

Q: What is Vermont Blue Rx?

A: Vermont Blue Rx is the new name of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont's pharmacy benefits management (PBM) program. Effective July 1, 2021, Vermont Blue Rx will continue to offer all the same services and benefits that members and providers have had over the years. Pharmacy claims will be administered through OptumRx®, our new PBM administrator.

Q: Why is Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont launching Vermont Blue Rx?

A: Vermont Blue Rx offers a more integrated experience for our members and helps control the costs of pharmaceutical benefits through OptumRx's superior web platform and products. The PBM contract that Blue Cross had with our current vendor expires June 30 and this was an opportunity to align our pharmacy services with other upgrades and technology enhancements underway across the company. Vermont Blue Rx allows us to move forward with the least disruption for our members and providers.

Q: Do members need to sign up for Vermont Blue Rx?

A: No. While some services and benefits, notably home delivery and specialty medications, will require members who currently use them to register through the new portal, nearly everyone else who currently has prescription drug coverage through their Blue Cross plan will see no interruption or change.

Q: Will current prescriptions and special considerations carry over after July 1?

A: We are contacting providers and prescribers now so that all refills, orders and prior approvals will be in place for July 1. Our on-staff pharmacist, who works closely with providers within our network, is doing direct outreach to all affected prescribers starting in early April.

Q: I received a letter telling me that the medication I take has a quantity limit (QL) that may change when Vermont Blue Rx begins on July 1. What should I do?

A: First, it's important to know that a QL for any medication is based on Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of the use of the drug and the manufacturer's recommendations on their packaging. While most prescriptions fall within those limits, prescriptions that exceed those FDA limits will need to be approved by Vermont Blue Rx. The best course for you to take now is to contact your prescriber to discuss the medication(s) in question. They should be able to help manage the prescription quantity and timing so that you will be able to continue your treatment without interruption. If your prescription is exceeding these limits without a prior approval and you refill your prescription, you will be responsible for the full cost of the medication. If you have questions about your current medication(s) you can contact your provider or Blue Cross customer service at the number on the back of your card.

Q: Where do I access a list of specialty drugs?

A: The list of specialty drugs will be available bcbsvt.com/vermontbluerx.

Q: Will there be a change in the retail pharmacies available to patients?

A: No. The same network of retail pharmacies will be available to patients.

Q: Will there be a change to the mail order and specialty pharmacies that patients can use?

A: Yes. After July 1, 2021, members who choose to use a mail order pharmacy will need to use OptumRx's mail order pharmacy. Similarly, members who chose to use Accredo™ specialty pharmacy in the past will need to use Optum Specialty Pharmacy.

Q: What will be the network for specialty pharmacy?

A: The Specialty Pharmacy Network will include Optum Specialty, University of Vermont Medical Center (UVM) and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC).

Q: How do I contact Optum/Vermont Blue Rx?

A: The phone numbers we currently use will remain the same after July 1. Members should contact the pharmacy number on the back of their ID cards.

Q: Will all the drugs currently covered carry over to Vermont Blue Rx? Where do I find the formulary?

A: With very few exceptions, all medications that are currently covered under a member's plan will be covered after July 1. For those exceptions, we are notifying members of the need to make a change and working with providers to ensure that all changes are complete in time for the deadline. There are two formularies for Vermont Blue Rx. As of July 1 UVM will use the National Performance Formulary (NPF).

Q: What about controlled substances?

A: Prescriptions for controlled substances are the only type of drug that cannot be transferred from the current mail order pharmacy to OptumRx's. If a member doesn't have refills on a prescription, that script will not transfer either.

Q: How do you identify which member has what formulary?

A: The formulary will be listed on the front of the member's ID card.

Q: Will members receive a new ID card in preparation for the launch on July 1?

A: Yes. We will be issuing a new ID card to all members with pharmacy benefits through Vermont Blue Rx in June. The new card will clearly indicate which formulary they are using and will have other updated information.

Q: How can members learn more about Vermont Blue Rx?

A: The best source of information and updates is our website, bcbsvt.com/vermontbluerx. As we approach July 1 the website will offer links into OptumRx's pages to provide guidance and details about taking advantage of their pharmacy programs and services. All the information about current services and plans will continue to be available at this web address through June 30 as well.

Q: Will employee communications refer to Vermont Blue Rx, rather than Optum? Will the letterhead say the same?

The letterhead will show the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont logo and Vermont Blue Rx name. The pharmacy program will be referred to as Vermont Blue Rx. However, when it comes to the mail order pharmacy and specialty pharmacy, we will have to mention OptumRx's name. Otherwise, the focus will be on Vermont Blue Rx.