such as amniocentesis or ultrasound to determine the gender of an unborn child are **not** covered.)
- necessary anesthesia services by a provider qualified to perform such services, including acupuncture used as an anesthetic during a covered surgical procedure and administered by a physician, a licensed doctor of oriental medicine, or other practitioner as required by law
- when necessary to protect the life of the infant or mother, coverage for transportation, including air transport, for the medically high-risk pregnant woman with an impending delivery of a potentially viable infant to the nearest available tertiary care facility for newly born infants (See "Ambulance Services" for details.)
- services of a physician who actively assists the operating surgeon in performing a covered surgical procedure when the procedure requires an assistant
- elective, spontaneous, or therapeutic termination of pregnancy prior to full term

Special Beginnings

This is a maternity program for BCBSNM members that is available whenever you need it. It can help you better understand and manage your pregnancy. To take full advantage of the program, you should enroll within three months of becoming pregnant. When you enroll, you will receive a questionnaire to find out if there may be any problems with your pregnancy to watch out for, information on nutrition, newborn care, and other topics helpful to new parents. You will also receive personal and private phone calls from an experienced nurse - all the way from pregnancy to six weeks after your child is born. To learn more, or to enroll, call toll-free at:

1-888-421-7781

Newborn Care

If you do not have coverage for your newborn on the date of birth, **you must add coverage within 31 days of birth** in order for any newborn charges, routine or otherwise, to be covered beyond the first 48 hours of birth (or 96 hours in the case of a C-section).

Newborn Eligibility

If you do not elect to add coverage for your newborn within 31 days, and wish to add the child to coverage later, the child is considered a late applicant unless eligible for a special enrollment. **Note:** If the parent of the newborn is a covered child of the subscriber (i.e., the newborn is the subscriber's grandchild), services for the newborn are **not** covered except for the first 48 hours of routine newborn care (or 96 hours in the case of a C-section).

Routine Newborn Care

If both the mother's charges and the baby's charges are eligible for coverage under this Plan, no additional deductible for the newborn is required for the facility's initial routine nursery care if the covered newborn is discharged on the same day as the mother.

Covered Services

Covered services for initial routine newborn care include:

- routine hospital nursery services, including alpha-fetoprotein IV screening
- routine medical care in the hospital after delivery
- pediatrician standby care at a C-section procedure
- services related to circumcision of a male newborn

For children who are covered from their date of birth, benefits include coverage of injury or sickness, including covered services related to the necessary care and treatment of medically diagnosed congenital defects and birth abnormalities.

Extended Stay Newborn Care

A newborn who is enrolled for coverage within the time limits specified in *Section 2: Enrollment and Termination Information* is also covered if he/she stays in the hospital longer than the mother. The baby's services will be subject to a separate deductible, coinsurance and out-of-pocket limit

Note: If you are in a Noncontracted facility, you must ensure that BCBSNM is called **before** the mother is discharged from the hospital. If you do not, benefits for the newborn's covered facility services will be reduced by $300. The baby's services will be subject to a separate deductible, coinsurance and out-of-pocket limit.

PHYSICIAN VISITS/MEDICAL CARE

This section describes benefits for therapeutic injections, allergy care and testing, and other nonsurgical, nonroutine medical visits to a health care provider for evaluating your condition and planning a course of treatment. See specific topics referenced in this section for more information regarding a particular type of service (e.g., "Preventive Services," "Transplant Services," etc.).

This Plan covers medically necessary care provided by a physician or other professional provider for an illness or accidental injury. **Your choice of provider can make a difference in the amount you pay.** (See *Section 3: How Your Plan Works.*)

Office Visits and Consultations

Benefits for services received in a physician's office are based on the type of service received while in the office. Services covered under this provision include allergy care, therapeutic injections, office visits, consultations (including second or third surgical opinions) and examinations, and other nonroutine office medical procedures — when not related to hospice care or payable as part of a surgical procedure. (See "Hospice Care" or "Surgery and Related Services" if the medical visits are related to either of these services.)

Allergy Care

This Plan covers direct skin (percutaneous and intradermal) and patch allergy tests, radioallergosorbent testing (RAST), allergy serum, and appropriate FDA-approved allergy injections administered in a provider's office or in a facility.

Diabetes Self-Management Education

This Plan covers diabetes self-management training if you have diabetes or an elevated blood glucose due to pregnancy. Training must be prescribed by a health care provider and given by a certified, registered, or licensed health care professional with recent education in diabetes management. Covered services are limited to:

- medically necessary visits upon the diagnosis of diabetes
- visits following a physician diagnosis that represents a significant change in your symptoms or condition that warrants changes in your self-management
- visits when re-education or refresher training is prescribed by a health care provider
- medical nutrition therapy related to diabetes management

Contact Express Scripts for benefits for insulin and oral agents to control blood glucose levels, glucose meters, needles, syringes, and test strips; see "Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics" for other covered supplies and equipment required due to diabetes.

Genetic Inborn Errors of Metabolism

This Plan covers medically necessary expenses related to the diagnosis, monitoring and control of genetic inborn errors of metabolism as defined in *Section 10: Definitions.* Covered services include medical assessment, including clinical services, biochemical analysis, medical supplies, corrective lenses for conditions related to the genetic inborn error of metabolism, nutritional management and **preauthorized** special medical foods (as defined and described in your pharmacy benefits). In order to be covered, services cannot be excluded under any other provision of this benefit booklet and are paid according to the provisions of the Plan that apply to that particular type of service (e.g., special medical foods are covered under your pharmacy benefits and medical assessments under "Physician Visits/Medical Care" and corrective lenses under "Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics").

To be covered, the member must be receiving medical treatment provided by licensed health care professionals, including physicians, dieticians and nutritionists, who have specific training in managing patients diagnosed with genetic inborn errors of metabolism.

Injections and Injectable Drugs

This Plan covers most FDA-approved therapeutic injections administered in a provider's office. However, this Plan covers some injectable drugs only when **preauthorization** is received from BCBSNM. Your BCBSNM-Contracted provider has a list of those injectable drugs that require preauthorization. If you need a copy of the list, call a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate. (When you request preauthorization, you may be directed to purchase the self-injectable medication through your drug plan.)

The Claims Administrator and the Plan reserves the right to exclude any injectable drug currently being used by a member. Proposed new uses for injectable drugs previously approved by the FDA will be evaluated on a medication-by-medication basis. Call a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate if you have any questions about this policy.

Mental Health Evaluation Services

This Plan covers medication checks and intake evaluations for mental disorders, alcohol, and drug abuse when **preauthorized** by BCBSNM. See "Psychotherapy (Mental Health and Chemical Dependency)" for psychotherapy and other therapeutic service benefits.

Inpatient Medical Visits

With the exception of dental-related services, this Plan covers the following services when received on a covered inpatient hospital day:

- visits for a condition requiring **only** medical care, unless related to hospice care
- consultations (including second opinions) and, if surgery is performed, inpatient visits by a provider who is not the surgeon and who provides medical care **not** related to the surgery (For the surgeon's services, see "Surgery

and Related Services" or "Transplant Services.")

- medical care requiring **two or more** physicians at the same time because of multiple illnesses
- initial routine newborn care for a newborn added to coverage within the time limits specified in *Section 2: Enrollment and Termination Information* (See "Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care" for details and for extended stay benefits.)

PREVENTIVE SERVICES

Claims filed under this provision must clearly show that the office visit and tests were for routine or preventive care.

The services listed under this provision are not limited as to the number of times you may receive the service in any given period or as to the age of the patient (except when a service is inappropriate for the patient's age group, such as providing a pediatric immunization to an adult). You and your physician are encouraged to determine how often and at what time you should receive preventive tests and examinations and you will receive coverage according to the benefits and limitations of your health care plan. Coverage for a recommended preventive service that is otherwise considered medically necessary for an individual will be provided regardless of an individual's sex assigned at birth, gender identity or gender that BCBSNM has recorded.

. Allergy injections are **not** considered immunizations under the "Preventive Services" benefit. Examples of covered Preventive services include, but are not limited to:

- routine physical, breast, and pelvic examinations
- routine adult and pediatric immunizations
- papilloma virus screening and cytologic screening (a Pap test or liquid-based cervical cytopathology)
- human papillomavirus vaccine (HPV) for members ages 9 - 26 years old
- periodic blood hemoglobin, blood pressure and blood glucose level tests
- periodic colorectal screening tests
- periodic blood cholesterol or periodic fractionated cholesterol level including a low-density lipoprotein (LDL) and a high-density lipoprotein (HDL) level; periodic stool examination for the presence of blood
- well-child care, including well-baby and well-child screening for diagnosing the presence of autism spectrum disorder
- periodic glaucoma eye tests
- vision and hearing screenings in order to detect the need for additional vision or hearing testing for members when received as part of a routine physical examination (A screening does *not* include an eye examination, refraction or other test to determine the amount and kind of correction needed.)
- health education and counseling services if recommended by your physician, including an annual consultation to discuss lifestyle behaviors that promote health and well-being
- contraceptive drugs and devices

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- employment physicals, insurance examinations, or examinations at the request of a third party (the requesting party may be responsible for payment); premarital examinations; sports or camp physicals; any other nonpreventive physical examination
- immunizations or medications required for international travel
- hepatitis B immunizations when required due to possible exposure during the member's work
- routine eye examinations; eye refractions; or any related service or supply
- routine hearing examinations; hearing aids; or any related service or supply, unless otherwise specified in this section (See "Hearing Aids/Related Services.")

PSYCHOTHERAPY (MENTAL HEALTH AND CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY)

Note: You do not receive a separate mental health/chemical dependency ID card; use your BCBSNM ID card to receive all medical/surgical and mental health/chemical dependency services covered under this Plan.

Medical Necessity

In order to be covered, treatment must be medically necessary and not experimental, investigational, or unproven. Therapy must be:

- required for the treatment of a distinct mental disorder as defined by the latest version of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* published by the American Psychiatric Association; and
- reasonably expected to result in significant and sustained improvement in your condition and daily functioning; and
- consistent with your symptoms, functional impairments and diagnoses and in keeping with generally accepted national and local standards of care; and
- provided to you at the least restrictive level of care.

Covered Services/Providers

Covered services include solution-focused evaluative and therapeutic mental health services (including individual and group psychotherapy) received in a psychiatric hospital, an IOP (intensive outpatient program), or an alcoholism treatment program that complies with applicable state laws and regulations, and services rendered by psychiatrists, licensed psychologists, and other providers as defined in *Section 10: Definitions*. See your BCBSNM *Provider Directory* for a list of contracting providers or check the BCBSNM website at www.bcbsnm.com.

Preauthorization Requirements

All inpatient mental health and chemical dependency services must be preauthorized by the Behavioral Health Unit at the phone number listed on the back of your ID card. Preauthorization is also required for outpatient psychological testing, neuropsychological testing, intensive outpatient program (IOP) treatment, and electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapies and repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation for treatment of mental illness and/or chemical dependency. Preauthorization is **not** required for outpatient/office group, individual, or family therapy visits to a physician or other professional provider licensed to perform covered services under this health plan. You or your physician should call the Behavioral Health Unit **before** you schedule treatment. If you do not call before receiving nonemergency services, **benefits for covered services may be reduced or denied** as explained in the *Preauthorizations* section, earlier. In such cases, you may be responsible

for all charges, so please ensure that you or your provider have received preauthorization for any services you plan to receive. The BHU Call Center is open 24/7 to assist members and providers with emergency admission inquiries and to respond to crisis calls.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- psychoanalysis or psychotherapy that you may use as credit toward earning a degree or furthering your education
- services billed by a school, halfway house or group home, or their staff members; foster care; Residential Treatment Centers; or behavior modification services
- Long term therapy or therapy for the treatment of chronic Mental Disorders or incurable conditions for which treatment produces minimal or temporary change of relief except that medication management for chronic conditions is covered. See "Early Developmental Delay and Disability" in *Section 8: Claims Payments and Appeals* for reimbursement of certain services provided to eligible children by the Department of Health.
- maintenance therapy or care provided after you have reached your rehabilitative potential

- hypnotherapy, or behavior modification services
- religious or pastoral counseling
- custodial care
- any care that is patient-elected and is not considered medically necessary
- care that is mandated by court order or as a legal alternative, and lacks clinical necessity as diagnosed by a licensed provider; services rendered as a condition of parole or probation
- special education, school testing and evaluations, counseling, therapy, or care for learning deficiencies or educational and developmental disorders; behavioral problems unless associated with manifest mental disorders or other disturbances
- non-national standard therapies, including those that are experimental as determined by the mental health professional practice
- the cost of any damages to a treatment facility

REHABILITATION AND OTHER THERAPY

When billed by a facility during a covered admission, therapy is covered in the same manner as the other ancillary services (see "Hospital/Other Facility Services").

Acupuncture/Chiropractic Services

This Plan covers acupuncture when administered by a licensed provider acting within the scope of licensure and chiropractic services administered by a chiropractor acting within the scope of his/her licensure and according to the standards of chiropractic medicine in New Mexico (or the state in which the services were rendered). Services must be necessary for the treatment of an illness or injury. Benefits for acupuncture (which includes acupuncture used as an anesthetic) and for chiropractic services (which includes physical therapy, spinal manipulation, x-rays, office visits, and other covered services performed by the chiropractor), are limited as specified on your *Summary of Benefits.*

Biofeedback

This Plan covers biofeedback when prescribed for only the following physician conditions: Reynaud's disease, urinary incontinence, chronic pain treatment, tension headaches, migraines, and temporomandibular joint (TMJ) or craniomandibular joint (CMJ) disorders. Biofeedback, including any related office call, is covered only for these listed conditions.

Services or supplies must be administered by a licensed physician or a Board-Certified Biofeedback therapists acting within the scope of his/her licensure and according to the standards in New Mexico or the state in which services are rendered.

Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation

This Plan covers outpatient cardiac rehabilitation programs provided within six months of a cardiac incident and outpatient pulmonary rehabilitation services. **Preauthorization** must be obtained from BCBSNM or benefits will be denied. See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Chemotherapy and Radiation Therapy

This Plan covers the treatment of malignant disease by standard chemotherapy and treatment of disease by radiation therapy. **High-dose chemotherapy treatments must receive preauthorization from BCBSNM in order to be covered.** See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Cancer Clinical Trials

If you are a participant in an approved cancer clinical trial, you may receive coverage for certain routine patient care costs incurred in the trial. The trial must be conducted as part of a scientific study of a new therapy or intervention for the prevention of reoccurrence, early detection, or treatment of cancer. The persons conducting the trial must provide BCBSNM with notice of when the member enters and leaves a qualified cancer clinical trial and must

accept BCBSNM's covered charges as payment in full (this includes the health care Plan's payment plus your share of the covered charge).

The routine patient care costs that are covered must be the same services or treatments that would be covered if you were receiving standard cancer treatment. Benefits also include FDA-approved prescription drugs that are not paid for by the manufacturer, distributor, or supplier of the drug. (Member cost-sharing provisions described under your pharmacy portion will apply to these benefits.)

Benefits for Routine Patient Care Costs for Participation in Certain Clinical Trials

Benefits for eligible expenses for Routine Patient Care Costs are provided in connection with a phase I, phase II, phase III, or phase IV clinical trial if the clinical trial is conducted in relation to the prevention, detection, or treatment of a life-threatening disease or condition and is approved by:

- the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States Department of Health and Human Services;
- the National Institutes of Health;
- the United States Food and Drug Administration;
- the United States Department of Defense;
- the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; or
- an institutional review board of an institution in this state that has an agreement with the Office of Human Research Protections of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

Benefits are not available under this section for services that are a part of the subject matter of the clinical trial and that are customarily paid for by the research institution conducting the clinical trial.

Dialysis

This Plan covers the following services when received from a dialysis provider, or when **preauthorization** is received from BCBSNM, in your home (See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.):

- renal dialysis (hemodialysis)
- continual ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD)
- apheresis and plasmapheresis
- the cost of equipment rentals and supplies for home dialysis

Massage Therapy

Benefits for medical necessary massage therapy that is prescribed by a physician for the treatment of an accidental injury or other pain are limited as specified on the *Summary of Benefits*, in combination with acupuncture, chiropractic, and rolfing services.

Services must be administered by a medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, licensed physical therapist, doctor of oriental medicine, chiropractor, or licensed massage therapist acting within the scope of his/her licenses and according to the standards in New Mexico or the state in which services are rendered.

Rolfing

This Plan covered rolfing, limited as specified on the *Summary of Benefits*, in combination with acupuncture, chiropractic, and massage therapy services. Services must be administered by a licensed rolfer acting within the scope of his/her licensure and according to the stands in New Mexico or the state in which services are rendered.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- herbs, homeopathic preparations, or nutritional supplements

- any therapeutic exercise equipment prescribed for home use

Short-Term Rehabilitation: Occupational, Physical, Speech Therapy (Inpatient and Outpatient, Including Skilled Nursing Facility)

Preauthorization Required

To be covered, all **inpatient**, outpatient, office and home-based outpatient, short-term rehabilitation treatments, including skilled nursing facility and physical rehabilitation facility admissions, must receive **preauthorization** from BCBSNM. Short-term rehabilitation required due to reinjury or aggravation of an injury are also covered but must receive a separate **preauthorization** from BCBSNM, even if therapy was authorized for the original injury. See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Covered Services

This Plan covers the following short-term rehabilitation services when rendered for the medically necessary treatment of accidental injury or illness:

- occupational therapy performed by a licensed occupational therapist
- physical therapy performed by a physician, licensed physical therapist, or other professional provider licensed as a physical therapist (such as a doctor of oriental medicine)
- speech therapy, including audio diagnostic testing, performed by a properly accredited speech therapist for the treatment of communication impairment or swallowing disorders caused by disease, trauma, congenital anomaly, or a previous treatment or therapy
- inpatient physical rehabilitation and skilled nursing facility services when **preauthorized** by BCBSNM

Benefit Limits

Benefits are limited, if applicable, as specified in the *Summary of Benefits*. **Note:** Long-term therapy, maintenance therapy, and therapy for chronic conditions are **not** covered. This Plan covers short-term rehabilitation only.

Conditions of Coverage

To be eligible for benefits, therapies must meet the following conditions:

- Services must be **Preauthorized** by BCBSNM. See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.
- There is a documented condition or delay in recovery that can be expected to measurably improve with therapy within two months of beginning active therapy. This period may be extended upon recommendation of the referring Contracted physician, in consultation with BCBSNM.
- Improvement would not normally be expected to occur without intervention.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- maintenance therapy or care provided after you have reached your rehabilitative potential (Even if you have not reached your rehabilitative potential, this Plan does not cover services that exceed maximum benefit limits, if any.)
- therapy for the treatment of chronic conditions such as, but not limited to, cerebral palsy or developmental delay and described in this *Covered Services* section under "Autism Spectrum Disorders"
- services provided at or by a health spa or fitness center, even if the service is provided by a licensed or registered provider
- therapeutic exercise equipment prescribed for home use (e.g., treadmill, weights)

- private room expenses unless your medical condition requires isolation for protection from exposure to bacteria and diseases (e.g., severe burns or conditions that require isolation according to public health laws)
- speech therapy for dysfunctions that self-correct over time; speech services that maintain function by using routine, repetitive, and reinforced procedures that are neither diagnostic or therapeutic; other speech services that can be carried out by the patient, the family, or caregiver/teacher
- herbs, homeopathic preparations, or nutritional supplements
- services of a massage therapist when not administered by a licensed massage therapist

SMOKING/TOBACCO USE CESSATION

This Plan covers smoking and tobacco use cessation treatment, limited to the following diagnostic and counseling services received from **Contracted Providers** and drug therapy that has been **preauthorized** by BCBSNM (subject to member cost-sharing provisions applicable to the type of service received, such as prescription drugs, counseling, etc.):

- diagnostic services to identify tobacco use, use-related conditions, and dependence
- two 90-day courses of **preauthorized** treatment with FDA-approved prescription drugs to assist you with quitting tobacco use or smoking (Contact Express Scripts for benefit details.) See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.
- a choice of cessation counseling of up to 90 minutes total provider contact time or two multi-session group programs per benefit period (Covered counseling is restricted to programs that meet minimum requirements .) See *Section 10: Definitions* for minimum cessation counseling requirements.

