



Dental Connections

A new plan to help dual-eligible Rhode Islanders get more benefits!

Earlier this year you heard from our Managing Director of Duals, Leanna Moran, about our BlueRI for Duals (HMO D-SNP) plan. It's designed for Rhode Islanders who qualify for both Medicare and Medicaid, offering even more benefits, including \$3,000 in dental coverage annually.

This plan is uniquely designed to meet the needs of the diverse and complex dual eligible population in Rhode Island. We are working to meet member needs in 2023 by providing services like:

- Up to 72 one-way rides to or from medical or dental appointments*
- A Flexible Benefit Card that makes it easy to pay for products and services members need the most. It is one card that can be spent multiple ways:
 - \$150/month to buy a combination of groceries and over-the-counter (OTC) items*
 - \$1,500/year to pay for dental, vision and hearing services and copays, in addition to standard benefits
 - \$300/year to buy glasses and contacts
- \$200 wellness reimbursement for things like favorite healthy activities, exercise classes, and weight loss programs
- \$0 Part D Drugs – Members who qualify for Extra Help may be able to get all Part D drugs for a \$0 copay*

Additionally, each member receives customized care coordination through a health navigator and a nurse or behavioral health care manager, working together to ensure access to healthcare and necessary social services.

Leanna and her team have already enrolled more than 1,300 members into this plan, but there are still more Rhode Islanders who may not know they qualify for this \$0 benefit-rich plan. As a dental professional, you are in a unique position to help identify patients who may qualify. In fact, many of our dedicated dental providers have offered valuable feedback to help make this plan even better. You spoke and we listened! **Beginning January 1, 2023, BlueRI for Duals members will also have coverage for dentures and single tooth implants added to their plan.**

If you would like to learn more about this plan, or if you're interested in offering informational brochures in your practice, please let us know. You can email the BlueRI for Duals team directly at dsnquestions@BCBSRI.org, or you can reach out to Provider Relations at providerrelations@BCBSRI.org or at 1-844-707-5627.

*You must receive Low-Income Subsidy (LIS) or Extra Help to receive the grocery and over-the-counter (OTC) allowance as well as \$0 Part D drug copays. Rides are available within our service area. Any trip over 20 miles will count as additional trips and will be subtracted from your 72 trip total.

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2023 Dental Direct Plan Options

You already know about our four Dental Direct plan options; Basic, Standard, Plus & Elite - that offer patients varying levels of quality dental coverage at affordable rates. We have worked hard to ensure members have access to basic and comprehensive dental coverage at a fair rate. So, we are proud to announce that our Basic, Standard and Plus Dental Direct plan options will be available in 2023 at a slightly reduced rate. We hope this exemplifies our commitment to the overall health and well-being of our members.

The Dental Direct open enrollment period takes place November 1 through December 31, 2022, with coverage effective on January 1, 2023. Dental Direct members who would like to explore other options or make changes to their existing plan are encouraged to contact our membership team at (401) 459-5555 during this time. Otherwise, no action is necessary to remain in the same Dental Direct plan into 2023.

Patients new to Dental Direct can enroll at any time during the year, and coverage will be effective the first of the month following enrollment. As in prior years, when new members enroll in one of our Dental Direct plans, we will waive the waiting period(s) if they can provide proof of prior comparable coverage that was effective within 60 days of the new enrollment. This proof of coverage can be obtained from the prior carrier or the member's employer and provided to our sales team. Although dental customer service does not have the ability to waive the waiting period, our membership team verify prior coverage.

If you would like 2023 Dental Direct brochures to display in your office, please email ProviderRelations@BCBSRI.org with your office name and address, as well as the quantity and we will mail these directly to you.

Thank you for your commitment to providing Blue Cross Dental members with the highest quality, safest dental care in Rhode Island.

