CareFirst
Family of health care plans

1: Welcome to CareFirst

To help you navigate through the manual, look for icons that indicate the relevant provider type as shown below.
Any content that is not marked with an icon applies to all provider types.

Ancillary  Institutional  Professional 

Introduction to CareFirst

Mission

As CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield and CareFirst BlueChoice®, Inc. (CareFirst) continues to transform, upholding our values and ethics in support of our mission remain crucial to our success. It is through our daily conduct that each of us can thrive and be our best on behalf of the people we serve; living our values and modeling the behaviors that form an ethical and supportive culture.

Online Resources and Contact Information

Provider Link List

Please refer to the Provider Link List to help you navigate the provider website.

Provider Quick Reference Guide

Please refer to the Provider Quick Reference Guide for additional information and resources to help you do business with CareFirst.

How to Use this Manual

This manual provides information for your patients who are CareFirst members. It is meant to be your primary reference guide to conducting business with CareFirst. The information in the manual relates to all provider types. To help you navigate through the manual, look for icons that indicate the relevant provider type as shown below. Any content that is not marked with an icon applies to all provider types.

Ancillary: 

Institutional: 

Professional: 

The information in this manual is organized by chapters and units within each chapter. Additionally, we have included links to helpful documents throughout the manual.

The entire manual can be downloaded as a searchable PDF document. Simply click on ”View Entire Manual.” Click on the magnifying glass, enter your keyword(s) in the search box to find the information you seek. Also, the table of contents has been hyperlinked, so you can easily navigate within the PDF.

Per the terms of the Participation Agreement, all providers are required to adhere to all policies and procedures contained in this manual, as applicable. In the event that there is an inconsistency between your Participation Agreement and this Manual, your Participation Agreement controls.

If we make any procedural changes in our ongoing efforts to improve our service to you, we will update the information in this manual and notify you through email or BlueLink, our online provider newsletter. To be kept up-to-date with the most current information and alerted to changes, we strongly encourage you to sign up to receive our emails, which will let you know when the manual has been revised.

We welcome your feedback on the manual. If you have any comments or suggestions for additional improvements to the manual, please send them to providermanual@carefirst.com.

Specific requirements of a member's health benefits vary and may differ from the general procedures outlined in this manual. If you have questions regarding a member's eligibility, benefits or claims status information, we encourage you to use one of our self-service channels: CareFirst Direct or CareFirst on Call. Through these channels, simple questions can be answered quickly.

Read and print the Guidelines for Provider Self-Service.

Note: References to the UB-04 claim form, its field locators and related billing instructions in this manual are intended to include UB-04 claim form, its successor form if it is replaced, and the equivalent electronic billing standard (ANSI 837) or another accepted standard format.

References to the CMS 1500 claim form, its field locator and related billing instructions in this manual is intended to include the CMS 1500 claim form, its successor form if it is replaced, and the equivalent electronic billing standard (ANSI 837) or another accepted standard format.

New Providers/Office Staff Begin Here

We encourage all new providers/office staff to review our on-demand training modules that serve as foundational knowledge to doing business with CareFirst. You will also find additional helpful training modules. If you have questions after reviewing these training sessions, please email providered@carefirst.com.

Social Drivers of Health

CareFirst serves three primary geographic regions: Maryland, D.C. and Northern Virginia. Within those three regions are smaller sub-regions. Annually, CareFirst analyzes social drivers of health in those geographic areas and identifies those most likely to directly impact the health and well-being of our members. Additionally, an assessment of these findings helps guide the CareFirst primary areas of focus for care coordination and the clinical programs that support our members' health.

A recent analysis identified the social drivers of health expected to have the greatest negative impact on our members and areas most in need of prevention and treatment efforts. Within our geographic regions and corresponding populations, poverty, crime, air quality, alcohol consumption and access to medical services presented some of the most significant social challenges impacting the health of CareFirst members. Each year, population and member experience data are assessed so that, as a health plan, we can determine needs and prioritize services. This data helps CareFirst focus healthcare resources and/or services to help improve member health.

Social drivers of health cause many challenges for members and may vary widely based on the area in which they live. This contributes to variations in health by region and in each of the areas we serve, with different geographic areas presenting different challenges. Chronic issues such as lack of access to healthy food, poverty, poor housing and lack of access to medical care all contribute to reduced health outcomes.

As a health plan, CareFirst is committed to offering programs and services designed to create the maximum positive impact and health outcomes for our members.

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