Starting any course of prescription drug therapy or cessation counseling constitutes one entire course of drug therapy or cessation counseling – even if you discontinue or fail to complete the course. For example, if you purchase a one-month supply of a prescription drug for smoking cessation and do not continue the drug beyond one month, you will have used up one entire 90-day course of treatment with the 30-day supply.
To locate a provider that is approved to provide cessation counseling sessions, you may call BCBSNM Customer Service or ask your personal physician about obtaining a prescription for smoking cessation drugs.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover the following services:

- cessation counseling or treatment received from Noncontracted providers or drug therapy that has not received preauthorization (See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.)
- acupuncture or hypnotherapy for smoking/tobacco use cessation
- over-the-counter tobacco cessation products, including but not limited to items such as nicotine patches or nicotine gum (Contact Express Scripts for copayments and other limitations that apply to prescription drugs.)

SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT AND PROSTHETICS

To be covered, items must be medically necessary and ordered by a health care provider. If you have a question about durable medical equipment, medical supplies, prosthetics or appliances not listed, please call the BCBSNM Health Services Department.

Preauthorization from BCBSNM is required for:

- **specific items** listed in this section
- **long-term rental** of an item
- when total charges for an item equal **$500** or more *(Total charges* means either the total purchase price of the item

or total rental charges for the estimated period of use.)

Diabetic Supplies and Equipment

This Plan covers the following supplies and equipment for diabetic members and individuals with elevated glucose levels due to pregnancy (supplies are not to exceed a **30-day supply** purchased during any 30-day period):

- injection aids, including those adaptable to meet the needs of the legally blind
- insulin pumps if **preauthorization** is received from BCBSNM, and insulin pump supplies
- blood glucose monitors, including those for the legally blind
- medically necessary podiatric appliances for prevention and treatment of foot complications associated with diabetes, including therapeutic molded or depth-inlay shoes, functional orthotics that have been **preauthorized** by BCBSNM, custom molded inserts, replacement inserts, preventive devices, and shoe modifications

Reminder: Preauthorization is required for items costing **over $500** or requiring long-term rental. See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements. For additional diabetic supply coverage, (e.g., insulin needle and syringes, autolet, glucose meters, test strips for glucose monitors, glucagon emergency kits), under your pharmacy benefits.

Durable Medical Equipment and Appliances

This Plan covers the following items (**preauthorization is required for items costing over $500 or requiring long-term rental):**

- orthopedic appliances (**preauthorization** is required, regardless of total cost)
- replacement of items only when required because of wear (and the item cannot be repaired) or because of a change in your condition
- oxygen and oxygen equipment, wheelchairs, hospital beds, crutches, and other medically necessary durable medical equipment
- lens implants for aphakic patients (those with no lens in the eye) and soft lenses or sclera shells (white supporting tissue of eyeball)
- either one set of prescription eyeglasses or one set of contact lenses (whichever is appropriate for your medical needs) when needed to replace lenses absent at birth or lost through cataract or other intraocular surgery or ocular injury, to treat conditions related to genetic inborn errors of metabolism, or prescribed by a physician as the only treatment available for keratoconus (Duplicate glasses/lenses are not covered. Replacement is covered only if a physician or optometrist recommends a change in prescription due to a change in your medical condition.)
- cardiac pacemakers

This Plan covers the rental (or at the option of BCBSNM, the purchase of) durable medical equipment (including repairs to or replacement of such purchased items), when prescribed by a covered health care provider and required for therapeutic use.

Note: Benefits for durable medical equipment received from a **Noncontracted provider** are limited each benefit period to the amount indicated in the *Summary of Benefits*. (The limitation does not apply to diabetic equipment, oxygen or oxygen equipment.) Benefits for durable medical equipment received from a Contracted Provider are not limited.

Medical Supplies

This Plan covers the following medical supplies, not to exceed a **34-day supply** purchased during any 30-day period, unless otherwise indicated:

- colostomy bags, catheters
- gastrostomy tubes
- hollister supplies

- tracheostomy kits, masks
- lamb's wool or sheepskin pads
- ace bandages, elastic supports when billed by a physician or other provider during a covered office visit
- slings
- support hose prescribed by a physician for treatment of varicose veins (six pair per calendar year)

Note: Benefits for medical supplies received from a **Noncontracted** provider are limited each benefit period to the amount indicated in the *Summary of Benefits*. (The limitation does not apply to diabetic equipment, oxygen, or oxygen equipment.) Benefits for medical supplies received from a Contracted provider are not limited.

Orthotics and Prosthetic Devices

This Plan covers the following items when medically necessary and ordered by a provider:

- surgically implanted prosthetics or devices, including penile implants required as a result of illness or accidental injury, if **preauthorization** for such items is received from BCBSNM
- externally attached prostheses to replace a limb or other body part lost after accidental injury or surgical removal; their fitting, adjustment, repairs and replacement
- replacement of prosthetics only when required because of wear (and the item cannot be repaired) or because of a change in your condition
- breast prosthetics when required as the result of a mastectomy and mastectomy bras, which are limited to **four bras** per calendar year
- functional orthotics only for patients having a locomotive problem or gait difficulty resulting from mechanical problems of the foot, ankle, or leg (A functional orthotic is used to control the function of the joints and is covered only when **preauthorized by BCBSNM** and prescribed by a physician or podiatrist.)
- orthotics (e.g., collars, braces, molds) prescribed by an eligible provider to protect, restore, or improve impaired body function
- wigs only when related to cancer treatment or other catastrophic hair loss ($200 every three years)

When alternative prosthetic devices are available, the allowance for a prosthesis will be based upon the most cost-effective item. See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Note: Benefits for orthotics and prosthetics received from a **Noncontracted** provider are limited each benefit period to the amount indicated in the *Summary of Benefits*.(The limitation does not apply to breast prosthetics or mastectomy bras.) Benefits for prosthetics and orthotics received from a Contracted provider are not limited.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover, regardless of therapeutic value, items such as, but not limited to:

- air conditioners, humidifiers, purifiers, self-help devices, or whirlpools
- items that are primarily nonmedical in nature such as Jacuzzi units, hot tubs, exercise equipment, heating pads, hot water bottles, or diapers
- nonstandard or deluxe equipment, such as motor-driven wheelchairs, chairlifts or beds; external prosthetics that are suited for heavier physical activity such as fast walking, jogging, bicycling, or skiing
- repairs to items that you do not own
- comfort items such as bedboards, beds or mattresses of any kind, bathtub lifts, overbed tables, or telephone arms
- repair or rental costs that exceeds the purchase price of a new unit
- dental appliances (See "Dental-Related Services and Oral Surgery" for exceptions.)
- accommodative orthotics (deal with structural abnormalities of the foot, accommodate such abnormalities, and provide comfort, but do not alter function)

- orthopedic shoes, unless joined to braces (Diabetic members should refer to "Diabetic Supplies and Equipment" earlier in this section for information about covered podiatric equipment and orthopedic shoes.)
- equipment or supplies not ordered by a health care provider, including items used for comfort, convenience, or personal hygiene
- duplicate items; repairs to duplicate items; or the replacement of items because of loss, theft, or destruction
- stethoscopes or blood pressure monitors
- voice synthesizers or other communication devices
- eyeglasses or contact lenses or the costs related to prescribing or fitting of glasses or contact lenses, unless listed as covered; sunglasses, special tints, or other extra features for eyeglasses or contact lenses
- hearing aids or ear molds, fitting of hearing aids or ear molds, or related services or supplies in excess of the maximum benefit described in this section (For surgically implanted devices for the profoundly hearing impaired, see "Surgery and Related Services" below.)
- syringes or needles for self-administering drugs (Coverage for insulin needles and syringes and other diabetic supplies not listed as covered in this section is described under your pharmacy benefits.)
- items that can be purchased over-the-counter, including but not limited to dressings for wounds (i.e., bed sores) and burns, gauze, and bandages
- male contraceptive devices, including over-the-counter contraceptive products such as condoms; female contraceptive devices, including over-the-counter contraceptive products such as spermicide, when not prescribed by a health care provider. (See "Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care: Family Planning" for devices requiring a prescription.)
- items not listed as covered
- costs for items received from a Noncontracted provider that exceed the maximum benefit listed in the *Summary of Benefits*, if any

SURGERY AND RELATED SERVICES

To be covered, preauthorization from BCBSNM must be received for all inpatient surgical procedures. See "Preauthorizations" in *Section 4* for details.

Surgeon's Services

Covered services include surgeon's charges for a covered surgical procedure.

Cochlear Implants

This Plan covers cochlear implantation of a hearing device (such as an electromagnetic bone conductor) to facilitate communication for the profoundly hearing impaired, including training to use the device. You must submit a **written request for preauthorization** to BCBSNM before treatment begins. This Plan does **not** cover cochlear implant services without preauthorization. See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Mastectomy Services

This Plan covers medically necessary hospitalization related to a covered mastectomy (including at least 48 hours of inpatient care following a mastectomy and 24 hours following a lymph node dissection).
This Plan also covers reconstructive breast surgery following a covered mastectomy. Coverage is limited to:

- surgery of the breast/nipple on which the mastectomy was performed, including tattooing procedures the initial surgery of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance
- prostheses and treatment of physical complications following the mastectomy, including treatment of lymphedema

This Plan does **not** cover subsequent procedures to correct unsatisfactory cosmetic results attained during the initial

breast/nipple surgery or tattooing, or breast surgery. that have not received preauthorization from BCBSNM.

Obesity Surgery

This Plan covers the surgical treatment of morbid obesity if treatment is preauthorized by BCBSNM before treatment begins and only when the member meets medical criteria established by BCBSNM. Medical policies are posted on BCBSNM's website (http://hcsc.com/medical_policies.html) and may change without notice. Check the website for the most current medical policy or call a Customer Service Advocate for assistance. **Benefits are not available without preauthorization, requested in writing.** *(Morbid obesity* means 45 kilograms or 100 percent over ideal body weight.)

Reconstructive Surgery

Reconstructive surgery improves or restores bodily function to the level experienced before the event that necessitated the surgery, or in the case of a congenital defect, to a level considered normal. Such surgeries may have a coincidental cosmetic effect. This Plan covers reconstructive surgery when required to correct a **functional** disorder caused by:

- an accidental injury
- a disease process or its treatment (For breast surgery following a mastectomy, see "Mastectomy Services," above.)
- a functional congenital defect (any condition, present from birth, that is significantly different from the common form; for example, a cleft palate or certain heart defects)

You or your physician must obtain **preauthorization, requested in writing,** from BCBSNM **before** the reconstructive service is provided. If the procedure (including any reconstructive service listed under

"Dental-Related/TMJ Services and Oral Surgery") has not received preauthorization, **the surgery and all related charges will be denied.** Cosmetic procedures and procedures that are **not medically necessary**, including all services related to such procedures, will be **denied.** See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- cosmetic or plastic surgery or procedures, such as breast augmentation, rhinoplasty, and surgical alteration of the eye that does not materially improve the physiological function of an organ or body part (unless covered under "Mastectomy Services")
- procedures to correct cosmetically unsatisfactory surgical results or surgically induced scars
- refractive keratoplasty, including radial keratotomy, or any procedure to correct visual refractive defect
- unless required as part of medically necessary diabetic disease management, trimming of corns, calluses, toenails, or bunions (except surgical treatment such as capsular or bone surgery)
- subsequent surgical procedures needed because you did not comply with prescribed medical treatment or because of a complication from a previous noncovered procedure (such as a noncovered organ transplant, or previous cosmetic surgery)
- any reconstructive procedure, orthognathic surgery when not related to TMJ/CMJ disorders, cochlear implant, breast reduction, or cosmetic breast surgery that has not received preauthorization from BCBSNM (See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.)
- the insertion of artificial organs, or services related to transplants not specifically listed as covered under "Transplant Services"
- standby services unless the procedure is identified by BCBSNM as requiring the services of an assistant surgeon and the standby physician actually assists

Anesthesia Services

This Plan covers necessary anesthesia services, including acupuncture used as an anesthetic, when administered during

a covered surgical procedure by a physician, certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA), or other practitioner licensed to provide anesthesia.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover local anesthesia, except for preventive colonoscopies. (Coverage for surgical procedures includes an allowance for local anesthesia because it is considered a routine part of the surgical procedure.)

Assistant Surgeon Services

Covered services include services of a professional provider who actively assists the operating surgeon in the performance of a covered surgical procedure when the procedure requires an assistant.

Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- services of an assistant only because the hospital or other facility requires such services
- services performed by a resident, intern, or other salaried employee or person paid by the hospital
- services of more than one assistant surgeon unless the procedure is identified by BCBSNM as requiring the services of more than one assistant surgeon

TRANSPLANT SERVICES

Preauthorization, requested in writing, must be obtained from BCBSNM **before** a pretransplant evaluation is scheduled. A pretransplant evaluation is **not** covered if preauthorization is not obtained from BCBSNM. If approved, a BCBSNM case manager will be assigned to you (the transplant recipient candidate) and must later be contacted with the results of the evaluation.

If you are approved as a transplant recipient candidate, you must ensure that **preauthorization** for the actual transplant is also received. None of the benefits described here are available unless you have this preauthorization. See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

Facility Must Be in Transplant Network

Benefits for covered services will be approved only when the transplant is performed at a facility that contracts with BCBSNM, another Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) Plan or the national BCBS transplant network, for the transplant being provided. Your BCBSNM case manager will assist your provider with information on the exclusive network of contracted facilities and required approvals. Call BCBSNM Health Services for information on these BCBSNM transplant programs.

Effect of Medicare Eligibility on Coverage

If you are now eligible for (or are *anticipating* receiving eligibility for) Medicare benefits, **you** are solely responsible for contacting Medicare to ensure that the transplant will be eligible for Medicare benefits.

Organ Procurement or Donor Expenses

If a transplant is covered, the surgical removal, storage, and transportation of an organ acquired from a cadaver is also covered. If there is a living donor that requires surgery to make an organ available for a covered transplant, coverage is available for expenses incurred by the donor for surgery, organ storage expenses, and inpatient follow-up care only.

This Plan does **not** cover donor expenses after the donor has been discharged from the transplant facility. Coverage for compatibility testing prior to organ procurement is limited to the testing of cadavers and, in the case of a live donor, to testing of the donor selected.

Bone Marrow, Cornea or Kidney

This Plan covers the following transplant procedures if **preauthorization** is received from BCBSNM (See *Section 4:*

Preauthorizations for more information about preauthorization requirements.):

- bone marrow transplant for a member with aplastic anemia, leukemia, severe combined immunodeficiency disease (SCID), or Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome, and other conditions determined by BCBSNM to be medically necessary and not experimental, investigational, or unproven
- cornea transplant
- kidney transplant

Cost-Sharing Provisions

Covered services related to the above transplants are subject to the usual cost-sharing features and benefit limits of this Plan (e.g., deductible, coinsurance and out-of-pocket limits; and annual home health care maximums, if applicable).

Heart, Heart-Lung, Liver, Lung, Pancreas-Kidney

This Plan covers transplant-related services for a **heart, heart-lung, liver, lung or pancreas-kidney** transplant. Services must be **preauthorized** in order to be covered. All other limitations, requirements, and exclusions of this "Transplant Services" provision apply to these transplant-related services. See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.

In addition to the general provisions of this "Transplant Services" section, the following benefits, limitations, and exclusions apply to the above-listed transplants for **one year** following the date of the actual transplant or retransplant. After one-year, usual benefits apply and the services must be covered under other provisions of the Plan in order to be considered for benefit payment.

Recipient Travel and Per Diem Expenses

If BCBSNM requires you (i.e., the transplant recipient) to temporarily relocate outside of your city of residence to receive a covered transplant, travel to the city where the transplant will be performed is covered. A standard per diem benefit **($50)** will be allocated for lodging expenses for the recipient and one additional adult traveling with the transplant recipient. If the transplant recipient is an eligible child under the age of 18, benefits for travel and per diem expenses for **two adults** to accompany the child are available.

Travel expenses and standard per diem allowances are limited to a total combined lifetime maximum benefit of **$10,000** per transplant. Your case manager may approve travel and per diem lodging allowances based upon the total number of days of temporary relocation, up to the **$10,000** benefit maximum.

Travel expenses are **not** covered and per diem allowances are **not** paid if you *choose* to travel to receive a transplant for which travel is not considered medically necessary by the case manager or if the travel occurs **more than five days** before or **more than one year** following the transplant or retransplant date.

Transplant Exclusions

This Plan does **not** cover:

- transplant-related services for a transplant that did not receive **preauthorization** from BCBSNM (See *Section 4: Preauthorizations* for more information about preauthorization requirements.)
- any transplant or organ-combination transplant not listed as covered
- implantation of artificial organs or devices (mechanical heart, unless covered under BCBSNM medical policy)
- nonhuman organ transplants
- care for complications of noncovered transplants or follow-up care related to such transplants
- services related to a transplant performed in a facility not Contracted directly or indirectly with BCBSNM to provide the required transplant (except cornea, kidney, or bone marrow)
- expenses incurred by a member of this plan for the donation of an organ to another person
- drugs that are self-administered or for use while at home (These services may be covered under your pharmacy benefits.)
- donor expenses after the donor has been discharged from the transplant facility

- lodging expenses in excess of the per diem allowance, if available, and food, beverage, or meal expenses
- travel or per diem expenses:
  - incurred **more than five days before** or **more than one year following** the date of transplantation
  - if the recipient's case manager indicates that travel is not medically necessary
  - related to a bone marrow or kidney transplant
- moving expenses or other personal expenses (e.g., laundry or dry-cleaning expenses; telephone calls; day care expenses; taxicab or bus fare; vehicle rental expenses; parking expenses; personal convenience items)
- expenses charged only because benefits are available under this provision (such as transportation received from a member of your family, or from any other person charging for transportation that does not ordinarily do so)

SECTION 6: GENERAL LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

These general limitations and exclusions apply to **all** services listed in this benefit booklet.

This Plan does not cover any service or supply not specifically listed as a covered service in this benefit booklet. If a service is not covered, then all services performed in conjunction with it are not covered.

This Plan will not cover any of the following services, supplies, situations, or related expenses:

— Before Effective Date of Coverage

This Plan does not cover any service received, item purchased, prescription filled, or health care expense incurred before your effective date of coverage. If you are an inpatient when coverage either begins or ends, benefits for the admission will be available only for those covered services received on and after your effective date of coverage or those received before your termination date.

— Blood Services

This Plan does not cover directed donor or autologous blood storage fees when the blood is used during a nonscheduled surgical procedure. **This Plan does not cover** blood replaced through donor credit.

— Complications of Noncovered Services

This Plan does not cover any services, treatments, or procedures required as the result of complications of a noncovered service, treatment, or procedure (e.g., due to a cosmetic surgery, transplant, or experimental procedure).

— Convalescent Care or Rest Cures

This Plan does not cover convalescent care or rest cures.

— Cosmetic Services

Cosmetic surgery is beautification or aesthetic surgery to improve an individual's appearance by surgical alteration of a physical characteristic. **This Plan does not cover** cosmetic surgery, services, or procedures for psychiatric or psychological reasons, or to change family characteristics or conditions caused by aging. **This Plan does not cover** services related to or required as a result of a cosmetic service, procedure, surgery, or subsequent procedures to correct unsatisfactory cosmetic results attained during an initial surgery.

Examples of cosmetic procedures are: dermabrasion; revision of surgically induced scars; breast augmentation; rhinoplasty; surgical alteration of the eye; correction of prognathism or micrognathism; excision or reformation of sagging skin on any part of the body including, but not limited to, eyelids, face, neck, abdomen, arms, legs, or buttock; services performed in connection with the enlargement, reduction, implantation, or change in appearance of a portion of the body including, but not limited to, breast, face, lips, jaw, chin, nose, ears, or genitals; **or any procedures that BCBSNM determines are not required to materially improve the physiological function of an organ or body part.**

Exception: Breast/nipple surgery performed as reconstructive procedures following a covered mastectomy may be covered. However, **Preauthorization**, requested in writing, must be obtained from BCBSNM for such services. Also, reconstructive surgery, which may have a coincidental cosmetic effect, may be covered when required as the result of accidental injury, illness, or congenital defect.