2023 Medicare Annual Election Period

The 2023 Medicare Annual Election Period (AEP) runs from October 15 through December 7, 2022, during which time members eligible for Medicare can make changes to (or choose to remain in) their current Medicare plan for the coming year. While most of our Medicare Advantage plans have included dental benefits at various coverage levels per plan, we are pleased to announce that beginning January 1, 2023, all BlueCHIP for Medicare Advantage plans will include dental coverage. That's right, no matter what Medicare Advantage plan your patient chooses, they will have some level of dental benefit coverage. Additionally, all Medicare Advantage plans will include coverage for one fluoride treatment per calendar year in 2023!

Also new for 2023, members now have up to \$300 a year to pay for dental, hearing and vision out-of-pocket expenses, like copays. This means that Medicare Advantage members can now offset cost share for covered services with the ease of the Flexible Benefit Card. Members receive this benefit in addition to their existing over-the-counter (OTC) benefit of up to \$100* per quarter all on the same card! In January the card will be automatically loaded with these enhancements.

If you, or your patients would like more information about our BlueCHIP for Medicare Advantage plan offerings, please visit bcsri.com/medicare.

*Specific values depend on the Medicare Plan selected. Unused benefits do not roll over to the next benefit period. Members cannot exceed benefit amounts.

Important Dental Policy Updates

Composite Restorations

Beginning January 1, 2023, BCBSRI will expand coverage for composite (white) restorations for posterior (back)

teeth. While this level of coverage has already been available in 2022 for some of our larger group plans, this enhancement extends coverage to our small group and direct pay plans, thus including all BCBSRI dental plans.

Single Tooth Implants

Members with prosthodontic coverage are eligible for a single tooth implant as an enhancement to their prosthodontic coverage when the implant is placed in a site where a conventional 3-unit bridge could be placed. Previously, BCBSRI clinical policy required that the implant replace one missing tooth that has sound natural teeth, on either side of the implant site. Beginning January 1, 2023, BCBSRI has updated this requirement to include sound, natural teeth or **sound dental implants** on either side of the implant site. This update is based on feedback we received from our valued participating dentists as well as consideration of member health needs.

Single tooth implant vs. dental implant coverage

It can be confusing when helping members determine benefit availability for implant coverage. Members with prosthodontic benefits are eligible for a single tooth implant when the BCBSRI criteria are met. Our policy on single tooth implant coverage can be found [here](#). Implant services are not a covered benefit unless the dental plan has an Implant Rider. Generally, coverage for plans with the Implant Rider is at 50%, with a \$3,500 lifetime maximum. All implant services are subject to a dentist advisor review. Our policy on implant services can be found [here](#). If you're still not sure how to determine benefit availability for implant coverage, please contact us at (401) 453-4700, or toll free, at 1-800-831-2400.

Provider Data and Credentialing

Having accurate provider data, which includes demographic information and patient panel information, is a requirement of the Comprehensive Appropriation Act, that became effective on January 1, 2022. In fact, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island (BCBSRI) must be able to confirm the accuracy of information posted in our provider directory each quarter. As such, we require our participating providers to attest to their provider level and practice location information each quarter using the "update practice info" feature on the BCBSRI.com provider account.

Effective April 1, 2022, providers who fail to comply with the quarterly attestation are removed from the Find a Dentist directory. This means BCBSRI dental plan members using the Find a Dentist tool won't be able to find a participating dentist that has not complied with the ongoing attestation.

As a reminder, BCBSRI maintains the Rhode Island participating provider database. Our claims processing and customer service partner, United Concordia Dental, does not update Rhode Island provider practice information. Therefore, all provider and practice updates, as well as credentialing and recredentialing events, are coordinated directly with BCBSRI. This includes quarterly attestation of provider and practice information necessary to remain compliant and active in our provider directory. To notify us that an existing participating provider with Blue Cross Dental joins your practice, or your practice information is changing, simply provide us with a completed Practitioner Change Form, along with a W-9, indicating the new office location. Fax the information to (401) 459-2099 or email provdb@bcbsri.org.

We always welcome new dentists to our network who deliver outstanding care to our members. If a dentist would like to participate with Blue Cross Dental, please visit the [Become a Participating Provider](#) page on bcbsri.com and fill out the required fields to initiate the credentialing process.

