

ASPEN Pharmacies expanding services to include home infusion for eligible Blue Shield of California HMO and PPO commercial plan members

Frequently Asked Questions October 2023

Blue Shield of California (Blue Shield) has teamed up with ASPEN Pharmacies (ASPEN) to offer enhanced services and simpler processes for eligible HMO and PPO commercial plan members and their providers to arrange for home infusion.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How does ASPEN improve the provider experience in drug procurement?

ASPEN is available to triage and coordinate prescription fulfillment, with status updates available through the ASPEN web portal at aspenpharmacies.com/aspen.

2. Does ASPEN offer any services that are not available via other Blue Shield in-network home infusion providers?

Yes, in addition to fulfilling home infusion orders, ASPEN reduces your office's administrative burden by offering these additional services:

- **Triaging and coordinating prescription fulfillment with home infusion providers.** Simply place orders with ASPEN by phone or FAX. They will work directly with members to help them find access to local home infusion providers.
- **Providing fulfillment status updates through their web portal at aspenpharmacies.com/aspen.** Log in to the portal to see all your home infusion and medication drop ship orders at a glance, regardless of which home infusion provider or specialty pharmacy is fulfilling the order.

3. Can home infusion help lower out-of-pocket costs for eligible Blue Shield members?

Some member plans may offer a lower copayment for members who receive home infusion. Outpatient hospital drug administration often costs two to three times more than at home or in the physician's office. By switching to a lower-cost site of care, members who have a coinsurance may have a lower out-of-pocket cost.

4. How do providers submit a home infusion order to ASPEN?

The first step is determining whether the home infusion drug you wish to order requires prior authorization.

- Log in to Provider Connection at blueshieldca.com/provider and check our *Medication Policy* to find out whether you need to get an authorization. From the home page, select *Authorizations > Clinical Policies & Guidelines > Medication Policy*.
- If a prior authorization for the drug is required, download the [Prescription Drug Authorization Form](#) on Provider Connection.
- When submitting the authorization form, indicate ASPEN Pharmacies in the *Requestor (if different than the prescriber)* field.

If a prior authorization is not required, you may contact ASPEN directly to place either a home infusion or medication drop ship order by telephone at (888) 349-0884, Monday through Friday, 5 a.m. to 7 p.m., or via FAX at (877) 643-1813.

5. Are providers required to use ASPN if they choose to order home infusion medications for Blue Shield members?

No, using ASPN is voluntary. However, to help ease the administrative burden on your office and improve member experience, we recommend ASPN as your office's go-to home infusion coordinator. They can help by working directly with the member to find the right home infusion provider.

6. What if I want to find and refer to a specific home infusion provider, without going through ASPN?

You can review a list of in-network home infusion providers by visiting blueshieldca.com/provider. Log in from the home page, then select *Guidelines & Resources > Patient Care Resources*, then click the link under *Ancillary Provider Rosters*. You may also call our Provider Customer Service team at (800) 541-6652.

7. Are there any penalties if providers do not use ASPN for ordering home infusion medications for Blue Shield members?

No, there are no penalties if providers do not use ASPN when they order a home infusion medication.

8. Are providers able to order home infusion medications using the standard process via any in-network Blue Shield home infusion provider?

- Yes, as long as you follow the required procedures, including authorization requests where necessary, your practice or facility can submit home infusion orders via any of the in-network home infusion providers.
- As an ordering provider, you are responsible for identifying a home infusion provider that can service the member's location and has the appropriate distribution rights and stock for the medication.

9. Which lines of business are eligible for home infusion services with ASPN?

Home infusion is available for all lines of business, but services through ASPN will only be available for our commercial HMO and PPO plans. Medicare and Medi-Cal providers should continue to order services for home infusion as previously done.

10. Are other ASPN services available for PPO commercial plan members that are not available for HMO commercial plan members?

Yes. Earlier this year, ASPN joined Blue Shield's Medication Drop Ship program to begin offering services that help reduce administrative tasks for commercial PPO network providers who order physician-administered drugs.

11. What is Blue Shield's Medication Drop Ship program?

Our Medication Drop Ship program is an alternative option for drug procurement where commercial PPO providers can order a drug from a specialty pharmacy on the drop ship program list, for a specific patient, and Blue Shield is billed directly by the pharmacy. The program is voluntary and offers an alternative to the traditional buy-and-bill model. The program helps to ease the financial and operational burdens associated with carrying medication inventory and the drug procurement process under the buy-and-bill model.

12. How do commercial PPO providers learn more about the Medication Drop Ship program?

Visit the [Medication Drop Ship Program](#) page on Provider Connection.

Assistance

If you have any questions about eligibility, claims, or coverage for eligible members, contact our Provider Customer Service team via Live Chat after logging in to Provider Connection at blueshieldca.com/provider or by telephone at (800) 541-6652, Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.