— Custodial Care

This Plan does not cover Custodial Care. Custodial Care is any service primarily for personal comfort or convenience that provides general maintenance, preventive, and/or protective care without any clinical likelihood of improvement of your condition. Custodial Care includes those services which do not require the technical skills, professional training and clinical assessment ability of medical and/or nursing personnel in order to be safely and effectively performed. These services can be safely provided by trained or capable non-professional personnel assisting with routine medical needs (e.g., simple care and dressings, administration of routine medications, etc.),

and/or assisting with activities of daily living (e.g., bathing, eating, dressing, etc.).

— Dental-Related Services and Oral Surgery

In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, see "Dental-Related Services and Oral Surgery" in *Section 5: Covered Services* for additional exclusions.

— Domiciliary Care

This Plan does not cover domiciliary care or care provided in a residential institution, treatment center, halfway house, or school because your own home arrangements are not available or are unsuitable, and consisting chiefly of room and board, even if therapy is included.

— Duplicate (Double) Coverage

This Plan does not cover amounts already paid by other valid coverage or that would have been paid by Medicare as the primary carrier if you were entitled to Medicare, had applied for Medicare, and had claimed Medicare benefits. See *Section 7: Coordination of Benefits and Reimbursement* for more information. Also, if your prior coverage has an extension of benefits provision, **this Plan will not cover** charges incurred after your effective date of coverage under this Plan that are covered under the prior plan's extension of benefits provision.

— Duplicate Testing

This Plan does not cover duplicative diagnostic testing or overreads of laboratory, pathology, or radiology tests.

— Experimental, Investigational, or Unproven Services

This Plan does not cover any treatment, procedure, facility, equipment, drug, device, or supply not accepted as *standard medical practice* (as defined) or those considered experimental, investigational, or unproven, unless for acupuncture rendered by a licensed doctor of oriental medicine or unless specifically listed as covered under "Autism Spectrum Disorders" or under "Cancer Clinical Trials" in *Section 5: Covered Services*. In addition, if federal or other government agency approval is required for use of any items and such approval was not granted when services were administered, the service is experimental and will not be covered. To be considered experimental, investigational, or unproven, one or more of the following conditions must be met:

- The device, drug, or medicine cannot be marketed lawfully without approval of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and approval for marketing has not been given at the time the device, drug, or medicine is furnished.
- Reliable evidence shows that the treatment, device, drug, or medicine is the subject of ongoing phase I, II, or III clinical trials or under study to determine its maximum tolerated dose, its toxicity, its safety, or its efficacy as compared with the standard means of treatment or diagnosis.
- Reliable evidence shows that the consensus of opinion among experts regarding the treatment, procedure, device, drug, or medicine is that further studies or clinical trials are necessary to determine its maximum tolerated dose, its toxicity, its efficacy, its safety, or its efficacy as compared with the standard means of treatment or diagnosis.

The guidelines and practices of Medicare, the FDA, or other government programs or agencies may be considered in a determination; however, approval by other bodies will neither constitute nor necessitate approval by BCBSNM.

Reliable evidence means only published reports and articles in authoritative peer-reviewed medical and scientific literature; the written protocol or protocols used by the treating facility, or the protocol(s) of another facility studying substantially the same medical treatment, procedure, device, or drug; or the written informed consent used by the treating facility or by another facility studying substantially the same medical treatment, procedure, device, or drug. *Experimental or investigational* does not mean cancer chemotherapy or other types of therapies that are the subjects of ongoing phase IV clinical trials.

The service must be medically necessary and not excluded by any other contract exclusion.

Standard medical practice means the services or supplies that are in general use in the medical community in the United States, and:

- have been demonstrated in standard medical textbooks published in the United States and/or peer-reviewed literature to have scientifically established medical value for curing or alleviating the condition being treated;
- are appropriate for the hospital or other facility provider in which they were performed; and
- the physician or other professional provider has had the appropriate training and experience to provide the treatment or procedure.

— Food or Lodging Expenses

This Plan does not cover food or lodging expenses, except for those lodging expenses that are eligible for a per diem allowance under "Transplant Services" in *Section 5: Covered Services*, and not excluded by any other provision in this section.

— Hearing Examinations, Procedures and Aids

This Plan does not cover audiometric (hearing) tests **unless** 1) required for the diagnosis and/or treatment of an accidental injury or an illness with prior authorization required or 2) covered as a preventive *screening* service , or 3) covered as part of the hearing aid benefit and described under "Hearing Aids/Related Services" in *Section 5: Covered Services.* (A screening does *not* include a hearing test to determine the amount and kind of correction needed.). (For surgically implanted devices, see "Surgery and Related Services" in *Section 5: Covered Services.*)

— Home Health, Home I.V. and Hospice Services

In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, see "Home Health Care/Home I.V. Services" or "Hospice Care" in *Section 5: Covered Services* for additional exclusions.

— Hypnotherapy

This Plan does not cover hypnosis or services related to hypnosis, whether for medical or anesthetic purposes.

— Infertility Services/Artificial Conception

This Plan does not cover services related to, but not limited to, procedures such as: artificial conception or insemination, fertilization and/or growth of a fetus outside the mother's body in an artificial environment, such as in-vivo or in-vitro ("test tube") fertilization, Gamete Intrafallopian Transfer (GIFT), Zygote Intrafallopian Transfer (ZIFT), embryo transfer, drugs for induced ovulation, or other artificial methods of conception. **This Plan does not cover** the cost of donor sperm, costs associated with the collection, preparation, or storage of sperm for artificial insemination, or donor fees.

This Plan does not cover infertility testing, treatments, or related services, such as hormonal manipulation and excess hormones to increase the production of mature ova for fertilization.

This Plan does not cover reversal of a prior sterilization procedure. (Certain treatments of medical conditions that sometimes result in restored fertility may be covered; see "Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care" in *Section 5: Covered Services.*)

— Late Claim Filing

This Plan does not cover services of a Noncontracted provider if the claim for such services is received by BCBSNM **more than 12 months** after the date of service. (Contracted providers contracting directly with BCBSNM and providers that have a "participating" agreement with BCBSNM will file claims for you and must submit them within a specified period of time, usually 180 days.) If a claim is returned for further information, resubmit it **within 45 days. Note:** If there is a change in the Claims Administrator, the length of the timely filing period may also change. See "Filing Claims" in *Section 8: Claim Payments and Appeals* for details.

— Learning Deficiencies/Behavioral Problems

This Plan does not cover special education, counseling, therapy, diagnostic testing, treatment, or any other service for learning deficiencies or chronic behavioral problems, whether or not associated with a manifest mental disorder, retardation, or other disturbance. See "Autism Spectrum Disorders" in *Section 5: Covered Services* for details about mandated coverage for children with these diagnoses.

— Limited Services/Covered Charges

This Plan does not cover amounts in excess of covered charges or services that exceed any maximum benefit limits listed in this benefit booklet, or any amendments, riders, addenda, or endorsements.

— Local Anesthesia

This Plan does not cover local anesthesia. (Coverage for surgical, maternity, diagnostic, and other procedures includes an allowance for local anesthesia because it is considered a routine part of the procedure.)

— Long-Term and Maintenance Therapy

This Plan does not cover long-term therapy whether for physical or for mental conditions, even if medically necessary and even if any applicable benefit maximum has not yet been reached, except that medication management for chronic conditions is covered. Therapies are considered long-term if measurable improvement is not possible **within two months** of beginning active therapy. Long-term therapy includes treatment for chronic or incurable conditions for which rehabilitation produces minimal or temporary change or relief. Treatment of chronic conditions is not covered. (Chronic conditions include, but are not limited to, muscular dystrophy, Down's syndrome, and cerebral palsy.) Note: This exclusion does not apply to benefits for medication or medication management or to certain services covered for children with autism spectrum disorders.

This Plan does not cover maintenance therapy or care or any treatment that does not significantly improve your function or productivity, or care provided after you have reached your rehabilitative potential (unless therapy is covered during an approved hospice benefit period). In a dispute about whether your rehabilitative potential has been reached, you are responsible for furnishing documentation from your physician supporting his/her opinion. **Note:** Even if your rehabilitative potential has not yet been reached, **this Plan does not cover** services that exceed maximum benefit limits.

— Medical Policy Determinations

Any technologies, procedures, or services for which medical policies have been developed by BCBSNM are either limited or excluded as defined in the medical policy. (See "Medical Policy" in *Section 10: Definitions).*

— Medically Unnecessary Services

This Plan does not cover services that are not medically necessary as defined in *Section 5: Covered Services* unless such services are specifically listed as covered (e.g., see "Preventive Services" or "Autism Spectrum Disorders" in *Section 5: Covered Services*).

BCBSNM, in consultation with the provider, determines whether a service or supply is medically necessary and whether it is covered. Because a provider prescribes, orders, recommends, or approves a service or supply does *not* make it medically necessary or make it a covered service, even if it is not specifically listed as an exclusion. (BCBSNM, at its sole discretion, determines medical necessity based on the criteria given in *Section 5: Covered Services*.)

— No Legal Payment Obligation

This Plan does not cover services for which you have no legal obligation to pay or that are free, including:

- charges made only because benefits are available under this Plan
- services for which you have received a professional or courtesy discount
- volunteer services

- services provided by you for yourself or a covered family member, by a person ordinarily residing in your household, or by a family member
- physician charges exceeding the amount specified by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) when primary benefits are payable under Medicare

Note: The "No Legal Payment Obligation" exclusion does not apply to services received at Department of Defense facilities or covered by Indian Health Service/Contract Health Services, and Medicaid.

— Noncovered Providers of Service

This Plan does not cover services prescribed or administered by a:

- member of your immediate family or a person normally residing in your home
- physician, other person, supplier, or facility (including staff members) that are not specifically listed as covered in this benefit booklet, such as a:
  - — health spa or health fitness center (whether or not services are provided by a licensed or registered provider)
  - — school infirmary
  - — halfway house
  - — massage therapist
  - — private sanitarium
  - — residential treatment center (A residential treatment center is a facility where the primary services are the provision of room and board and constant supervision or a structured daily routine for a person who is impaired but whose condition does not require acute care hospitalization.)
  - — dental or medical department sponsored by or for an employer, mutual benefit association, labor union, trustee, or any similar person or group
  - — homeopathic or naturopathic provider

— Nonmedical Expenses

This Plan does not cover nonmedical expenses (even if medically recommended and regardless of therapeutic value), including costs for services or items such as, but not limited to:

- adoption or surrogate expenses
- educational programs such as behavior modification and arthritis classes (Some diabetic services and other educational programs may be covered; see "Physician Visits/Medical Care" and "Preventive Services" in *Section 5: Covered Services* for details.)
- vocational or training services and supplies
- mailing and/or shipping and handling
- missed appointments; "get-acquainted" visits without physical assessment or medical care; provision of medical information to perform admission review or other Preauthorizations; filling out of claim forms; copies of medical records; interest expenses
- modifications to home, vehicle, or workplace to accommodate medical conditions; voice synthesizers; other communication devices
- membership at spas, health clubs, or other such facilities
- personal convenience items such as air conditioners, humidifiers, exercise equipment, or personal services such as haircuts, shampoos, guest meals, and television rentals, Internet services
- personal comfort services, including homemaker and housekeeping services, except in association with respite care covered during a hospice admission

- immunizations or medications required for international travel
- moving expenses or other personal expenses (e.g., laundry or dry-cleaning expenses; phone calls; day care expenses; taxicab or bus fare; vehicle rental expenses; parking expenses; personal convenience items)
- physicals or screening examinations and immunizations given primarily for insurance, licensing, employment, camp, medical research programs, sports, or for any nonpreventive purpose
- hepatitis B immunizations when required due to possible exposure during the member's work
- court- or police-ordered services unless the services would otherwise be covered or services rendered as a condition of parole or probation
- the cost of any damages to a treatment facility that are caused by the member

— Noncontracted Provider Services

This Plan does not cover transplants when received from a Noncontracted provider.

— Nutritional Supplements

This Plan does not cover vitamins, dietary/nutritional supplements, special foods, formulas, mother's milk, or diets, unless prescribed by a physician. Such supplements require a prescription to be covered under the "Home Health Care/Home I.V. Services" in *Section 5: Covered Services*. This Plan covers other nutritional products only under specific conditions set forth under your pharmacy benefits.

— Post-Termination Services

This Plan does not cover any service received or item or drug purchased after your coverage is terminated, even if: 1) preauthorization for such service, item, or drug was received from BCBSNM, or 2) the service, item, or drug was needed because of an event that occurred while you were covered. (If you are an inpatient when coverage ends, benefits for the admission will be available only for those covered services received before your termination date.)

— Preauthorization Not Obtained When Required

This Plan does not cover certain services if you do not obtain preauthorization from BCBSNM before those services are received. See *Section 4: Preauthorizations.*

— Private Duty Nursing Services

This Plan does not cover private duty nursing services.

— Psychotherapy (Mental Health and Chemical Dependency)

In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, see "Psychotherapy (Mental Health and Chemical Dependency)" in *Section 5: Covered Services* for additional exclusions.

— Sexual Dysfunction Treatment

This Plan does not cover services related to the treatment of sexual dysfunction.

— Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics

In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, see "Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics" in *Section 5: Covered Services* for additional exclusions.

— Surgery and Related Services

In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, see "Surgery and Related Services" in *Section 5: Covered Services* for additional exclusions.

— Therapy and Counseling Services

This Plan does not cover therapies and counseling programs other than the therapies listed as covered in this benefit booklet. In addition to treatments excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, (see "Rehabilitation and Other Therapy" in *Section 5: Covered Services* for additional exclusions) **this Plan does not cover** services such as, but not limited to:

- recreational, sleep, crystal, primal scream, sex, and Z therapies
- self-help, stress management and codependency programs
- services of a massage therapist or rolfing
- transactional analysis, encounter groups, and transcendental meditation (TM); moxibustion; sensitivity or assertiveness training
- vision therapy; orthoptics
- pastoral, spiritual, or religious counseling
- supportive services provided to the family of a terminally ill patient when the patient is not a member of this Plan
- therapy for chronic conditions such as, but not limited to, cerebral palsy or developmental delay and described in *Section 5* under "Autism Spectrum Disorders"
- any therapeutic exercise equipment for home use (e.g., treadmill, weights)
- speech therapy for dysfunctions that self-correct over time; speech services that maintain function by using routine, repetitive, and reinforced procedures that are neither diagnostic or therapeutic, other speech services that can be carried out by the patient, the family, or caregiver/teacher

— Thermography

This Plan does not cover thermography (a technique that photographically represents the surface temperatures of the body).

— Transplant Services

Please see "Transplant Services" in *Section 5: Covered Services* for specific transplant services that are covered and related limitations and exclusions. In addition to services excluded by the other general limitations and exclusions listed throughout this section, **this Plan does not cover** any other transplants (or organ-combination transplants) or services related to any other transplants.

— Travel or Transportation

This Plan does not cover travel expenses, even if travel is necessary to receive covered services unless such services are eligible for coverage under "Transplant Services" or "Ambulance Services" in *Section 5: Covered Services*.

— Veteran's Administration Facility

This Plan does not cover services or supplies furnished by a Veterans Administration facility for a service-connected disability or while a member is in active military service.

— Vision Services

This Plan does not cover any services related to refractive keratoplasty (surgery to correct nearsightedness) or any complication related to keratoplasty, including radial keratotomy or any procedure designed to correct visual refractive defect (e.g., farsightedness or astigmatism). **This Plan does not cover** eyeglasses, contact lenses, prescriptions associated with such procedures, and costs related to the prescribing or fitting of glasses or lenses, unless

listed as covered under "Supplies, Equipment and Prosthetics" in *Section 5: Covered Services.* **This Plan does not cover** sunglasses, special tints, or other extra features for eyeglasses or contact lenses.

— War-Related Conditions

This Plan does not cover any service required as the result of any act of war or related to an illness or accidental injury sustained during combat or active military service.

— Work-Related Conditions

This Plan does not cover services resulting from work-related illness or injury, or charges resulting from occupational accidents or sickness covered under:

- occupational disease laws
- employer's liability
- municipal, state, or federal law (except Medicaid)
- Workers' Compensation Act

To recover benefits for a work-related illness or injury, you must pursue your rights under the Workers' Compensation Act or any of the above provisions that apply, including filing an appeal. (BCBSNM may pay claims during the appeal process on the condition that you sign a reimbursement agreement.)

This Plan does not cover a work-related illness or injury, **even if:**

- You fail to file a claim within the filing period allowed by the applicable laws and rules, including but not limited to statutes, ordinances, judicial decisions and regulations.
- You obtain care not authorized by Workers' Compensation insurance.
- Your employer fails to carry the required Workers' Compensation insurance. (The employer may be liable for an employee's work-related illness or injury expenses.)
- You fail to comply with any other provisions of the law.

Note: This "Work-Related Conditions" exclusion does not apply to an executive employee or sole proprietor of a professional or business corporation who has affirmatively elected not to accept the provisions of the New Mexico Workers' Compensation Act. You must provide documentation showing that you have waived Workers' Compensation and are eligible for the waiver. (The Workers' Compensation Act may also not apply if an employer has a very small number of employees or employs certain types of laborers excluded from the Act.)

SECTION 7: COORDINATION OF BENEFITS (COB) AND REIMBURSEMENT

For a work-related injury or condition, see the "Work-Related Conditions" exclusion in Section 6: General Limitations and Exclusions.

This Plan contains a coordination of benefits (COB) provision that prevents duplication of payments. When you are enrolled in any other valid coverage, the combined benefit payments from all coverages cannot exceed 100 percent of BCBSNM's covered charges. (Other valid coverage is defined as all other group and individual (or direct-pay) insurance policies or health care plans including Medicare, but excluding Indian Health Service and Medicaid coverages, that provide payments for medical services and are considered other valid coverage for purposes of coordinating benefits under this Plan.)

If you are also covered by Medicare, special COB rules may apply. Contact a Customer Service Advocate for more information. If you are enrolled in federal continuation coverage, coverage ends at the beginning of the month when you become entitled to Medicare or when you become insured under any other valid coverage.

When this Plan is secondary, all provisions (such as obtaining preauthorization) must be followed or benefits may be denied.

The following rules determine which coverage pays first:

No COB Provision — If the other valid coverage does not include a COB provision, that coverage pays first.

Medicare — If the other valid coverage is Medicare and Medicare is not secondary according to federal law, Medicare pays first.

Child/Spouse — If a covered child under this health plan is covered as a spouse under another health plan, the covered child's spouse's health plan is primary over this health plan.

Subscriber/Family Member — If the member who received care is covered as an employee, retiree, or other policy holder (i.e., as the subscriber) under one health plan and as a spouse, child, or other family member under another, the health plan that designates the member as the employee, retiree, or other policy holder (i.e., as the subscriber) pays first.

If you have other valid coverage *and* Medicare, contact the other carrier's customer service department to find out if the other coverage is primary to Medicare. There are many federal regulations regarding Medicare Secondary Payer provisions, and other coverage may not be subject to those provisions.

Child — For a child whose parents are not separated or divorced, the coverage of the parent whose birthday falls earlier in the calendar year pays first. If the other valid coverage does not follow this rule, the father's coverage pays first.

Child, Parents Separated or Divorced — For a child of divorced or separated parents, benefits are coordinated in the following order:

- *Court-Decreed Obligations.* Regardless of which parent has custody, if a court decree specifies which parent is financially responsible for the child's health care expenses, the coverage of that parent pays first.
- *Custodial/Noncustodial.* The plan of the custodial parent pays first. The plan of the spouse of the custodial parent pays second. The plan of the noncustodial parent pays last.
- *Joint Custody.* If the parents share joint custody, and the court decree does not state which parent is responsible for the health care expenses of the child, the plans follow the rules that apply to children whose parents are not separated or divorced.

