



An Anthem Company

October 2018

Transition of musculoskeletal and pain management programs

Effective January 1, 2019, Empire BlueCross BlueShield HealthPlus (Empire) is transitioning our musculoskeletal programs from OrthoNet LLC to AIM Specialty Health® (AIM) subject to New York State Department of Health approval. AIM currently administers other programs for Empire, and we are excited to expand this relationship. AIM works with leading insurers to improve health care quality and manage costs for today’s most complex and prevalent tests and treatments, helping to promote care that is appropriate, safe and affordable.

This transition enables Empire to expand and optimize the musculoskeletal programs, further ensuring that care aligns with established evidence-based medicine. Where the existing guidance provides insufficient clinical detail, AIM will make a determination of medical necessity using an objective evidence-based process. Detailed prior authorization (PA) requirements are available to contracted providers by accessing the provider self-service tool at <https://www.availity.com>. Contracted and noncontracted providers may call Provider Services at the phone number on the back of the member’s ID card for general assistance and PA requirements. The clinical guidelines that have been adopted by Empire to review for medical necessity are located at <http://aimspecialtyhealth.com/CG-Musculoskeletal.html>.

Pre-service review requirements

Beginning December 17, 2018, providers will be able to contact AIM for PA on services to take place on or after January 1, 2019. For services scheduled on or after January 1, 2019, providers must contact AIM to obtain PA for the services listed below. Providers are strongly encouraged to verify that PA has been obtained before scheduling and performing services.

The Musculoskeletal Program

This program conducts PA medical necessity reviews of spine surgeries, joint surgeries and interventional pain management procedures. Effective January 1, 2019, the following services require PA from AIM:

Spine surgery — cervical, thoracic, lumbar and sacral	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bone grafts • Bone growth stimulators • Cervical/lumbar foraminotomies • Cervical/lumbar spinal fusions • Cervical/lumbar spinal laminectomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cervical/lumbar spinal discectomy • Cervical/lumbar spinal disc arthroplasty (replacement) • Spinal deformity (scoliosis/kyphosis) • Vertebroplasty/kyphoplasty
Joint surgery (including all associated revision surgeries)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hip arthroscopy • Knee arthroscopy • Meniscal allograft transplantation • Shoulder arthroscopy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total hip replacement • Total knee replacement • Total shoulder replacement • Treatment of osteochondral defects

www.empireblue.com/nymedicaidoc

Empire BlueCross BlueShield HealthPlus is the trade name of HealthPlus HP, LLC, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. AIM Specialty Health is a separate company providing utilization review services on behalf of Empire BlueCross BlueShield HealthPlus.

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Interventional pain management	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Epidural steroid injections• Paravertebral facet joint injection/ nerve block/neurolysis• Regional sympathetic nerve block	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sacroiliac steroid injections• Spinal cord stimulators

Services will be reviewed against AIM clinical guidelines. The clinical guidelines that have been adopted by Empire are located at <http://aimspecialtyhealth.com/CG-Musculoskeletal.html>.

Surgeries and interventional pain management procedures performed as part of an inpatient admission are included. The level of care guidelines that will be in effect at the start of the program launch are available for you to reference (<http://www.aimspecialtyhealth.com/marketing/guidelines/185>).

Member engagement

The Musculoskeletal Program includes a member engagement initiative designed to educate your patients about the surgeries and treatments your practice recommends for them prior to the scheduled procedure. Our member engagement initiative supports your efforts to reinforce important information about the surgeries and treatments you recommend. This initiative is designed to reduce anxiety, drive adherence to care plans, motivate preventive action and improve appropriate use of care for our members. Members may be contacted by email or phone and are provided a link to review educational multimedia programs based on the order requests you submit to AIM for the procedures and treatments noted. As they view these resources, members have an opportunity to note and submit questions and concerns. Member input is then sent to your practice, giving you the opportunity to follow up and provide any additional education and information required.

Members included in the new program

All members in your area are included.

How to place a review request:

- Get fast, convenient online service via the AIM *ProviderPortal*SM. *ProviderPortal* is available 24/7 to process requests in real time using clinical criteria. Go to <http://aimspecialtyhealth.com/goweb.html> to register. Registration opens December 15, 2018.
- Call AIM toll free at **1-800-714-0040**, Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. ET.

Additional information

Our provider website (www.empireblue.com/nymedicaidoc) helps you learn more and provides access to useful information and tools such as order entry checklists, clinical guidelines and FAQ. For resources to help your practice get started with the Musculoskeletal Program, visit <http://aimprovider.com/msk>.

If you have questions about this communication or need assistance with any other item, contact your local Provider Relations representative or call Provider Services at **1-800-450-8753**.

We value your participation in our network and look forward to working with you to help improve the health of our members.