Please contact the BCBSRI Provider Relations team if you have questions about this process. They can also help if you have difficulty accessing your bcbsri.com provider account or need help navigating the 'update practice info' functionality. Please email us at ProviderRelations@bcbsri.org.

Thank you for your continued partnership with Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island.



Clinical Corner with Dr. Yvonne Wolny

As I write this article, I am so grateful for our profession. Despite all the recent challenges with staff shortages, infection protocol changes as well as navigating the pandemic ourselves, we are all working hard taking care of our patients.

Since the pandemic, I've had many patients report a decline in their dental health and an increased consumption of carbohydrates and sugary foods, resulting in a noticeable jump in caries rate. Patients also reported a decline in seeking medical attention for various reasons related to the pandemic.

Considering this information and the estimate that 1 in 5 adults in the US population have untreated decay (JADA, Volume 153, April 2022), the concern for our patients is ever growing. Often times, patients place regular dental visits behind medical appointments. When families are concerned about how they will pay their bills on time, dental visits often take a backseat.

This scenario is not new to any of us. I am sure that we all have experienced patients putting their dental care last within our own respective patient populations. Now that the pandemic is somewhat behind us you may be noticing a shift in the other direction and seeing an increase in patients wanting to be seen for routine visits as well as other procedures.

Now more than ever, we can be the first line of healthcare professionals to recognize such conditions as diabetes, mental health issues, sleep apnea, and hypertension prior to the patient seeing their PCP. Thorough medical histories, baseline blood pressure readings and sleep apnea questionnaire are great tools to recognize these conditions in addition to listening to our patients talk about their concerns and struggles. I would like to personally thank each one of you for all that you do for our members every day. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or concerns at Yvonne.Wolny@bcbsri.org.

Dental Provider Resources

When we have updates to share with your office, we will send them right to your inbox. However, to view past updates, our dental treatment guidelines, and previous editions of *Dental Connections*, please visit our [Dental Provider Resources](#) page. Bookmark this page in your browser. You also will find contact information in one convenient location.

If you would like to add anyone in your office to our email list so they can receive our updates and *Dental Connections* too, you can do that [here](#).

Your Blue StoreSM Upcoming Events

All four Your Blue Store locations—East Providence, Lincoln, Warwick and Cranston—offer our members a convenient, face- to-face way to get the same great service we're known for. That includes helping members when they contact United Concordia Dental for assistance, among many other services.

Our local team is happy to help in English, Spanish, or (at our East Providence store) Portuguese. Available services include:

- Sales of medical, dental, vision, and travel health insurance
- Customer service to help answer questions for all members
- Visits with our on-site nurse for help with ongoing health conditions
- Free exercise classes and educational sessions

For a complete listing of events, visit the [Your Blue Store](#) page.

Blue Cross Dental Contact Information

Claims submission address:

Dental Claims Administrator
P.O. Box 69427
Harrisburg, PA 17106-9427

Claims submission address for FEP:

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of RI
500 Exchange Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dental Clinical Consultant: Yvonne M. Wolny, DMD, (401) 459-1246, or Yvonne.Wolny@BCBSRI.org

For claims, eligibility, and benefits:

Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00
p.m. (401) 453-4700; Outside of Rhode
Island: 1-800-831-2400

For FEP claims, eligibility, and benefits:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday: 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Tuesday: 9:15 a.m. to 4:30
p.m. (401) 831-0153; Outside of RI: 1-800-377-4418

For provider/network support:

BCBSRI Provider Relations: 1-844-707-5627 or ProviderRelations@bcsri.org

For member enrollment:

(401) 459-5550 or 1-855-690-2583

You may also direct your patients who need service to Your Blue StoreSM locations Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.:

East Providence – Highland Commons, 71 Highland Ave

Lincoln – Lincoln Commons, 622 George Washington Hwy

Warwick – Cowesett Corners, 300 Quaker Ln

Cranston - Marshalls Plaza, 1400 Oaklawn Ave

Your Blue Store main line: (401) 459-2200

Your Blue Store website: www.bcsri.com/yourbluestore