Active/Inactive Employee — If a member is covered as an active employee under one coverage and as an inactive employee under another, the coverage through active employment pays first. (Even if a member is covered as a family member under both coverages, the coverage through active employment pays first.) If the other plan does not have this rule and the plans do not agree on the order of benefits, the next rule applies.

Longer/Shorter Length of Coverage — When none of the above applies, the plan in effect for the longest continuous period of time pays first. (The start of a new plan does not include a change in the amount or scope of benefits, a change in the entity that pays, provides, or administers the benefits, or a change from one type of plan to another.)

Responsibility For Timely Notice

BCBSNM is not responsible for coordination of benefits if timely information is not provided.

Facility of Payment

Whenever any other plan makes benefit payments that should have been made under this Plan, BCBSNM has the right to pay the other plan any amount BCBSNM determines will satisfy the intent of this provision. Any amount so paid will be considered to be benefits paid under this Plan, and with that payment BCBSNM will fully satisfy its liability under this provision.

Overpayments - Right of Recovery

Regardless of who was paid, whenever benefit payments made by BCBSNM exceed the amount necessary to satisfy the intent of this provision, BCBSNM has the right to recover the excess amount from any persons to or for whom those payments were made, or from any insurance company, service plan, or any other organizations or persons.

REIMBURSEMENT

If you or one of your covered family members incur expenses for sickness or injury that occurred due to the negligence of a third party and benefits are provided for covered services described in this benefit booklet, you agree:

- **NMRHCA** has the right to reimbursement for all benefits provided from any and all damages collected from the third party for those same expenses whether by action at law, settlement, or compromise, by you or your legal representative as a result of that sickness or injury, in the amount of the total covered charges for covered services for which **NMRHCA** has provided benefits to you or your covered family members.
- **NMRHCA** is assigned the right to recover from the third party, or his or her insurer, to the extent of the benefits **NMRHCA** provided for that sickness or injury.

NMRHCA shall have the right to first reimbursement out of all funds you, your covered family members, or your legal representative, are or were able to obtain for the same expenses for which **NMRHCA** has provided benefits as a result of that sickness or injury.

You are required to furnish any information or assistance or provide any documents that BCBSNM and/or **NMRHCA** may reasonably require in order to obtain our rights under this provision. This provision applies whether or not the third party admits liability.

SECTION 8: CLAIMS PAYMENTS AND APPEALS

FILING CLAIMS

You must submit claims **within 12 months** after the date services or supplies were received. If a claim is returned for further information, resubmit it **within 45 days. Note:** If there is a change in the Claims Administrator, the length of the timely filing period may also change.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT FILING CLAIMS

This section addresses the procedures for filing claims and appeals. The instructions in no way imply that filing a claim or an appeal will result in benefit payment and do not exempt you from adhering to all of the provisions described in this benefit booklet. All claims submitted will be processed by BCBSNM according to the patient's eligibility and benefits in effect at the time services are received. Whether inside or outside New Mexico and/or the United States, you must meet all preauthorization requirements or benefits may be reduced or denied as explained in *Section 4: Preauthorizations.* Covered services are the same services listed as covered in *Section 5: Covered Services* and all services are subject to the limitations and exclusions listed throughout this booklet.

IF YOU HAVE OTHER VALID COVERAGE

In accordance with the Retiree Health Care Act, the coverage provided by this PPO health care plan is secondary to all other benefit coverages to which the NMRHCA participant is entitle, including Medicare and other Medicare complementary or supplemental policies, both group and non-group, to the extent permitted by federal law. When you have any other converge (including a NMRHCA dental or vision plan), you need to file your claim to the other coverage first. After your other coverage (including health care insurance, dental or vision plan, Medicare, automobile or other liability insurance, Workers' Compensation, etc.;) pays its benefits, a copy of their payment explanation form must be attached to the claim sent to BCBSNM or to the local BCBS Plan, as instructed under “Where to Send Claim Forms," later in this section.

If the other valid coverage pays benefits to you (or your family member) directly, give your provider a copy of the payment explanation so that he/she can include it with the claim sent to BCBSNM or to the local BCBS Plan. (If a Noncontracted provider does not file claims for you, attach a copy of the payment explanation to the claim that you send to BCBSNM or to the local BCBS Plan, as applicable.)

CONTRACTED PROVIDERS

Contracted providers have specific timely filing limits in their contracts with BCBSNM (usually 180 days). The providers' contract language lets them know that they may not bill the employer or any member for a service if the provider does not meet the filing limit for that service and the claim for that service is denied due to timely filing limitations.

NONCONTRACTED PROVIDERS

A Noncontracted provider is one that has neither a preferred or a participating provider agreement. If your Noncontracted provider does not file a claim for you, submit a separate claim form for each family member as the services are received. Attach itemized bills and, if applicable, your other valid coverage's payment explanation, to a *Member Claim Form.* (Forms can be printed from the BCBSNM website at www.bcbsnm.com or requested from a Customer Service Advocate.) Complete the claim form using the instructions on the form. (See special claim filing instructions for out-of-country claims under “Where to Send Claim Forms” later in this section.)

ITEMIZED BILLS

Claims for covered service must be itemized on the provider's billing forms or letterhead stationery and must show:

- member's identification number

- member's and subscriber's name and address
- member's date of birth and relationship to the subscriber
- name, address, National Provider Identification number (NPI), and tax ID or social security number of the provider
- date of service or purchase, diagnosis, type of service or treatment, procedure, and amount charged for each service (each service must be listed separately)
- accident or surgery date (when applicable)
- amount paid by you (if any) along with a receipt, cancelled check, or other proof of payment

Correctly itemized bills are necessary for your claim to be processed. The only acceptable bills are those from health care providers. Do **not** file bills you prepared yourself, canceled checks, balance due statements, or cash register receipts. Make a copy of all itemized bills for your records before you send them. The bills are not returned to you. All information on the claim and itemized bills must be readable. If information is missing or is not readable, BCBSNM will return it to you or to the provider.

Do not file for the same service twice unless asked to do so by a Customer Service Advocate. If your itemized bills include services previously filed, identify clearly the new charges that you are submitting. (See "Where to Send Claim

Forms" below, for special instructions regarding out-of-country claims.)

WHERE TO SEND CLAIM FORMS

If your noncontracting provider does not file a claim for you, you (not the provider) are responsible for filing the claim. **Remember:** Contracted providers will file claims for you; these procedures are used only when you must file your own claim.

Services in United States, Canada, Jamaica, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico

If a noncontracting provider will not file a claim for you, ask for an itemized bill and complete a claim form the same way that you would for services received from any other noncontracting provider. Mail the claim forms and itemized bills to BCBSNM at the address below (or, if you prefer, you may send to the local Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan in the state where the services were received):

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico
P.O. Box 27630
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125-7630

Mental Health/Chemical Dependency Claims

Claims for covered mental health and chemical dependency services received in New Mexico should be submitted to:

BCBSNM, BH Unit
P.O. Box 27630
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125-7630

Drug Plan Claims

NMRHCA has Contracted with a pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) for claims administration of your outpatient prescription drug benefits. (This program is not affiliated with BCBSNM.) For more information about your prescription drug coverage, please review the summary of prescription drug benefits (drug rider), call NMRHCA at 1-800-233-2576 or call the PBM directly at 1-800-501-0987 (TTY/TDD phone number is 1-800-716-3231.) Details about the drug benefits are also on the NMRHCA web site at www.nmrhca.state.nm.us. You can visit the PBM's website at www.express-scripts.com.

Emergency Care Services

This Plan covers only limited health care services received outside of the United States. As used in this section, "Out-of-Area Covered Services" include Emergency services and Urgent Care obtained outside of the United States. Follow- up care following an Emergency is also available provided the services are Preauthorized by BCBSNM. Any other services will not be eligible for Benefits unless Preauthorized by BCBSNM.

Inpatient Services

In most cases, if you contact the service center for assistance, hospitals will not require you to pay for covered inpatient services, except for your cost-share amounts (Deductibles, Coinsurance, etc.). In such cases, the hospital will submit your claims to the service center to begin claims processing. However, if you paid in full at the time of service, you must submit a claim to receive reimbursement for Covered Services. You must contact BCBSNM to obtain Preauthorization for non-emergency inpatient services.

Outpatient Services

Outpatient services are available for Emergency Care treatment and Urgent care centers. Providers located outside of the BlueCard Service Area will typically require you to pay in full at the time of service. You must submit a claim to obtain reimbursement for Covered Services.

Submitting a Blue Cross Blue Shield Global Core Claim

When you pay for Covered Services outside the BlueCard Service Area, you must submit a claim to obtain reimbursement. For institutional and professional claims, you should complete a Blue Cross Blue Shield Global Core International claim form and send the claim form with the provider's itemized bill(s) to the service center (the address is on the form) to initiate claims processing. Following the instructions on the claim form will help ensure timely processing of your claim. The claim form is available from BCBSNM, the service center or online at Blue Cross Blue Shield Global Core www.bcbsglobalcore.com. If you need assistance with your claim submission, you should call the service center at 1-800-810-BLUE (2583) or call collect at 1-804-673- 1177, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Services Outside the United States, U.S. Virgin Islands, Jamaica, or Puerto Rico

Non-emergency care received outside the United States is not covered. For covered emergency inpatient Hospital services received outside the United States (including Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and the U.S. Virgin Islands), show your Plan ID Card issued by BCBSNM. BCBSNM participates in a Claim payment program with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. If the Hospital has an agreement with the Association, the Hospital files the Claim for you to the appropriate Blue Cross Plan. Payment is made to the Hospital by that Plan, and then BCBSNM reimburses the other Plan. **Note:** Services received outside the United States (including Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and the U.S. Virgin Islands) and Canada **will be covered only if they are for Emergency treatment.**

You will need to pay up front for care received from a **doctor,** a **participating outpatient Hospital,** and/or a **nonparticipating Hospital.** Then, complete an *International Claim Form* and send it with the bill(s) to the service center (the address is on the form). The *International Claim Form* is available from BCBSNM, the service center, or online at:

www.bcbs.com/already- a- member/coverage- home- and- away.html

The Blue Cross Blue Shield Global Core *International Claim Form* is to be used to submit institutional and professional Claims for benefits for covered Emergency services received outside the United States, Puerto Rico, Jamaica and the U.S. Virgin Islands. For filing instructions for other Claim types (e.g., dental, prescription drugs, etc.) contact your Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plan. The *International Claim Form* must be completed for each patient in full, and accompanied by fully itemized bills. It is not necessary for you to provide an English translation or convert currency.

Since the Claim cannot be returned, please be sure to keep photocopies of all bills and supporting documentation for your personal records. The Member should submit an *International Claim Form* (available at www.bcbs.com), attach itemized bills, and mail to Blue Cross Blue Shield Global Core at the address below. Blue Cross Blue Shield Global Core will then translate the information, if necessary, and convert the charges to United States dollars. They also will contact BCBSNM for benefit information in order to process the Claim. Once the Claim is finalized,

the *Explanation of Benefits* will be mailed to the Subscriber and payment, if applicable, will be made to the Subscriber via wire transfer or check. Mail international Claims to:

Service Center
P.O. Box 72017
Richmond, VA 23255- 2017

CLAIMS PAYMENT PROVISIONS

Most claims will be evaluated and you and/or the provider notified of the BCBSNM benefit decision within 30 days of receiving the claim. If all information needed to process the claim has been submitted, but BCBSNM cannot make a determination within 30 days, you will be notified (before the expiration of the 30-day period) that an additional 15 days is needed for claim determination.

After a claim has been processed, the subscriber will receive an *Explanation of Benefits* (EOB). The EOB indicates what charges were covered and what charges, if any, were not. **Note:** If a Qualified Child Medical Support Order (QCMSO) is in effect, the QCMSO provisions will be followed. For example, when the member is an eligible child of divorced parents, and the subscriber under this Plan is the noncustodial parent, the custodial parent may receive the payment and the EOB.

If A Claim or Preauthorization Is Denied

If benefits are denied or only partially paid, BCBSNM will notify you of the determination. The notice to you will include: 1) the reasons for denial; 2) a reference to the health care plan provisions on which the denial is based; and 3) an explanation of how you may appeal the decision if you do not agree with the denial. (See "Grievance Procedures," later in this section.) **You also have 180 days in which to appeal a decision.**

Covered Charge

Provider payments are based upon Contracted provider agreements and covered charges as determined by BCBSNM. For Emergency services received outside of New Mexico, covered charges may be based on the local Plan practice (e.g., for out-of-state providers that contract with their local Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plan, the covered charge may be based upon the amount negotiated by the other Plan with its own contracted providers). You are responsible for paying copayments, deductibles, coinsurance, any penalty amounts, and noncovered expenses. For covered services received in foreign countries, BCBSNM will use the exchange rate in effect on the date of service in order to determine billed charges.

Contracted Providers

Payments for covered services usually are sent directly to network providers. The EOB you receive explains the payment.

Noncontracted Providers

If covered services are received from a Noncontracted provider, payments are usually made to the subscriber (or to the applicable alternate payee when a Qualified Child Medical Support Order, or QCMSO, is in effect). The check will be attached to an EOB that explains BCBSNM's payment. In these cases, you are responsible for arranging payment to the provider and for paying any amounts greater than covered charges plus copayments, deductibles, coinsurance, any penalty amounts, and noncovered expenses.

Accident-Related Hospital Services

If services are administered as a result of an accident, a hospital or treatment facility may place a lien upon a compromise, settlement, or judgment obtained by you when the facility has not been paid its total billed charges from all other sources.

Assignment of Benefits

BCBSNM specifically reserves the right to pay the subscriber directly and to refuse to honor an assignment of benefits

in any circumstances. No person may execute any power of attorney to interfere with BCBSNM's right to pay the subscriber instead of anyone else.

Emergency Service Pricing

Notwithstanding anything in this booklet to the contrary, for out-of-network emergency care services, the covered charge shall be equal to at least the greatest of the following three amounts - not to exceed billed charges:

- the median amount negotiated with in-network providers for emergency care services furnished;
- the amount for the emergency care service calculated using the same method the Plan generally uses to determine payments for Noncontracted provider services but substituting the in-network provider cost- sharing provisions for the out-of-network cost-sharing provisions; or
- the amount that would be paid under Medicare for the emergency care service.

Each of these three amounts is calculated excluding any in-network copayment or coinsurance imposed with respect to the member.

Medicaid

Payment of benefits for members eligible for Medicaid is made to the appropriate state agency or to the provider when required by law.

Medicare

If you are 65 years of age or older, BCBSNM will suspend your claims until it receives (a) an *Explanation of Medicare Benefits (EOMB)* for each claim (if you are entitled to Medicare), or (b) Social Security Administration documentation showing that you are not entitled to Medicare.

Overpayments

If BCBSNM makes an erroneous benefit payment to the subscriber or member for any reason (e.g., provider billing error, claims processing error), BCBSNM may recover overpayments from you. If you do not refund the overpayment, BCBSNM reserves the right to withhold future benefit payments to apply to the amount that you owe the Plan, and to take legal action to correct payments made in error.

Pricing of Noncontracted Provider Claims

The BCBSNM covered charge for some covered services received from Noncontracted providers is the lesser of the provider's billed charges or the BCBSNM "noncontracting allowable amount." The BCBSNM noncontracting allowable amount is based on the **Medicare Allowable** amount for a particular service, which is determined by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS). The Medicare Allowable is determined for a service covered under your BCBSNM health plan using information on each specific claim and, based on place of treatment and date of service, is multiplied by an "adjustment factor" to calculate the BCBSNM noncontracting allowable amount. The adjustment factor for nonemergency services are:

- 100% of the base Medicare Allowable for inpatient facility claims
- 300% of the base Medicare Allowable for outpatient facility claims
- 200% of the base Medicare Allowable for freestanding ambulatory surgical center claims
- 100% of the base Medicare Allowable for physician, other professional provider claims, and other ancillary providers of covered health care services and supplies

Certain categories of claims for **covered services** from Noncontracted providers are excluded from this Noncontracted provider pricing method. These include:

- services for which a Medicare Allowable cannot be determined based on the information submitted on the claim (in

such cases, the covered charge is 50 percent of the billed charge)

- home health claims (the covered charge is 50 percent of the billed charge)
- services administered and priced by any subcontractor of BCBSNM or by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association
- claims paid by Medicare as primary coverage and submitted to your health plan for secondary payment
- New Mexico ground ambulance claims (for which the state's Office of Superintendent of Insurance sets fares)
- covered claims priced by a non-New Mexico BCBS Plan through BlueCard using local pricing methods

Pricing for the following categories of claims for **covered services** from Noncontracted providers will be priced at billed charges or at an amount negotiated by BCBSNM with the provider, whichever is less:

- covered services required during an emergency and received in a hospital, trauma center, or ambulance
- for PPO health plans, services from Noncontracted providers that satisfy at least one of the three conditions below and, as a result, are eligible for the Contracted Provider benefit level of coverage
  - -covered services from Noncontracted providers within the United States that are classified as "unsolicited" as explained earlier in *Section 3: How Your Plan Works* and as determined by the member's Host Plan while outside the service area of BCBSNM
  - -**preauthorized** transition of care services received from Noncontracted providers
  - -covered services received from a Noncontracted anesthesiologist, pathologist, or radiologist while you are a patient at a **Contracted** facility receiving covered services or procedures that have been preauthorized, if needed

BCBSNM will use essentially the same claims processing rules and/or edits for Noncontracted provider claims that are used for Contracted provider claims, which may change the covered charge for a particular service. If BCBSNM does not have any claim edits or rules for a particular covered service, BCBSNM may use the rules or edits used by Medicare in processing the claims. Changes made by CMS to the way services or claims are priced for Medicare will be applied by BCBSNM within 90-145 days of the date that such change is implemented by CMS or its successor.

IMPORTANT: Regardless of the pricing method used, the BCBSNM covered charge will usually be less than the provider's billed charge and you will be responsible for paying to the provider the difference between the BCBSNM covered charge and the Noncontracted provider's billed charge for a covered service. This difference may be considerable. The difference is not applied to any deductible or out-of-pocket limit. In the case of a noncovered service, you are responsible for paying the provider's full billed charge directly to the provider. Reminder: Contracted providers will not charge you the difference between the BCBSNM covered charge and the billed charge for a covered service.

Provider Payment Example

The two examples below demonstrate the difference between your liability for services from a Noncontracted provider (when such services are **preauthorized** and **not** eligible for 100 percent coverage of billed charges, such as during an emergency) versus a Contracted provider. Both examples are for a plan that pays 80 percent of covered charges with the remaining 20 percent of covered charges paid by the member.

Example 1. Contracted Provider Claim Payment (Plan pays 80 percent; deductible is met):

Provider's billed charge	$10,000
Covered charges (maximum amount that can be considered for benefit	$8,000
BCBSNM payment to provider (80% of $8,000)	$6,400

Member coinsurance (20% of $8,000) applied to the out-of-pocket limit	$1,600
Amount over the covered charges - the Contracted provider writes off the difference between billed amount and covered charge	$0
Total amount due from member (coinsurance only):	$1,600

Example 2. Noncontracted Provider Claim Payment (Plan pays 80 percent; deductible is met):

Provider's billed charge	$10,000
Covered charges (maximum amount that can be considered for benefit	$8,000
BCBSNM payment to provider (80% of $8,000)	$6,400
Member coinsurance (20% of $8,000) applied to the out-of-pocket limit	$1,600
Amount over the covered charges - the member is responsible for all costs incurred over the covered charges and these amounts do not apply to your	$2,000
Total amount due from member (coinsurance only):	$3,600

Emergency Care Services

This Plan covers only limited health care services received outside of the United States. As used in this section, "Out-of-Area Covered Services" include Emergency services and Urgent Care obtained outside of the United States. Follow-up care following an Emergency is also available provided the services are Preauthorized by BCBSNM. Any other services will not be eligible for Benefits unless Preauthorized by BCBSNM.

Inpatient Services

In most cases, if you contact the service center for assistance, hospitals will not require you to pay for covered inpatient services, except for your cost-share amounts (Deductibles, Coinsurance, etc.). In such cases, the hospital will submit your claims to the service center to begin claims processing. However, if you paid in full at the time of service, you must submit a claim to receive reimbursement for Covered Services. You must contact BCBSNM to obtain Preauthorization for non-emergency inpatient services.

Outpatient Services

Outpatient services are available for Emergency Care treatment and Urgent care centers. Providers located outside of the BlueCard Service Area will typically require you to pay in full at the time of service. You must submit a claim to obtain reimbursement for Covered Services.

Submitting a Blue Cross Blue Shield Global Core Claim

When you pay for Covered Services outside the BlueCard Service Area, you must submit a claim to obtain reimbursement. For institutional and professional claims, you should complete a Blue Cross Blue Shield Global Core International claim form and send the claim form with the provider's itemized bill(s) to the service center (the address is on the form) to initiate claims processing. Following the instructions on the claim form will help ensure timely processing of your claim. The claim form is available from BCBSNM, the service center or online at Blue Cross Blue Shield Global Core www.bcbsglobalcore.com. If you need assistance with your claim submission, you should call the service center at 1-800-810-BLUE (2583) or call collect at 1-804-673-1177, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

MEMBER DATA SHARE

You may, under certain circumstances as specified below, apply for and obtain, subject to any applicable terms and conditions, replacement coverage. The replacement coverage will be that which is offered by BCBSNM, a division of Health Care Service Corporation, or, if you do not reside in the BCBSNM service area, by the Host Blue whose service area covers the geographic area in which you reside. The circumstances mentioned above may arise in various ways, such as from

involuntary termination of your health coverage sponsored by the subscriber. As part of the overall plan of benefits that BCBSNM offers to you if you do not reside in the BCBSNM service area, BCBSNM may facilitate your right to apply for and obtain such replacement coverage, subject to applicable eligibility requirements, from the Host Blue in which you reside. To do this, BCBSNM may (1) communicate directly with you and/or (2) provide the Host Blues whose service area covers the geographic area in which you reside with your personal information and may also provide other general information relating to your coverage under the Plan the subscriber has with BCBSNM to the extent reasonably necessary to enable the relevant Host Blues to offer you coverage continuity through replacement coverage.

COMPLAINTS (GRIEVANCES) AND APPEALS: SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES

If you want to make an oral complaint or file a written appeal about a claims payment or denial, a preauthorization denial, the termination of your coverage (other than due to nonpayment of premium), or any other issue, a BCBSNM Customer Service Advocate is available to assist you. You will not be subject to retaliatory action by BCBSNM for making a complaint, filing an appeal, or requesting a reconsideration.

IMPORTANT: Within 180 days after you receive notice of a BCBSNM decision on, for example, a claim, a preauthorization request, the quality of care you receive, or the termination of your coverage, call or write BCBSNM Customer Service and explain your reasons for disagreeing with the decision. If you do not submit the request for internal review within the 180-day period, you waive your right to internal review as described in this section, unless you can satisfy BCBSNM that matters beyond your control prevented you from timely filing the request.

Many complaints or problems can be handled informally by calling, writing, or emailing BCBSNM Customer Service. If you are not satisfied with the initial response, you can also request internal and external review as described in the detailed *Appendix: Inquiries/Complaints and Internal/External Appeals for NMRHCA* included in the back of your booklet.

SECTION 9: GENERAL PROVISIONS

APPLICATION STATEMENT

No statement (except a fraudulent statement) you make in any application for coverage that is **more than two years old** can void this coverage or be used against you in any legal action or proceeding relating to this coverage unless the application or a true copy of it is incorporated in or attached to the contract.

AVAILABILITY OF PROVIDER SERVICES

BCBSNM does not guarantee that a certain type of room or service will be available at any hospital or other facility within the BCBSNM network, nor that the services of a particular hospital, physician, or other provider will be available.

CATASTROPHIC EVENTS

In case of fire, flood, war, civil disturbance, court order, strike, or other cause beyond BCBSNM's control, BCBSNM may be unable to process claims or provide preauthorization for services on a timely basis. If due to circumstances not within the control of BCBSNM or a network provider (such as partial or complete destruction of facilities, war, riot, disability of a network provider, or similar case), BCBSNM and the provider will have no liability or obligation if medical services are delayed or not provided. BCBSNM and its network providers will, however, make a good-faith effort to provide services.

CHANGES TO THE BENEFIT BOOKLET

No employee of BCBSNM may change this benefit booklet by giving incomplete or incorrect information, or by contradicting the terms of this benefit booklet. Any such situation will not prevent BCBSNM from administering this benefit booklet in strict accordance with its terms. See the inside back cover for further information.

DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

BCBSNM has no control over any diagnosis, treatment, care, or other service provided to you by any facility or professional provider, whether Contracted or not. BCBSNM is not liable for any loss or injury caused by any health care provider by reason of negligence or otherwise.

Nothing in this benefit booklet is intended to limit, restrict, or waive any member rights under the law and all such rights are reserved to the individual.

DISCLOSURE AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION

BCBSNM will only disclose information as permitted or required under state and federal law.

EXECUTION OF PAPERS

On behalf of yourself and your eligible family members you must, upon request, execute and deliver to BCBSNM any documents and papers necessary to carry out the provisions of this Plan.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

The relationship between BCBSNM and its network providers is that of independent contractors; physicians and other providers are not agents or employees of BCBSNM, and BCBSNM and its employees are not employees or agents of any network provider. BCBSNM will not be liable for any claim or demand on account of damages arising out of, or in any manner connected with, any injuries suffered by you while receiving care from any network provider.

The relationship between BCBSNM and the group is that of independent contractors; the employer is not an agent or employee of BCBSNM, and BCBSNM and its employees are not employees or agents of the group.

MEMBER RIGHTS

All members have these rights:

- The right to available and accessible services, when medically necessary, as determined by your primary care or treating physician in consultation with BCBSNM, 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, or urgent or emergency care services, and for other health services as defined by your benefit booklet.
- The right to be treated with courtesy and consideration, and with respect for your dignity and your need for privacy.
- The right to have their privacy respected, including the privacy of medical and financial records maintained by BCBSNM and its health care providers as required by law.
- The right to be provided with information concerning BCBSNM's policies and procedures regarding products, services, providers, and appeals procedures and other information about the company and the benefits provided.
- The right to receive from your physician(s) or provider, in terms that you understand, an explanation of your complete medical condition, recommended treatment, risk(s) of treatment, expected results and reasonable medical alternatives, irrespective of BCBSNM's position on treatment options. If you are not capable of understanding the information, the explanation shall be provided to your next of kin, guardian, agent or surrogate, if able, and documented in your medical record.
- The right to file a complaint or appeal with BCBSNM and to receive an answer to those complaints within a reasonable time.
- The right to detailed information about coverage, maximum benefits, and exclusions of specific conditions, ailments or disorders, including restricted prescription benefits, and all requirements that you must follow for preauthorization and utilization review.
- The right to make recommendations regarding BCBSNM's member rights and responsibilities policies.
- The right to a complete explanation of why care is denied, an opportunity to appeal the decision to BCBSNM's internal review and the right to a secondary appeal.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

As a member enrolled in a managed health care plan administered by BCBSNM, you have these responsibilities:

- The responsibility to supply information (to the extent possible) that BCBSNM and its Contracted practitioners and providers need in order to provide care.
- The responsibility to follow plans and instructions for care that you have agreed on with your treating provider or practitioners.
- The responsibility to understand your health problems and participate in developing mutually agreed-upon treatment goals with your treating provider or practitioner to the degree possible.

MEMBERSHIP RECORDS

BCBSNM will keep membership records and the employer will periodically forward information to BCBSNM to administer the benefits of this Plan. You can inspect all records concerning your membership in this Plan during normal business hours given reasonable advance notice.

RESEARCH FEES

BCBSNM reserves the right to charge you an administrative fee when extensive research is necessary to reconstruct information that has already been provided to you in explanations of benefits, letters, or other forms.

SENDING NOTICES

All notices to you are considered to be sent to and received by you when deposited in the United States mail with first-class postage prepaid and addressed to the subscriber at the latest address on BCBSNM membership records or to the employer.

TRANSFER OF BENEFITS

All documents described in this booklet are personal to the member. Neither these benefits nor health care plan payments may be transferred or given to any person, corporation, or entity. Any attempted transfer will be void. Use of benefits by anyone other than a member will be considered fraud or material misrepresentation in the use of services or facilities, which may result in cancellation of coverage for the member and appropriate legal action by BCBSNM and/or **NMRHCA**.

SECTION 10: DEFINITIONS

It is important for you to understand the meaning of the following terms. The definition of many terms determines your benefit eligibility.

Accidental Injury — A bodily injury caused solely by external, traumatic, and unforeseen means. Accidental Injury does not include disease or infection, hernia or cerebral vascular accident. Dental injury caused by chewing, biting, or malocclusion is not considered an Accidental Injury.

Acupuncture — The use of needles inserted into the human body for the prevention, cure, or correction of any disease, illness, injury, pain, or other condition.

Administrative Services Agreement — A contract for health care services which by its terms limits eligibility to members of a specified group. The Administrative Services Agreement includes the Benefit Program Application and may include coverage for family members.

Admission — The period of time between the dates when a patient enters a Facility as an inpatient and is discharged as an inpatient. (If you are an inpatient at the time your coverage either begins or ends, benefits for the Admission will be available only for those Covered Services received on and after your Effective Date of Coverage or those received before your termination date.)

Adverse Determination — A decision made either pre- service or post- service by BCBSNM that a Health Care Service requested by a Provider or Member has been reviewed and based upon the information available does not meet the requirements for coverage or Medical Necessity and the requested Health Care Service is either denied or terminated.

Alcohol Abuse — Conditions defined by patterns of usage that continue despite occupational, social, marital, or physical problems related to compulsive use of alcohol. Alcohol Abuse may also be defined by significant risk of severe withdrawal symptoms if the use of alcohol is discontinued.

Alcohol Abuse Treatment Facility, Alcohol Abuse Treatment Program — An appropriately licensed provider of Medical Detoxification and rehabilitation treatment for Alcohol Abuse.

Ambulance — A specially designed and equipped vehicle used **only** for transporting the sick and injured. It must have customary safety and lifesaving equipment such as first-aid supplies and oxygen equipment. The vehicle must be operated by trained personnel and licensed as an Ambulance.

Ambulatory Surgical Facility — An appropriately licensed provider, with an organized staff of Physicians, that meets all of the following criteria:

- has permanent facilities and equipment for the primary purpose of performing surgical procedures on an Outpatient Basis; *and*
- provides treatment by or under the supervision of Physicians and nursing services whenever the patient is in the Facility; *and*
- does not provide inpatient accommodations; *and*
- is not a Facility used primarily as an office or clinic for the private practice of a Physician or other Provider.

Appliance — A device used to provide a functional or therapeutic effect.

Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) — Services that include behavior modification training programs that are based on the theory that behavior is learned through interaction between an individual and the environment. The goal of behavior management is to reinforce and increase desirable, functional behaviors while reducing undesirable, "maladaptive" behaviors.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) — A condition that meets the diagnostic criteria for the pervasive developmental disorders published in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fourth edition, text revision, also known as *DSM- IV-TR*, published by the *American Psychiatric Association*, including autistic disorder; Asperger's disorder; pervasive development disorder not otherwise specified; Rhett's disorder; and childhood integrative disorder.

Benefit Booklet — This document or evidence of coverage issued to you along with your separately issued Summary of Benefits, explains the benefits, limitations, exclusions, terms, and conditions of your health coverage.

Biofeedback — Training and other necessary services (such as the use of special equipment) related to making certain bodily process (e.g., heartbeats or brain waves) perceptible to the senses so they can be mentally controlled.

Blue Access for Members (BAM) — On- line programs and tools that BCBSNM offers its Members to help track claims payments, make health care choices, and reduce health care costs. For details, see *Section 1: How To Use This Benefit Booklet.*

BlueCard — BlueCard is a national program that enables members of one Blue company to obtain Health Care Services while traveling or living in another Blue company's service area. The program links Contracted Healthcare Providers with the independent Blue companies across the country and in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide., through a single electronic network for claims processing and reimbursement.

BlueCard Access — The term used by Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies for national doctor and Hospital finder resources available through the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. These provider location tools are useful when you need covered health care outside New Mexico. Call BlueCard Access at 1 (800) 810- BLUE (2583) or visit the BlueCard Doctor and Hospital Finder at www.bcbsnm.com.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico — A Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association; also referred to as BCBSNM.

Calendar Year — A Calendar Year (also known as a benefit period) is a period of one year that begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of the same year (also referred to as calendar year). The initial Calendar Year benefit period is from a Member's Effective Date of Coverage and ends on December 31, which may be less than 12 months.

Cancer Clinical Trial — A course of treatment provided to a patient for the prevention of reoccurrence, early detection or treatment of cancer for which standard cancer treatment has not been effective or does not exist. It does not include trials designed to test toxicity or disease pathophysiology, but must have a therapeutic intent and be provided as part of a study being conducted in a Cancer Clinical Trial in New Mexico. The scientific study must have been approved by an institutional review board that has an active federal-wide assurance of protection for human subjects and include all of the following: specific goals, a rationale and background for the study, criteria for patient selection, specific direction for administering the therapy or intervention and for monitoring patients, a definition of quantitative measures for determining treatment response, methods for documenting and treating adverse reactions, and a reasonable expectation based on clinical or pre-clinical data, that the treatment will be at least as effective as standard cancer treatment. The trial must have been approved by a United States federal agency or by a qualified research entity that meets the criteria established by the federal National Institutes of Health for grant eligibility.

Cardiac Rehabilitation — An individualized, supervised physical reconditioning exercise session lasting 4-12 weeks. Also includes education on nutrition and heart disease.

Certified Nurse-Midwife — A person who is licensed by the Board of Nursing as a Registered Nurse and who is licensed by the New Mexico Department of Health (or appropriate state regulatory body) as a certified nurse-midwife.

Certified Nurse Practitioner — A Registered Nurse whose qualifications are endorsed by the Board of Nursing for expanded practice as a certified nurse practitioner and whose name and pertinent information is entered on the list of certified

nurse practitioners maintained by the Board of Nursing.

Cessation Counseling — As applied to the "smoking/tobacco use cessation" benefit described in *Section 5: Covered Services*, under "Preventive Services," Cessation Counseling means a program, including individual, group, or proactive telephone quit line, that:

- is designed to build positive behavior change practices and provides counseling at a minimum on: establishment of reasons for quitting, understanding nicotine addiction, techniques for quitting, discussion of stages of change, overcoming the problems of quitting, including withdrawal symptoms, short-term goal setting, setting a quit date, relapse prevention information, and follow-up;
- operates under a written program outline that meets minimum requirements established by the Office of Superintendent of Insurance;
- employs counselors who have formal training and experience in tobacco cessation programming and are active in relevant continuing education activities; and
- uses a formal evaluation process, including mechanisms for data collection and measuring participant rate and impact of the program.

Chemical Dependency — Conditions defined by patterns of usage that continue despite occupational, marital, or physical problems that are related to compulsive use of alcohol, drugs or other substance. Chemical dependency (also referred to as "substance abuse," which includes Alcohol or Drug Abuse) may also be defined by significant risk of severe withdrawal symptoms if the use of alcohol, drugs, or other substance is discontinued.

Chemotherapy — Drug therapy administered as treatment for malignant conditions and diseases of certain body systems.

Child — See definition of "Eligible Family Member" in *Section 2: Enrollment and Termination Information*

Chiropractor Services— Any service or supply administered by a Chiropractor acting within the scope of his/her licensure and according to the standards of chiropractic medicine in New Mexico or the state in which services are rendered.

Chiropractor — A person who is a Doctor of Chiropractic (D.C.) licensed by the appropriate governmental agency to practice chiropractic medicine.

Church Plan — That term as defined pursuant to Section 3(33) of the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974.

Claim — The term "claim," as used in this document, refers only to post- service bills for services already received and sent to BCBSNM (or its designee) for benefit determination.

Claims Administrator — BCBSNM which is the entity providing consulting services in connection with the operation of this benefit plan, including the processing and payment of Claims and other such functions as agreed to from time to time by your Group and BCBSNM.

Clinical Psychologist — A person with a doctoral degree in clinical psychology licensed or certified in accordance with the New Mexico Professional Psychologist Act or similar statute in another state.

Coinsurance — A percentage of Covered Charges that you are required to pay for a Covered Service. For Covered Services that are subject to Coinsurance, you pay the percentage (indicated on the *Summary of Benefits*) of BCBSNM's Covered Charge after the Deductible (if any) has been met.

Contracted provider — A provider that has a contract with BCBSNM Advantage Value Plan or another BCBS Plan (Emergency and urgent care coverage only outside of the state of New Mexico) to bill BCBSNM (or other BCBS Plan) directly and to accept this health plan's payment (provided in accordance with the provisions of the contract) plus the

member's share (coinsurance, deductibles, copayments, etc.) as payment in full for covered services. Also see "Network provider (in-network provider)," in this section.

Copayment — The fixed-dollar amount (or, in some cases, a percentage) that you must pay to a health care Provider upfront in order to receive a specific service or benefit covered under this Plan. Copayments are listed on the *Summary of Benefits.*

Cosmetic Surgery Services — Cosmetic Surgery Services is a beautification or aesthetic surgery to improve an individual's appearance by surgical alteration of physical characteristic.

Cost Effective — A procedure, service, or supply that is an economically efficient use of resources with respect to cost, relative to the benefits and harms associated with the procedure, service, or supply. When determining Cost Effectiveness, the situation and characteristics of the individual patient are considered.

Covered Charge — The amount that BCBSNM determines is a fair and reasonable allowance for a particular covered service. After your share of a covered charge (e.g., deductible, copayment, coinsurance,) has been calculated, BCBSNM pays the remaining amount of the covered charge, up to maximum benefit limits, if any. **The covered charge may be less than the billed charge**. Also see "Claims Payment Provision" in *Section 8: Claim Payments and Appeals*.

Covered Services — Those services and other items for which benefits are available under the terms of the benefit plan of an eligible plan member.

Creditable Coverage — Health care coverage through an employment-based group health care plan; health insurance coverage; Part A or B of Title 18 of the Social Security Act (Medicare); Title 19 of the Social Security Act (Medicaid) except coverage consisting solely of benefits pursuant to section 1928 of that title; 10 USCA Chapter 55 (military benefits); a medical care program of the Indian Health Service or of an Indian nation, tribe, or pueblo; the NM Medical Insurance Pool (NMMIP) Act, or similar state sponsored health insurance pool; a health plan offered pursuant to 5 USCA Chapter 89; a public health plan as defined in federal regulations, whether foreign or domestic; any coverage provided by a governmental entity, whether or not insured, a State Children's Health Insurance Program; or a health benefit plan offered pursuant to section 5(e) of the federal Peace Corps Act.

Custodial Care — Any service primarily for personal comfort or convenience that provides general maintenance, preventive, and/or protective care without any clinical likelihood of improvement of your condition. Custodial Care includes those services which do not require the technical skills, professional training and clinical assessment ability of medical and/or nursing personnel in order to be safely and effectively performed. These services can be safely provided by trained or capable nonprofessional personnel, are to assist with routine medical needs (e.g., simple care and dressings, administration of routine medications, etc.), and are to assist with activities of daily living (e.g., bathing, eating, dressing, etc.).

Cytologic Screening — A papanicolaou test or liquid- based cervical cytopathology, a human papillomavirus test, and a pelvic exam for symptomatic, as well as, asymptomatic female patients.

Deductible — The amount of covered charges that you must pay in a calendar year before this Plan begins to pay its share of covered charges you incur during the same benefit period. If the deductible amount remains the same during the calendar year, you pay it only once each calendar year and it applies to all covered services you receive during that calendar year.

Dental-Related Services — Services performed for treatment or conditions related to the teeth or structures supporting the teeth.

Dentist, Oral Surgeon — A Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.) or Doctor of Medical dentistry (D.M.D.) who is licensed to practice prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases, accidental injuries and malformation of the teeth, jaws, and mouth.

Diagnostic Services — Procedures such as laboratory and pathology tests, x-ray services, EKGs and EEGs that do not require the use of an operating or recovery room and that are ordered by a Provider to determine a condition or disease.

Dialysis — The treatment of a kidney ailment during which impurities are mechanically removed from the body with dialysis equipment.

Doctor of Oriental Medicine — A person who is a doctor of oriental medicine (D.O.M.) licensed by the appropriate governmental agency to practice Acupuncture and oriental medicine.

Domestic Partner — A person of the same or opposite sex who meets all of the following criteria:

- shares your permanent residence and has resided with you for no less than one year;
- is not less than 18 years of age;
- is financially interdependent with you and has proven such interdependence by providing documentation of at least two of the following arrangements: common ownership of real property or a common leasehold interest in such property; community ownership of a motor vehicle; a joint bank account or a joint credit account; designation as a beneficiary for life insurance or retirement benefits or under your partner's will; assignment of a durable power of attorney or health care power of attorney; or such other proof as is sufficient to establish financial interdependency under the circumstances of your particular case;
- is not a blood relative any closer than would prohibit legal marriage; and
- has signed jointly with you, a notarized affidavit which can be made available to BCBSNM on request.

In addition, you and your Domestic Partner will meet the terms of this definition as long as neither you nor your Domestic Partner:

- has signed a Domestic Partner affidavit or declaration with any other person within 12 months prior to designating each other as Domestic Partners hereunder;
- is currently legally married to another person; or
- has any other Domestic Partner, spouse, or spouse equivalent of the same or opposite sex.

Drug Abuse — A condition defined by patterns of usage that continue despite occupational, marital, or physical problems related to compulsive use of drugs or other non-alcoholic substance. There may also be significant risk of severe withdrawal symptoms if the use of drugs is discontinued. Drug Abuse does not include nicotine addiction or Alcohol Abuse.

Drug Abuse Treatment Facility— An appropriately licensed provider primarily engaged in detoxification and rehabilitation treatment for Chemical Dependency.

Durable Medical Equipment — Any equipment that can withstand repeated use, is made to serve a medical purpose, and is generally considered useless to a person who is not ill or injured.

Effective Date of Coverage — 12:01 a.m. of the date on which a Member's coverage under this Plan begins.

Eligible family members — See "Eligible Family Members" in *Section 2: Enrollment and Termination Information* for more information about eligible family members.

Emergency, Emergency Care — Medical or surgical procedures, treatments, or services delivered after the sudden onset of what reasonably appears to be a medical condition with symptoms of sufficient severity, including severe pain, that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected by a reasonable layperson to result in jeopardy to his/her health; serious impairment of bodily functions; serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part, or disfigurement. In addition, services must be received in an emergency room, trauma center, or Ambulance to qualify as an Emergency.

Examples of Emergency conditions include but are not limited to: heart attack or suspected heart attack, coma, loss of respiration, stroke, acute appendicitis, severe allergic reaction, or poisoning.

Enteral Nutritional Products — A product designed to provide calories, protein, and essential micronutrients by the enteral route (i.e., by the gastrointestinal tract, which includes the stomach and small intestine only).

Experimental, Investigational or Unproven — Any treatment, procedure, facility, equipment, drug, device, or supply that is not accepted as standard medical practice in the state where services are provided. In addition, if a federal or other governmental agency approval is required for use of any items and such approval was not granted at the time services were administered, the service is Experimental. To be considered standard medical practice and not Experiment or Investigational, treatment must meet all five of the following criteria:

- a technology must have final approval from the appropriate regulatory government bodies; however, approval by a governmental or regulatory agency will be taken into consideration by BCBSNM in assessing Experimental/Investigational status of a drug, device, biological product, supply and equipment for medical treatment or procedure but will not be determinative;
- the scientific evidence as published in peer - reviewed literature must permit conclusions concerning the effect of the technology on health outcomes;
- the technology must improve the net health outcome;
- the technology must be as beneficial as any established alternatives; and
- the improvement must be attainable outside the Investigational settings.

Facility — A hospital (see "Hospital" later in this section) or other institution (also, see "Provider" later in this section).

FDA — The United States Food and Drug Administration.

Genetic Inborn Error of Metabolism — A rare, inherited disorder that is present at birth; if untreated, results in mental retardation or death, and requires that the affected person consume Special Medical Foods.

Good Cause — Failure of the Subscriber to pay the premiums or other applicable charges for coverage; a material failure to abide by the rules, policies, or procedures of this Plan; or fraud or material misrepresentation affecting coverage.

Governmental Plan — That term as defined in Section 3(32) of the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and includes a federal governmental plan (a governmental plan established or maintained for its employees by the United States government or an instrumentality of that government).

Group — A bonafide employer covering employees of such employer for the benefit of persons other than the employer; or an association, including a labor union, that has a constitution and bylaws and is organized and maintained in good faith for purposes other than that of obtaining insurance.

Group Health Care Plan — An employee welfare benefit plan as defined in Section 3(1) of the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to the extent that the plan provides medical care and includes items and services paid for as medical care (directly or through insurance, reimbursement, or otherwise) to employees or their eligible family members (as defined under the terms of the Plan).

Habilitative Services — Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy and other health care services that help you keep, learn, or improve skills and functioning for daily living, as prescribed by your Physician pursuant to a treatment plan. Examples include therapy for a child who isn't walking or talking at the expected age and includes therapy to enhance the ability of a child to function with a Congenital, Genetic or Early Acquired Disorder. These pathology and other services for people with disabilities in a variety of Inpatient and/or Outpatient settings, with coverage as described in this benefit booklet.

Health Care Benefits — Benefits for Medically Necessary services consisting of preventive care, Emergency care, inpatient and out- patient hospital and Physician care, diagnostic laboratory and diagnostic and therapeutic radiological services and does not include dental services, vision services for adults, or long- term rehabilitation treatment.

Health Care Facility — An institution providing Health Care Services, including a Hospital or other licensed inpatient center, an ambulatory surgical or treatment center, a Skilled Nursing Facility, a Residential Treatment Center, a Home Health Care Agency, a diagnostic laboratory or imaging center, and a rehabilitation or other therapeutic health setting.

Home Health Care Agency — An appropriately licensed provider that both:

- brings Skilled Nursing Care and other services on an intermittent, visiting basis into your home in accordance with the licensing regulations for home health care agencies in New Mexico or in the state where the services are provided; *and*
- is responsible for supervising the delivery of these services under a plan prescribed and approved in writing by the attending Physician.

Home Health Care Services — Covered Services, as listed under "Home Health Care/Home I.V. Services" in *Section 5: Covered Services*, that are provided in the home according to a treatment plan by a certified Home Health Care Agency under active Physician and nursing management. Registered Nurses must coordinate the services on behalf of the Home Health Care Agency and the patient's Physician.

Hospice — A licensed program providing care and support to Terminally Ill Patients and their families. An approved Hospice must be licensed when required, Medicare-certified as, or accredited by, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), as a Hospice.

Hospice Benefit Period — The period of time during which Hospice benefits are available. It begins on the date the attending Physician certifies that the Member is terminally ill and ends **six months** after the period began (or upon the Member's death, if sooner). The Hospice Benefit Period must begin while the Member is covered for these benefits, and coverage must be maintained throughout the Hospice Benefit Period.

Hospice Care — An alternative way of caring for Terminally Ill Patients in the home or institutional setting, which stresses controlling pain and relieving symptoms but does not cure. Supportive services are offered to the family before the death of the patient.

Hospital — A health institution offering facilities, beds, and continuous services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Hospital must meet all licensing and certification requirements of local and state regulatory agencies. Services provided include:

- diagnosis and treatment of illness, injury, deformity, abnormality or pregnancy
- clinical laboratory, diagnostic x-ray, and definitive medical treatment provided by an organized medical staff within the institution
- treatment facilities for Emergency Care and Surgical Services either within the institution or through a contractual arrangement with another licensed Hospital (These Contracted services must be documented by a well-defined plan and related to community needs).

Host Blue — When you are outside New Mexico and receive Emergency Covered Services, the provider will submit Claims to the Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) Plan in that state. That BCBS Plan (the "Host Blue" Plan) will then price the Claim according to local practice and contracting, if applicable, and then forward the Claim electronically to BCBSNM - your "Home" Plan - for completion of processing (e.g., benefits and eligibility determination). For details, see "BlueCard" in *Section 8: Claims Payments and Appeals*.

Identification Card (ID Card) — The card BCBSNM issues to the Subscriber that identifies the cardholder as a Plan Member.

Initial Enrollment Eligibility Date — A member's effective date of coverage or the first day of any employee probationary period imposed on the member by the employer, whichever is earlier. For a late applicant or for a person applying under a special enrollment provision, the initial enrollment eligibility date is his/her effective date of coverage.

Inpatient Services — Care provided while you are confined as an inpatient in a Hospital or treatment center for at least 24 hours. Inpatient care includes partial hospitalization (a nonresidential program that includes from 5 -12 hours of continuous mental health or Chemical Dependency care during any 24-hour period in a treatment Facility). Inpatient Services include, but are not limited to, semi-private room accommodations, general nursing care, meals, and special diets or parenteral nutrition when Medically Necessary, Physician and surgeon services, use of all Hospital facilities when use of such facilities is determined to be Medically Necessary by your treating Physician, pharmaceuticals and other medications, anesthesia and oxygen services, special duty nursing when Medically Necessary, Radiation Therapy, inhalation therapy, and administration of whole blood and blood components when Medically Necessary.

Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) — Distinct levels or phases of treatment that are provided by a certified/licensed Chemical Dependency or mental health program. IOPs provide a combination of individual, family, and/or group therapy in a day, totaling nine or more hours in a week.

Investigational Drug or Device — For purposes of the "Cancer Clinical Trial" benefit described in *Section 5: Covered Services* under "Rehabilitation and Other Therapy," an "Investigational Drug or Device" means a drug or device that has not been approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration.

Involuntary Loss of Coverage — As applied to special enrollment provisions, loss of other coverage due to legal separation, divorce, death, moving out of an PPO service area, termination of employment, reduction in hours or termination of employer contributions (even if the affected member continues such coverage by paying the amount previously paid by the employer). A loss of coverage may also occur if your employer ceased offering coverage to the particular class of workers or similarly situated individuals to which you belonged or terminated your benefit package option and no substitute Plan was offered. If the member is covered under a state or federal continuation policy due to prior employment, involuntary loss of coverage includes exhaustion of the maximum continuation time period.

Involuntary Loss of Coverage does not include a loss of coverage due to the failure of the individual or Member to pay premiums on a timely basis or termination of coverage for Good Cause.

Late Applicant — Please contact NMRHCA at 1-800-233-2576 for more information.

Licensed Midwife — A person who practices lay midwifery and is registered as a licensed midwife by the New Mexico Department of Health (or appropriate state regulatory body).

Licensed Practical Nurse (L.P.N.) — A nurse who has graduated from a formal practical nursing education program and is licensed by appropriate state authority.

Managed Health Care Plan — A "managed Health Care Plan" is a health plan that requires a member to use, or encourages a member to use, a "Network Provider" (your Provider network is determined by the type of health plan you have). Your health plan may require you to use Network Providers in order to receive benefits. Therefore, your choice of Provider under a Managed Health Care Plan determines the amount and kind of **benefits** you receive under your health care plan. **Your BCBSNM health plan does not prevent you from choosing to receive services from a Provider outside the network.** The choice of Provider is still up to you - but the health plan is not obligated to provide benefits for every service you seek to receive. You receive no benefits for nonemergency services received outside the network.

Maternity — Any condition that is related to pregnancy. Maternity care includes prenatal and postnatal care and care for the complications of pregnancy, such as ectopic pregnancy, spontaneous abortion (miscarriage), elective abortion or C-section. See "Maternity/Reproductive Services and Newborn Care" in Section *5: Covered Services for* more information.

Medicaid — A state-funded program that provides medical care for indigent persons, as established under Title XIV of the Social Security Act of 1965, as amended.

Medical Detoxification — Treatment in an acute care Facility for withdrawal from the physiological effects of Alcohol or Drug Abuse. (Detoxification usually takes about three days in an acute care Facility.)

Medical Supplies — Expendable items (except prescription drugs) ordered by a Physician or other Professional Provider, that are required for the treatment of an illness or Accidental Injury.

Medically Necessary, Medical Necessity — Health Care Services determined by a Provider, in consultation with BCBSNM, to be appropriate or necessary, according to any applicable generally accepted principles and practices of good medical care or practice guidelines developed by the federal government, national or professional medical societies, boards and associations, or any applicable clinical protocols or practice guidelines developed by BCBSNM consistent with such federal, national, and professional practice guidelines, for the diagnosis or direct care and treatment of physical, behavioral, or mental health condition, illness, injury, or disease.

Medicare — The program of health care for the aged, end-stage renal disease (ESRD) patients and disabled persons established by Title XVIII of the Social Security Act of 1965, as amended.

Member — An enrollee (the Subscriber or any Eligible Family Member) who is enrolled for coverage and entitled to receive benefits under this Plan in accordance with the terms of the Group Administration Document. Throughout this Benefit Booklet, the terms "you" and "your" refer to each Member.

Mental Disorder — A clinically significant behavioral or psychological syndrome or condition that causes distress and disability and for which improvement can be expected with relatively short-term treatment. Mental Disorder does not include developmental disabilities, autism or Autism Spectrum Disorders, drug or Alcohol Abuse, or learning disabilities.

Morbid Obesity — A serious health condition that can interfere with a person's basic physical functions such as breathing or walking and that meets the following criteria with respect to such person's weight and/or health:

- a body mass index (BMI) equal to or greater than 40 kg/meters^2;
- a BMI equal to or greater than 35kg/meters^2 with at least one (1) of the following clinically significant obesity-related diseases or complications that are not controlled by best practice medical management: hypertension, dyslipidemia, diabetes mellitus, coronary heart disease, sleep apnea, or osteoarthritis.

Network Provider (In-network Provider) — A Contracted Provider that has agreed to provide services to members in your *specific* type of health plan (e.g., EPO, PPO, etc.).

Network Service Area — Network Service area is New Mexico and members must reside within the state of New Mexico to be covered under this plan.

Noncontracted —When a provider that does not have any contract with BCBSNM Advantage Value Plan,

Noncontracting allowable amount— See definition of "Covered charge" earlier in this section.

Obstetrician-Gynecologist — A Physician who is board-eligible or board-certified by the American Board of Obstetricians and Gynecologists or by the American College of Osteopathic Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Occupational Therapist — A person registered to practice Occupational Therapy. An Occupational Therapist treats neuromuscular and psychological dysfunction caused by disease, trauma, congenital anomaly or prior therapeutic process through the use of specific tasks or goal-directed activities designed to improve functional performance of the patient.

Occupational Therapy — The use of rehabilitative techniques to improve a patient's functional ability to perform activities of daily living.

Optometrist — A Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) licensed to examine and test eyes and treat visual defects by prescribing and adapting corrective lenses and other optical aids.

Orthopedic Appliance — An individualized rigid or semirigid support that eliminates, restricts, or supports motion of a weak, injured, deformed, or diseased body part; for example, functional hand or leg brace, Milwaukee brace, or fracture brace.

OSI — The Office of the Superintendent of Insurance.

Other Valid Coverage — All other group and individual (or direct-pay) insurance policies or health care benefit plans (including Medicare, but excluding Indian Health Service and Medicaid coverages), that provide payments for medical services will be considered Other Valid Coverage for purposes of coordinating benefits under this Plan.

Other Providers — Clinical Psychologists and the following masters-degreed psychotherapists (an independently licensed Professional Provider with either an M.A. or M.S. degree in psychology or counseling): licensed independent social workers (L.I.S.W.); licensed professional clinical mental health counselors (L.P.C.C.); masters-level Registered Nurse certified in psychiatric counseling (R.N.C.S.); licensed marriage and family therapist (L.M.F.T.). For Chemical Dependency services, a Provider also includes a licensed Alcohol and Drug Abuse counselor (L.A.D.A.C.).

Out-of-Pocket Limit — The maximum amount of Deductible, Coinsurance, and/or Copayments that you pay for most Covered Services in a Calendar Year. After an Out-of-Pocket Limit is reached, this Plan pays **100 percent** of most of your Covered Charges for the rest of that Calendar Year, not to exceed any benefit limits.

Outpatient Services — Medical/Surgical Services received in the outpatient department of a Hospital, observation room, Emergency room, Ambulatory Surgical Facility, freestanding Dialysis Facility, or other covered outpatient treatment Facility. Outpatient Services include those Hospital services that can reasonably be provided on an ambulatory basis and those preventive, Medically Necessary, diagnostic and treatment procedures prescribed by your attending Physician. Such services may be provided at a Hospital, a Physician's office, any other appropriate licensed Facility, or at any other appropriate Facility if the professional delivering the services is licensed to practice, is certified and is practicing under authority of the Health Care Insurer, a medical group, an independent practice association, or other authority authorized by applicable New Mexico law.

Outpatient Surgery — Any Surgical Services that is performed in an Ambulatory Surgical Facility or the outpatient department of a Hospital, but **not** including a procedure performed in an office or clinic. Outpatient Surgery includes any procedure that requires the use of an Ambulatory Surgical Facility or an outpatient Hospital operating or recovery room.

Contracted Provider — Any provider that, for the service being provided, contracts with BCBSNM, a BCBSNM contractor or subcontractor, another Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) Plan or the national BCBS transplant network. Your "preferred" provider may have two agreements with the local BCBS Plan — a preferred provider contract and another "participating" provider contract. Providers that have only the participating provider contract are **not** considered preferred providers. See definition of "Provider."

Physical Therapist — A licensed physical therapist. Where there is no licensure law, the Physical Therapist must be certified by the appropriate professional body. A Physical Therapist treats disease or Accidental Injury by physical and mechanical means (regulated exercise, water, light, or heat).

Physical Therapy — The use of physical agents to treat disability resulting from disease or injury. Physical agents include heat, cold, electrical currents, ultrasound, ultraviolet radiation, and therapeutic exercise.

Physician — A Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) or osteopathy (D.O.) and who is licensed to practice medicine under the laws of the state or jurisdiction where the services are provided.

Physician Assistant — A graduate of a physician assistant or surgeon assistant program approved by a nationally recognized accreditation body or a skilled person who is currently certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, who is licensed in the state of New Mexico (or by the appropriate state regulatory body) to practice medicine under the supervision of a licensed Physician.

Podiatrist — A licensed doctor of podiatric medicine (D.P.M.). A podiatrist treats conditions of the feet.

Practitioner of the Healing Arts — Any physician, professional provider or other person holding a license or certificate provided for in Chapter 61, Article 4, 5, 6 or 14A NMSA 1978 authorizing the licensee to offer or undertake to diagnose, treat, or operate on, or prescribe for any human pain, injury, disease, deformity, physical, or mental condition.

Preauthorization — An advance confirmation to determine medical necessity, as may be required where permitted by law, for certain services to be eligible for benefits.

Predetermination — An advance confirmation, or "predetermination," of benefits for a requested Covered Service. Predetermination does not guarantee benefits if the actual circumstances of the case differ from those originally described.

Preferred Provider — See definition of "Provider," below.

Pregnancy-Related Services — See definition of "Maternity," earlier in the section.

Preventive Services — Professional services rendered for the early detection of asymptomatic illnesses or abnormalities and to prevent illness or other conditions.

Primary Preferred Provider (PPP) — See definition of "Provider."

Probationary Period — The amount of time an employee must work before becoming eligible for any health care coverage offered by the employer sponsoring this plan. Your employer determines the length of the probationary period.

Prosthetics or Prosthetic Device — An externally attached or surgically implanted artificial substitute for an absent body part; for example, an artificial eye or limb.

Provider — A duly licensed Hospital, physician, or other practitioner of the healing arts authorized to furnish Health Care Services within the scope of licensure.

> **Health care facility:** An institution providing health care services, including a hospital or other licensed inpatient center, an ambulatory surgical or treatment center, a skilled nursing facility, a home health care agency, a diagnostic laboratory or imaging center, and a rehabilitation or other therapeutic health setting.
>
> **Physician:** A practitioner of the healing arts who is also a Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) or osteopathy (D.O.) and who is licensed to practice medicine under the laws of the state or jurisdiction where the services are provided.
>
> **Professional provider:** A physician or health care practitioner, including a pharmacist, who is licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized by the state to provide health care services consistent with state law.

A provider may belong to one or more networks, but if you want to visit a network provider, you must choose the provider from the *appropriate* network:

PPP (Primary Preferred Provider): A preferred provider in one of the following medical specialties **only:** Family Practice; General Practice; Internal Medicine; Obstetrics/Gynecology; Gynecology; or Pediatrics. PPPs do **not** include Physicians specializing in any other fields such as Obstetrics only, Geriatrics, Pediatric Surgery or Pediatric Allergy.

PPO Specialist: A practitioner of the healing arts who is in the Preferred Provider Network - but does not belong to one of the specialties defined above as being for a "Primary Preferred Provider" (or "PPP"). A specialist does not include hospitals or other treatment facilities, urgent care facilities, pharmacies, equipment suppliers, ambulance companies, or similar ancillary health care providers.

A network provider agrees to provide health care services to members with an expectation of receiving payment (other than coinsurance or deductibles) directly or indirectly from BCBSNM (or other entity with whom the provider has Contracted). A network provider agrees to bill BCBSNM (or other contracting entity) directly and to accept this Plan's payment (provided in accordance with the provisions of the contract) plus the member's share (coinsurance, deductibles, copayments, etc.) as payment in full for covered services. BCBSNM (or other contracting entity) will pay the network provider directly. BCBSNM (or other contracting entity) may add, change, or terminate specific network providers at its discretion or recommend a specific provider for specialized care as medical necessity warrants.

Psychiatric Hospital — A psychiatric Facility licensed as an acute care Facility or a psychiatric unit in a medical Facility that is licensed as an acute care Facility. Services are provided by or under the supervision of an organized staff of Physicians. Continuous 24-hour nursing services are provided under the supervision of a Registered Nurse.

Psychologist — A person who is duly licensed or certified in the state where the service is rendered and has a doctoral degree in psychology and has had at least two years of clinical experience in a recognized health setting or has met the standards of the national register of health service providers in psychology.

Pulmonary Rehabilitation — An individualized, supervised physical conditioning program. Occupational Therapists teach you how to pace yourself, conserve energy, and simplify tasks. Respiratory Therapists train you in bronchial hygiene, proper use of inhalers, and proper breathing.

Radiation Therapy — X-ray, radon, cobalt, betatron, telocobalt, and radioactive isotope treatment for malignant diseases and other medical conditions.

Reconstructive Surgery — Reconstructive Surgery improves or restores bodily function to the level experienced before the event that necessitated the surgery, or in the case of a congenital defect, to a level considered normal. Such surgeries may have a coincidental Cosmetic effect.

Registered Lay Midwife — Any person who practices lay midwifery and is registered as a lay midwife by the New Mexico Department of Health.

Registered Nurse (R.N.) — A nurse who has graduated from a formal program of nursing education (diploma school, associate degree or baccalaureate program) and is licensed by appropriate state authority.

Registered Nurse (R.N.) in an Expanded Practice — A person licensed by the board of nursing as a Registered Nurse for Expanded Practice as a certified nurse practitioner, certified registered nurse anesthetist, certified clinical nurse specialist in psychiatric mental health nursing or clinical nurse specialist in private practice and who has a master's degree or doctorate in a defined clinical nursing specialty and is certified by a national nursing organization.

Rehabilitation Hospital — An appropriately licensed Facility that provides rehabilitation care services on an Inpatient Services basis. Rehabilitation care services consist of the combined use of a multidisciplinary team of Physical, Occupational, Speech, and Respiratory Therapists, medical social workers, and rehabilitation nurses to enable patients disabled by illness or Accidental Injury to achieve the highest possible functional ability. Services are provided by or under the supervision of an organized staff of Physicians. Continuous nursing services are provided under the supervision of a Registered Nurse.

Rehabilitative Service — Including, but not limited to Speech Therapy, Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy. Treatment, as determined by your Physician that must be limited to therapy which is expected to result in significant improvement in the conditions for which it is rendered, "Rehabilitative Services" must be expected to help a person regain, maintain or prevent deterioration of a skill or function that has been acquired but then lost or impaired due to illness, injury or disabling condition.

Residential Treatment Center — A Facility offering a defined course of therapeutic intervention and special programming in a controlled environment which also offers a degree of security, supervision, and structure and is licensed by the appropriate state and local authority to provide such service. It does not include half- way houses, supervised living, group homes, boarding houses, or other facilities that provide primarily a supportive environment and address long- term social needs, even if counseling is provided in such facilities. Patients in Residential Treatment Centers are medically monitored with 24- hour medical availability and 24- hour on- site nursing service for patients with Mental Illness and/or Chemical Dependency disorders.

Respiratory Therapist — A person qualified for employment in the field of respiratory therapy. A Respiratory Therapist assists patients with breathing problems.

Routine Newborn Care — Care of a child immediately following his/her birth that includes:

- routine Hospital nursery services, including alpha-fetoprotein IV screening
- routine medical care in the Hospital after delivery
- pediatrician
- services related to circumcision of a male newborn
- standby care at a C-section procedure

Routine Patient Care Cost — The cost for all items and services consistent with the coverage provided under this Plan that is typically covered for a Member who is not enrolled in a clinical trial. Routine Patient Care Cost does not include:

- the investigational item, device, or service, itself;
- items and services that are not provided solely to satisfy data collection and analysis needs and that are not used in the direct clinical management of the patient; or
- a service that is clearly inconsistent with widely accepted and established standards of care for a particular diagnosis.

Routine Screening Colonoscopy/Mammogram — Tests to screen for occult colorectal and/or breast cancer in persons who, at the time of testing, are not known to have active cancer of the colon or breast, respectively. (If there is a history of colon or breast cancer, for the purposes of the "Preventive Services" benefit, a cancer is no longer active if there has been no treatment for it and no evidence of recurrence for the previous three years.) Routine screening tests are performed at defined intervals based on recommendations of national organizations as summarized in the BCBSNM Preventive Care Guidelines. Routine screening tests do not include tests (sometimes called "surveillance testing") intended to monitor the current status or progression of a cancer that is already diagnosed.

Note: BCBSNM Preventive Care Guidelines may be found at the BCBSNM website below or contacting Customer Service:

www.bcbsnm.com/health/know_your_numbers

Short-Term Rehabilitation — Inpatient, outpatient, office- and home- based occupational, physical, and Speech Therapy techniques that are medically necessary to restore and improve lost bodily functions following illness or Accidental Injury. (This does not include services provided as part of an approved home health or Hospice Admission, which are subject to separate benefit limitations and exclusions, and does not include Alcohol or Drug Abuse rehabilitation.)

Skilled Nursing Care — Care that can be provided only by someone with at least the qualifications of a Licensed Practical Nurse (L.P.N.) or Registered Nurse (R.N.).

Skilled Nursing Facility — A Facility or part of a Facility that:

- is licensed in accordance with state or local law; *and*
- is a Medicare-participating Facility; *and*
- is primarily engaged in providing Skilled Nursing Care to inpatients under the supervision of a duly licensed Physician; *and*
- provides continuous 24-hour nursing service by or under the supervision of a Registered Nurse; *and*
- does **not** include any Facility that is primarily a rest home, a Facility for the care of the aged, or for treatment of tuberculosis, or for intermediate, Custodial or educational care.

Sound Natural Teeth — Teeth that are whole, without impairment, without periodontal or other conditions and not in need of treatment for any reason other than Accidental Injury. Teeth with crowns or restorations (even if required due to a previous injury) are **not** Sound Natural Teeth. Therefore, injury to a restored tooth will not be covered as an accident-related expense. (Your Provider must submit x-rays taken *before* the dental or surgical procedure in order for BCBSNM to determine whether the tooth was "sound.")

Special Care Unit — A designated unit that has concentrated facilities, equipment and supportive services to provide an intensive level of care for critically ill patients. Examples of Special Care Units are intensive care unit (ICU), cardiac care unit (CCU), subintensive care unit, and isolation room.

Special Enrollment — When an otherwise eligible employee or Eligible Family Member did not enroll in the Plan when initially eligible, there are certain instances (or "qualifying events") during which the employee and his/her Eligible Family Members, if any, may enroll in the Plan at a later date - or more than 31 days after becoming eligible - and not considered Late Applicants. The "Special Enrollment" period is the period of time during which an otherwise Late Applicant may apply for coverage during the open enrollment period designated by the NMRHCA.

Special Medical Foods — Nutritional substances in any form that are consumed or administered internally under the supervision of a Physician, specifically processed or formulated to be distinct in one or more nutrients present in natural food; intended for the medical and nutritional management of patients with limited capacity to metabolize ordinary foodstuffs, or certain nutrients contained in ordinary foodstuffs, or who have other specific nutrient requirements as established by medical evaluation; and essential to optimize growth, health, and metabolic homeostasis. Special Medical Foods are covered only when prescribed by a Physician for treatment of genetic orders of metabolism, and the member is under the Physician's ongoing care. Special Medical Foods are not for use by the general public and may not be available in stores or supermarkets. Special Medical Foods are not those foods included in a health diet intended to decrease the risk of disease, such as reduced- fat foods, low sodium foods, or weight loss products.

Speech Therapist — A speech pathologist certified by the American Speech and Hearing Association. A Speech Therapist assists patients in overcoming speech disorders.

Speech Therapy — Services used for the diagnosis and treatment of speech and language disorders.

Subscriber — The retiree, except for family dependency, is the basis for enrollment eligibility, or in the case of an individual contract, the person in whose name the contract is issued.

Summary of Benefits and Coverage (SBC) — The separately issued schedule that defines your Copayment and/or Coinsurance requirements, Deductible, Out- of- Pocket Limit, and annual or lifetime benefits, and provides an overview of Covered Services. It is referred to as the *Summary of Benefits* throughout this Benefit Booklet.

Surgical Services — Any of a variety of technical procedures for treatment or diagnosis of anatomical disease or Accidental Injury including, but not limited to: cutting; microsurgery (use of scopes); laser procedures; grafting, suturing, castings; treatment of fractures and dislocations; electrical, chemical, or medical destruction of tissue; endoscopic examinations; anesthetic epidural procedures; other invasive procedures. Benefits for Surgical Services also include usual and related local anesthesia, necessary assistant surgeon expenses, and pre- and post-operative care, including recasting.

Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ)/Craniomandibular Joint (CMJ) Disorder — A condition that may include painful temporomandibular joints, tenderness in the muscles that move the jaw, clicking of joints, and limitation of jaw movement.

Terminally Ill Patient — A patient with a life expectancy of **six months or less**, as certified in writing by the attending Physician.

Tertiary Care Facility — A Hospital unit that provides complete perinatal care (occurring in the period shortly before and after birth) and intensive care of intrapartum (occurring during childbirth or delivery) and perinatal high-risk patients. This Hospital unit also has responsibilities for coordination of transport, communication and data analysis systems for the geographic area served.

Totally Disabled — With respect to an Eligible Person, an inability by reason of illness, injury or physical condition to perform the material duties of any occupation for which the Eligible Person is or becomes qualified by reason of experience, education or training or with respect to a covered person other than an Eligible Person, the inability by reason of illness, injury or physical condition to engage in the normal activities of a similarly situated person who is in good health.

Transplant — A surgical process that involves the removal of an organ from one person and placement of the organ into another. Transplant can also mean removal of organs or tissue from a person for the purpose of treatment and re-implanting the removed organ or tissue into the same person.

Transplant-Related Services — Any hospitalizations and medical or Surgical Services related to a covered Transplant or retransplant and any subsequent hospitalizations and medical or Surgical Services related to a covered Transplant or re-Transplant, and received within one year of the Transplant or re- Transplant.

Urgent Care — Medically Necessary Health Care Services received for an unforeseen condition that is not life-threatening. This condition does, however, require prompt medical attention to prevent a serious deterioration in your health (e.g., high fever, cuts requiring stitches).

Utilization Management — A system for reviewing the appropriate and efficient allocation of medical services and Hospital resources given or proposed to be given to a patient or group of patients.

Well-Child Care — Periodic health and developmental assessments and screenings, immunizations, and physical exams provided to children who have no symptoms of current illness as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF).

APPENDIX A: CONTINUATION COVERAGE RIGHTS UNDER COBRA

This notice contains important information about your possible right to COBRA continuation coverage, which is a temporary extension of coverage under this Group Health Care Plan. The right to COBRA continuation coverage was created by a federal law, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA), for certain larger group employers. COBRA continuation coverage may be available to you and to other members of your family who are covered under the health care plan when you would otherwise lose your Group health coverage. Contact your employer to determine if you or your Group are eligible for COBRA continuation coverage.

This notice generally explains:

- COBRA continuation coverage;
- when it may become available to you and your family if your Group is subject to the provisions of COBRA; and
- what you need to do to protect your right to receive it.

This notice gives only a summary of COBRA continuation coverage rights. For more information about the rights and obligations under the Plan and under federal law, contact the Plan administrator or see *Section 2: Enrollment and Termination Information* of this Benefit Booklet.

The Plan administrator of the Plan is named by the employer or by the group health plan. Either the Plan administrator or a third party named by the Plan administrator is responsible for administering COBRA continuation coverage. Contact your Plan administrator for the name, address, and telephone number of the party responsible for administering your COBRA continuation coverage.

COBRA CONTINUATION COVERAGE

COBRA continuation coverage is a continuation of health care plan coverage when coverage would otherwise end because of a life event known as a "qualifying event." Specific qualifying events are listed later in this notice. COBRA continuation coverage must be offered to each person who is a "qualified beneficiary." A qualified beneficiary is someone who will lose coverage under the health care plan because of a qualifying event. Depending on the type of qualifying event, employees, spouses of employees, and eligible children of employees may be qualified beneficiaries. Under the Plan, generally most qualified beneficiaries who elect COBRA continuation coverage must pay for COBRA continuation coverage. Contact the employer and/or COBRA administrator for specific information for your Plan.

If you are an employee, you will become a qualified beneficiary if you will lose your coverage under the Plan because either one of the following qualifying events happens:

- your hours of employment are reduced; or
- your employment ends for any reason other than your gross misconduct.

If you are the spouse of an employee, you will become a qualified beneficiary if you will lose your coverage under the Plan because any of the following qualifying events happens:

- your spouse dies;
- your spouse's hours of employment are reduced;
- your spouse's employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
- your spouse becomes enrolled in Medicare (Part A, Part B or both); or
- you become divorced or legally separated from your spouse.

Your eligible children will become qualified beneficiaries if they lose coverage under the Plan because any of the following qualifying events happens and if your Group is subject to the provisions of COBRA:

- the parent-employee dies;

- the parent-employee's hours of employment are reduced;
- the parent-employee's employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
- the parent-employee becomes enrolled in Medicare (Part A, Part B or both);
- the parents become divorced or legally separated; or
- the child stops being eligible for coverage under the Plan as an "eligible child".

If the Plan provides health care coverage to retired employees, the following applies: Sometimes, filing a proceeding in bankruptcy under title 11 of the United States Code can be a qualifying event. If a proceeding in bankruptcy is filed with respect to the employer, and that bankruptcy results in the loss of coverage of any retiree covered under the Plan, the retiree is a qualified beneficiary with respect to the bankruptcy. The retiree's spouse, surviving spouse and eligible children will also be qualified beneficiaries if bankruptcy results in the loss of their coverage under the Plan.

The Plan will offer COBRA continuation coverage to qualified beneficiaries only after the Plan administrator has been notified that a qualifying event has occurred.

The employer must notify the Plan administrator **within 30 days** when the qualifying event is:

- the end of employment;
- the reduction of hours of employment;
- the death of the employee;
- with respect to a retired employee health coverage, commencement of a proceeding in bankruptcy with respect to the employer; or
- the enrollment of the employee in Medicare (Part A, Part B or both).

For the other qualifying events (divorce or legal separation of the employee and spouse or an eligible child losing eligibility for coverage as an eligible child), you must notify the Plan administrator. The Plan requires you to notify the Plan administrator **within 60 days** after the qualifying event occurs. Contact your employer and/or the COBRA administrator for procedures for this notice, including a description of any required information or documentation.

Once the Plan administrator receives notice that a qualifying event has occurred, COBRA continuation coverage will be offered to each of the qualified beneficiaries. For each qualified beneficiary who elects COBRA continuation coverage, COBRA continuation coverage will begin on the date that Plan coverage would otherwise have been lost.

COBRA continuation coverage is a temporary continuation of coverage. COBRA continuation coverage may last for up to 36 months when the qualifying event is:

- the death of the employee;
- the enrollment of the employee in Medicare (Part A, Part B or both);
- your divorce or legal separation; or
- an eligible child losing eligibility as an eligible child.

When the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction in hours of employment, COBRA continuation coverage lasts for **up to 18 months**. There are two ways in which this 18-month period of COBRA continuation can be extended:

Disability Extension of 18-month Period of Continuation Coverage

If you or anyone in your family covered under the Plan is determined by the Social Security Administration to be disabled at any time during **the first 60 days** of COBRA continuation coverage and you notify the Plan administrator in a timely fashion, you and your entire family can receive **up to an additional 11 months** of COBRA continuation coverage, **for a total maximum of 29 months**. You must make sure that your Plan administrator is notified of the Social Security Administration's determination **within 60 days** of the date of the determination and before the end of the 18-month period of COBRA continuation coverage. Contact your employer and/or the COBRA administrator for

procedures for this notice, including a description of any required information or documentation.

Second Qualifying Event Extension of 18-Month Period of Continuation Coverage

If your family experiences another qualifying event while receiving COBRA continuation coverage, the spouse and eligible children in your family can get additional months of COBRA continuation coverage, **up to a maximum of 36 months**. This extension is available to the spouse and eligible children if the former employee dies, enrolls in Medicare (Part A, Part B or both), or gets divorced or legally separated. The extension is also available to an eligible child when that child stops being eligible under the Plan as an eligible child.

In all of these cases, you must make sure that the Plan administrator is notified of the second qualifying event **within 60 days** of the second qualifying event. Contact your employer and/or the COBRA administrator for procedures for this notice, including a description of any required information or documentation.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

If you have questions about COBRA continuation coverage, contact the Plan administrator or the nearest Regional or District Office of the U. S. Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA). Addresses and phone numbers of Regional and District EBSA Offices are available through EBSA's Web site at www.dol.gov/ebsa.

In order to protect your family's rights, you should keep the Plan administrator informed of any changes in the addresses of family members. You should also keep a copy, for your records, of any notices you send to your Plan administrator.

PLAN CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact your employer for the name, address and telephone number of the party responsible for administering your COBRA continuation coverage.

SUMMARY OF HEALTH INSURANCE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

This is a summary of the process you must follow when you request a review of a decision by BCBSNM. You will be provided with detailed information and complaint forms by BCBSNM at each step. In addition, you can review the complete New Mexico regulations that control the process under the **Managed Health Care Bureau** page found under the **Departments** tab on the Office of Superintendent of Insurance (OSI) website, located at www.osi.state.nm.us. You may also request a copy from BCBSNM at:

NMRHCA Designated Service Unit, Grievance Coordinator
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 27630
Albuquerque, New Mexico 871255-7630
Telephone: 1-888-966-7742
Email: nmpstadsu@bcbsnm.com Fax: (505) 837-8509

or from OSI by calling 1-505 827-4601 or toll free at 1-855-427-5674.

What types of decisions can be reviewed?

You may request a review of two different types of decisions:

Adverse determination: You may request a review if BCBSNM has denied pre-authorization (certification) for a proposed procedure, has denied full or partial payment for a procedure you have already received, or is denying or reducing further payment for an ongoing procedure that you are already receiving and that has been previously covered. (BCBSNM must notify you *before* terminating or reducing coverage for an ongoing course of treatment, and must continue to cover the treatment during the appeal process.) This type of denial may also include a refusal to cover a service for which benefits might otherwise be provided because the service is determined to be experimental, investigational, or not medically necessary or appropriate. It may also include a denial by BCBSNM of a participant's or beneficiary's eligibility to participate in a plan. These types of denials are collectively called **"adverse**

determinations."

Administrative decision: You may also request a review if you object to how BCBSNM handles other matters, such as its administrative practices that affect the availability, delivery, or quality of health care services; claims payment, handling or reimbursement for health care services; or if your coverage has been terminated.

Review of an Adverse Determination How does pre-authorization for a health care service work?

When BCBSNM receives a request to pre-authorize (certify) payment for a healthcare service (service) or a request to reimburse your healthcare provider (provider) for a service that you have already had, it follows a two-step process.

Coverage: First, BCBSNM determines whether the requested service is covered under the terms of your health benefits plan (policy). For example, if your policy excludes payment for adult hearing aids, then BCBSNM will not agree to pay for you to have them even if you have a clear need for them.

Medical necessity: Next, if BCBSNM finds that the requested service is covered by the policy, BCBSNM determines, in consultation with a physician, whether a requested service is medically necessary. The consulting physician determines medical necessity either after consultation with specialists who are experts in the area or after application of uniform standards used by BCBSNM. For example, if you have a crippling hand injury that could be corrected by plastic surgery and you are also requesting that BCBSNM pay for cosmetic plastic surgery to give you a more attractive nose, BCBSNM might certify the first request to repair your hand and deny the second, because it is not medically necessary.

Depending on terms of your policy, BCBSNM might also deny certification if the service you are requesting is outside the scope of your policy. For example, if your policy does not pay for experimental procedures, and the service you are requesting is classified as experimental, BCBSNM may deny certification. BCBSNM might also deny certification if a procedure that your provider has requested is not recognized as a standard treatment for the condition being treated.

IMPORTANT: If BCBSNM determines that it will not certify your request for services, you may still go forward with the treatment or procedure. **However,** you will be responsible for paying the provider yourself for the services.

How long does initial certification take?

Standard decision: BCBSNM must make an initial decision within 5 working days. However, BCBSNM may extend the review period for a maximum of 10 calendar days if it: (1) can demonstrate reasonable cause beyond its control for the delay; (2) can demonstrate that the delay will not result in increased medical risk to you; and (3) provides a written progress report and explanation for the delay to you and your provider within the original 5 working day review period.

What if I need services in a hurry?

Urgent care situation: An **urgent care situation** is a situation in which a decision from BCBSNM is needed quickly because: **(1)** delay would jeopardize your life or health; **(2)** delay would jeopardize your ability to regain maximum function; **(3)** the physician with knowledge of your medical condition reasonably requests an expedited decision; **(4)** the physician with knowledge of your medical condition, believes that delay would subject you to severe pain that cannot be adequately managed without the requested care or treatment; or **(5)** the medical demands of your case require an expedited decision.

If you are facing an urgent care situation **or** BCBSNM has notified you that payment for an ongoing course of treatment that you are already receiving is being reduced or discontinued, you or your provider may request an expedited review and BCBSNM must either certify or deny the initial request quickly. BCBSNM must make its initial decision in accordance with the medical demands of the case, but within 24 hours after receiving the request for an **expedited** decision.

If you are dissatisfied with BCBSNM's initial expedited decision in an urgent care situation, you may then request an **expedited review** of the decision by both BCBSNM and an external reviewer called an Independent Review Organization (IRO). When an **expedited** review is requested, BCBSNM must review its prior decision and respond to your request within

72 hours. If you request that an IRO perform an expedited review simultaneously with BCBSNM's review and your request is eligible for an IRO review, the IRO must also provide its expedited decision within 72 hours after receiving the necessary release of information and related records. If you are still dissatisfied after the IRO completes its review, you may request that the Superintendent review your request. This review will be completed within 72 hours after your request is complete.

The internal review, the IRO review, and the review by the Superintendent are described in greater detail in the following sections.

IMPORTANT: If you are facing an emergency, you should seek medical care immediately and then notify BCBSNM as soon as possible. BCBSNM will guide you through the claims process once the emergency has passed.

When will I be notified that my initial request has been either certified or denied?

If the initial request is approved, BCBSNM must notify you and your provider within 1 working day after the decision, unless an urgent matter requires a quicker notice. If BCBSNM denies certification, BCBSNM must notify you and the provider within 24 hours after the decision.

If my initial request is denied, how can I appeal this decision?

If your initial request for services is denied or you are dissatisfied with the way BCBSNM handles an administrative matter, you will receive a detailed written description of the grievance procedures from BCBSNM as well as forms and detailed instructions for requesting a review. You may submit the request for review either orally or in writing depending on the terms of your policy. BCBSNM provides representatives who have been trained to assist you with the process of requesting a review. This person can help you to complete the necessary forms and with gathering information that you need to submit your request. For assistance, contact BCBSNM's as follows:

BCBSNM Appeals Unit
P.O. Box 27630 Albuquerque,
NM 87125-9815
Telephone (toll-free): (800) 205-9926
E-mail: see website at www.bcbsnm.com
Fax: (505) 816-3837

You may also contact the Managed Health Care Bureau (MHCB) at OSI for assistance with preparing a request for a review at:

Telephone: 1-(505) 827-4601 or toll free at 1-(855) 427-5674 Office of

Superintendent of Insurance - MHCB
P.O. Box 1689,
1120 Paseo de Peralta Santa Fe, NM 87504-1689 FAX
#:(505) 827-6341, Attn: MHCB
Email:mhcb.grievance@state.nm.us

Who can request a review?

A review may be requested by you as the patient, your provider, or someone that you select to act on your behalf. The patient may be the actual subscriber or a dependent who receives coverage through the subscriber. The person requesting the review is called the **"grievant."**

Appealing an adverse determination – first level review

If you are dissatisfied with the initial decision by BCBSNM, you have the right to request that the decision be reviewed by its medical director. The medical director may make a decision based on the terms of your policy, may choose to contact a specialist or the provider who has requested the service on your behalf, or may rely on BCBSNM's

standards or generally recognized standards.

How much time do I have to decide whether to request a review?

You must notify BCBSNM that you wish to request an internal review within **180 days** after the date you are notified that the initial request has been denied.

What do I need to provide? What else can I provide?

If you request that BCBSNM review its decision, BCBSNM will provide you with a list of the documents you need to provide and will provide to you all of your records and other information the medical director will consider when reviewing your case. You may also provide additional information that you would like to have the medical director consider, such as a statement or recommendation from your doctor, a written statement from you, or published clinical studies that support your request.

How long does a first level internal review take?

Expedited review. If a review request involves an urgent care situation, BCBSNM must complete an expedited internal review as required by the medical demands of the case, but in no case later than 72 hours from the time the internal review request was received.

Standard review. BCBSNM must complete both the medical director's review and (if you then request it) BCBSNM's internal panel review within 30 days after receipt of your pre-service request for review or within 60 days if you have already received the service. The medical director's review generally takes only a few days.

The medical director denied my request - now what?

If you remain dissatisfied after the medical director's review, you may either request a review by a panel that is selected by BCBSNM or you may skip this step and ask that your request be reviewed by an IRO that is appointed by the Superintendent.

- If you ask to have your request reviewed by BCBSNM's panel, then you have the right to appear before the panel in person or by telephone or have someone, (including your attorney), appear with you or on your behalf. You may submit information that you want the panel to consider, and ask questions of the panel members. Your health provider may also address the panel or send a written statement.
- If you decide to skip the panel review, you will have the opportunity to submit your information for review by the IRO, but you will not be able to appear in person or by telephone. OSI can assist you in getting your information to the IRO.

IMPORTANT: If you are covered under the NM State Healthcare Purchasing Act, you may NOT request an IRO review if you skip the panel review.

How long do I have to make my decision?

If you wish to have your request reviewed by BCBSNM's panel, you must inform BCBSNM within **5 days** after you receive the medical director's decision. If you wish to skip panel review and have your matter go directly to the IRO, you must inform OSI of your decision within **4 months** after you receive the medical director's decision.

What happens during a panel review?

If you request that BCBSNM provide a panel to review its decision, BCBSNM will schedule a hearing with a group of medical and other professionals to review the request. If your request was denied because BCBSNM felt the requested services were not medically necessary, were experimental or were investigational, then the panel will include at least one specialist with specific training or experience with the requested services.

BCBSNM will contact you with information about the panel's hearing date so that you may arrange to attend in person or by telephone, or arrange to have someone attend with you or on your behalf. You may review all of the

information that BCBSNM will provide to the panel and submit additional information that you want the panel to consider. If you attend the hearing in person or by telephone, you may ask questions of the panel members. Your medical provider may also attend in person or by telephone, may address the panel, or send a written statement.

BCBSNM's internal panel must complete its review within 30 days following your original request for an internal review of a request for pre-certification or within 60 days following your original request if you have already received the services. You will be notified within 1 day after the panel decision. If you fail to provide records or other information that BCBSNM needs to complete the review, you will be given an opportunity to provide the missing items, *but the review process may take much longer, and you will be forced to wait for a decision.*

Hint: If you need extra time to prepare for the panel's review, then you may request that the panel be delayed for a maximum of 30 days.

NMRHCA Grievance Review Procedures

If you are not satisfied with BCBSNM's internal review decision, you may file a complaint with New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority within 30 days after BCBSNM's internal review decision. (Note: You may contact NMRHCA at any time during the internal review process.) Upon receipt of your complaint, the New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority will review the case and respond to the parties involved within 30 days. If your situation requires expedited review, a response will be provided within 48 hours of receipt by New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority of the complaint. Your complaint should be submitted to:

Executive Director, NMRHCA 4308
Carlisle Blvd. NE, Suite 104
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107 1-
800-233-2576
Fax: 505-983-8667

If I choose to have my request reviewed by the BCBSNM's panel, can I still request the IRO review?

Yes. If your request has been reviewed by the BCBSNM's panel and you are still dissatisfied with the decision, you will have **4 months** to request a review by an IRO.

What's an IRO and what does it do?

An IRO is a certified organization appointed by OSI to review requests that have been denied by an insurer. The IRO employs various medical and other professionals from around the country to perform reviews. Once OSI selects and appoints an IRO, the IRO will assign one or more professionals who have specific credentials that qualify them to understand and evaluate the issues that are particular to a request. Depending on the type of issue, the IRO may assign a single reviewer to consider your request, or it may assign a panel of reviewers. The IRO must assign reviewers who have no prior knowledge of the case and who have no close association with BCBSNM or with you. The reviewer will consider all of the information that is provided by BCBSNM and by you. (OSI can assist you in getting your information to the IRO.) In making a decision, the reviewer may also rely on other published materials, such as clinical studies.

The IRO will report the final decision to you, your provider, BCBSNM, and to OSI. BCBSNM must comply with the decision of the IRO. If the IRO finds that the requested services should be provided, then BCBSNM must provide them.

The IRO's fees are billed directly to BCBSNM – there is no charge to you for this service.

How long does an IRO review take?

The IRO must complete the review and report back within 20 days after it receives the information necessary for the review. (However, if the IRO has been asked to provide an expedited review regarding an urgent care matter, the IRO must report back within 72 hours after receiving all of the information it needs to review the matter.)

Review by the Superintendent of Insurance

If you remain dissatisfied after the IRO's review, you may still be able to have the matter reviewed by the Superintendent. You may submit your request directly to OSI, and if your case meets certain requirements, a hearing will be scheduled. You will then have the right to submit additional information to support your request and you may choose to attend the hearing and speak. You may also ask other persons to testify at the hearing. The Superintendent may appoint independent co-hearing officers to hear the matter and to provide a recommendation.

The co-hearing officers will provide a recommendation to the Superintendent within 30 days after the hearing is complete. The Superintendent will then issue a final order.

There is no charge to you for a review by the Superintendent of Insurance and any fees for the hearing officers are billed directly to BCBSNM. However, if you arrange to be represented by an attorney or your witnesses require a fee, you will need to pay those fees.

Review of an Administrative Decision

How long do I have to decide if I want to appeal and how do I start the process?

If you are dissatisfied with an initial administrative decision made by BCBSNM, you have a right to request an internal review within **180 days** after the date you are notified of the decision. BCBSNM will notify you within 3 days after receiving your request for a review and will review the matter promptly. You may submit relevant information to be considered by the reviewer.

How long does an internal review of an Administrative Decision take?

BCBSNM will mail a decision to you within 30 days after receiving your request for a review of an administrative decision.

Can I appeal the decision from the internal reviewer?

Yes. You have **20 days** to request that BCBSNM form a committee to reconsider its administrative decision.

What does the reconsideration committee do? How long does it take?

When BCBSNM receives your request, it will appoint two or more members to form a committee to review the administrative decision. The committee members must be representatives of the company who were not involved in either the initial decision or the internal review. The committee will meet to review the decision within 15 days after BCBSNM receives your request. You will be notified at least 5 days prior to the committee meeting so that you may provide information, and/or attend the hearing in person or by telephone.

If you are unable to prepare for the committee hearing within the time set by BCBSNM, you may request that the committee hearing be postponed for up to 30 days.

The reconsideration committee will mail its decision to you within 7 days after the hearing.

NMRHCA Grievance Review Procedures

If you are not satisfied with BCBSNM's internal review decision, you may file a complaint with New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority within 30 days after BCBSNM's internal review decision. (Note: You may contact NMRHCA at any time during the internal review process.) Upon receipt of your complaint, the New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority will review the case and respond to the parties involved within 30 days. If your situation requires expedited review, a response will be provided within 48 hours of receipt by New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority of the complaint. Your complaint should be submitted to:

Executive Director, NMRHCA 4308
Carlisle Blvd. NE, Suite 104
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107 1-

800-233-2576

Fax: 505-983-8667

How can I request an external review?

If you are dissatisfied with the reconsideration committee's decision, you may ask the Superintendent to review the matter within **20 days** after you receive the written decision from BCBSNM or the Executive Director. You may submit the request to OSI using forms that are provided by BCBSNM. Forms are also available on the OSI website located at www.osi.state.nm.us. You may also call OSI to request the forms at (505) 827-4601 or toll free at 1-(855)-427-5674.

How does the external review work?

Upon receipt of your request, the Superintendent will request that both you and BCBSNM submit information for consideration. BCBSNM has 5 days to provide its information to the Superintendent, with a copy to you. You may also submit additional information including documents and reports for review by the Superintendent. The Superintendent will review all of the information received from both you and BCBSNM and issue a final decision within 45 days. If you need extra time to gather information, you may request an extension of up to 90 days. Any extension will cause the review process and decision to take more time.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Confidentiality

Any person who comes into contact with your personal health care records during the grievance process must protect your records in compliance with state and federal patient confidentiality laws and regulations. In fact, the provider and insurer cannot release your records, even to OSI, until you have signed a release.

Special needs and cultural and linguistic diversity

Information about the grievance procedures will be provided in accessible means or in a different language upon request in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Reporting requirements

Insurers are required to provide an annual report to the Superintendent with details about the number of grievances it received, how many were resolved and at what stage in the process they were resolved. You may review the results of the annual reports on the OSI website.

GENERAL INQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS

Inquiry – A general request for information regarding claims, benefits, or membership.

Complaint - An expression of dissatisfaction by you, either orally or in writing. Issues may include, but are not limited to, claims payments or denials, quality of care, and locating a network provider.

If you have an inquiry or a concern about any preauthorization request, claims payment, claims that have been denied or only partially paid, the quality of care you receive, the cancellation of your coverage, or any other review decisions made by BCBSNM, call the BCBSNM New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority Designated Service Unit toll free at (877) 994-2583. Many complaints or problems can be handled informally by calling, writing, or e-mailing the BCBSNM New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority Designated Service Unit. If you are not satisfied with the initial response, you can request internal review as described below.

RETALIATORY ACTION

No retaliatory action will be taken against you for making a complaint or for requesting internal or external review under

this health benefits plan.

CATASTROPHIC EVENTS

In case of fire, flood, war, civil disturbance, court order, strike, or other cause beyond BCBSNM's control, BCBSNM may be unable to process claims or provide preauthorization for services on a timely basis. If due to circumstances not within the control of BCBSNM or a network provider (such as partial or complete destruction of facilities, war, riot, disability of a network provider, or similar case), BCBSNM and the provider will have no liability or obligation if medical services are delayed or not provided. BCBSNM and its network providers will, however, make a good-faith effort to provide services.

Acceptance of coverage under this benefit booklet constitutes acceptance of its terms, conditions, limitations, and exclusions. Members are bound by all of the terms of this benefit booklet.

The legal agreement between **New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority (NMRHCA)** and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico (BCBSNM) includes the following documents:

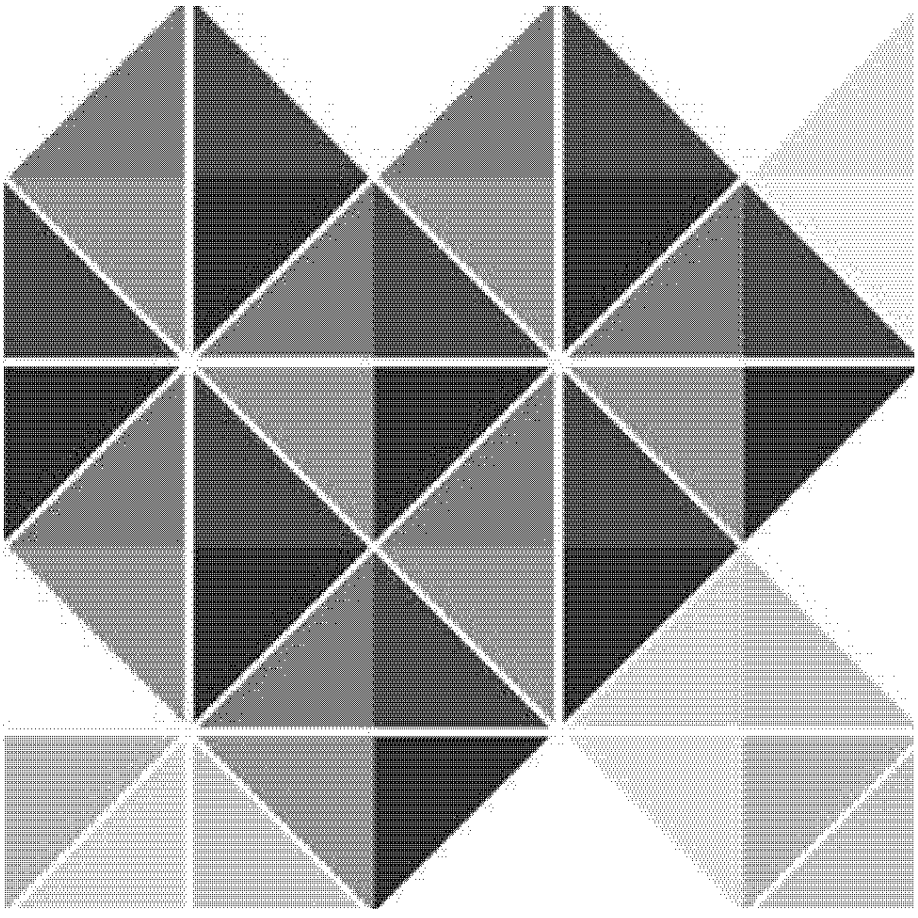
- this benefit booklet and any amendments, riders, or endorsements;
- the enrollment/change form(s) for the subscriber and his/her dependents;
- the members' identification cards; and
- the *Summary of Benefits*

In addition, your employer (or association) has important documents that are part of the legal agreement:

- the **Contract Agreement** between BCBSNM and **NMRHCA**.

The above documents constitute the entire legal agreement between BCBSNM and **NMRHCA**. No agent or employee of BCBSNM has authority to change this benefit booklet or waive any of its provisions. You will be notified of any changes to this benefit booklet at least 30 days before the changes become effective.

NMRHCA reserves the right to amend, modify, or discontinue coverage provided for employees and their dependents. This benefit booklet is not an implied contract and does not guarantee benefits or employment.

BCBSNM provides administrative claims payment services only and does not assume any financial risk or obligation with respect to claims, except as may be specified in the Administrative Services Agreement.

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of New Mexico