

September/October 2020

Contents

Quality Improvement program gives our members better care and service 2

Flu prevention season is here 5

Know the difference between the flu and COVID-19 6

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services introduces immunization awareness campaign 7

Provider health equity training: Reducing health disparities and improving health outcomes 8

Avoid antibiotic treatment for acute bronchitis 9

Here are health care professional and provider rights 10

Review criteria used for Blue Cross Complete utilization management determinations 11

Help us keep the Blue Cross Complete provider directory up to date 12

Report suspected fraud to Blue Cross Complete 13





Quality Improvement program gives our members better care and service

Blue Cross Complete is committed to providing access to high quality health care in Michigan. We received a 3.5-star ranking from the National Committee for Quality Assurance in 2019.¹ We also received the highest overall score of 4 apples in the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services 2020 consumer guide, with 18 out of 20 apples across five categories. And we received the highest rankings possible in the “Taking Care of Women and Keeping Kids Healthy” category.²

NCQA rates health plans on the results of care people receive and what patients say about their care. We hold a Commendable Health Plan Accreditation rating from NCQA. This means we have well-established programs for service and clinical quality. These programs meet or exceed requirements for consumer protection and quality improvement.

We also hold the Multicultural Health Care Distinction from NCQA. This is given to organizations that engage in efforts to improve health care for all. This is done by making culturally and linguistically appropriate services available to members and reducing health care gaps.

We have an active community outreach program. To engage more with members, we supported more than 700 community events in 2019. Community health workers went to doctors’ offices, community wellness centers, and members’ homes to help members improve their overall health. Once a year, community health workers attempt to screen members for social determinants of health needs.

Members are asked questions to see if Blue Cross Complete can assist with a variety of concerns, including child care and clothing. We also ask if we can assist with daily items, including hygiene supplies or household items, such as furniture and appliances, education, food, housing, literacy, access to a phone, access to medical supplies, personal and household safety, social needs to reduce isolation and loneliness, transportation and utilities.

1. National Committee for Quality Assurance, The NCQA Health Insurance Plan Ratings 2019-2020 Report, <https://www.ncqa.org/hedis/reports-and-research/ratings-2019>.

2. A Guide to Michigan Medicaid Health Plans - Quality Check-Up January 2020.

*Our website is mibluecrosscomplete.com. While website addresses for other organizations are provided for reference, Blue Cross Complete does not control these sites and is not responsible for their content.

As part of our accreditation requirements with NCQA, Blue Cross Complete shares member survey results with our members. Each year, Blue Cross Complete sends the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems survey to a random group of members. The survey asks members about their health plan and their health care for the previous year, and members rate their experience.

Blue Cross Complete conducted a member, or CAHPS, survey this year, just as Michigan was feeling the impact from the COVID-19 virus. NCQA has stated that it is concerned about the reliability and validity of the survey results and won't be using these scores to rate health plans this year. In light of NCQA's concerns about the CAHPS results, we're highlighting last year's results.

Blue Cross Complete members scored these categories high enough to place Blue Cross Complete in the top 10% of all health plans according to NCQA's Quality Compass:

- Getting Care Quickly
- Getting Needed Care
- Overall Rating of Health Plan

This means that members said they got the care they felt they needed as soon as they needed it. It also means that members gave Blue Cross Complete high ratings as a health plan.

Additionally, members gave improved ratings in 2019 for Shared Decision Making, How Well Doctors Communicate and Specialists. This means that members felt their doctors talked with them about reasons to take or not take medications, listened carefully and explained things in a way they could understand. It also means members gave improved ratings for health care they received from their specialists.

Members gave slightly decreased ratings for Care Coordination and Customer Service. This identifies improvement opportunities for Blue Cross Complete.

The full survey results are available to providers. To request this information, please contact Blue Cross Complete Provider Inquiry at **1-888-312-5713**.

For more information about the CAHPS survey, visit cahps.ahrq.gov.*



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We're always working to improve the quality of service we provide and the care our members receive from our doctors. This year, we're focusing on encouraging members to receive annual preventive screenings and vaccinations, especially in children's and women's health, and access to care. Blue Cross Complete is focusing on reducing health disparities and achieving health equity for our members and the communities in which they live.

Blue Cross Complete also uses the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set to measure how well we provide access to care to members. HEDIS^{®**} compares the performances of health plans across the country. Some areas of care that get scored by HEDIS include: child, adolescent and adult well care, prenatal and postpartum, diabetes, cardiovascular and respiratory care. To request information on Blue Cross Complete's HEDIS scores, please contact Customer Service at **1-800-228-8554**.

Blue Cross Complete promotes quality of care by reviewing evidence-based clinical practice guidelines, then approving, distributing and encouraging their use as standards of care throughout our provider network. Approved guidelines are consistent with criteria of nationally recognized professional organizations. They're reviewed annually and revised as more current information becomes available. To learn about our clinical practice guidelines, visit mibluecrosscomplete.com. Or, visit the Michigan Quality Improvement Consortium website at mqic.org.*

Call **1-800-228-8554** for more information about these programs. We're available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We also provide this information at mibluecrosscomplete.com.

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**HEDIS is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance.



Flu prevention season is here

As we enter flu season, it's time to start a flu prevention plan for your patients. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends a flu vaccine during each flu season as the first and most important step in protecting against the virus.

Here are a few additional reminders for your patients:

- Get the recommended amount of sleep.
- Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet.
- Minimize stress.
- Keep moving — exercise has numerous health benefits, such as boosting mood and energy. It also helps to promote better sleep.

To help prevent the flu, also remind your patients to:

- Wash their hands frequently with soap and warm water.
- Cover their nose and mouth if they sneeze or cough.
- If they feel sick or have flu-like symptoms, stay home to prevent further spread of the illness.
- If possible, avoid people who are sick.

Blue Cross Complete covers seasonal flu vaccines with no copayment for all of our members. They can receive the vaccine from a medical provider, local health department or pharmacy. For the pharmacy, call ahead to determine availability and ask about age limits, as most pharmacies have restrictions on vaccinating children under a certain age.

If you have any questions, contact your Blue Cross Complete provider account executive or call Provider Inquiry at **1-888-312-5713**.

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Know the difference between the flu and COVID-19

As we enter into flu season while continuing to manage the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has released articles on the difference between the two viruses.

In a recent article titled, "[Similarities and Differences Between Flu and COVID-19](#),"* the CDC listed the similarities as varying degrees of signs and symptoms. They range from no symptoms (asymptomatic) to severe symptoms. The most common symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are:

- Fever, feeling feverish or having chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle pain or body aches
- Headache
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults

According to the article, the difference between the two is that **COVID-19 could include a change in or loss of taste or smell**. The CDC indicated that flu or COVID-19 symptoms can appear within one or more days of a person becoming infected.

While prescription influenza antiviral drugs are Food and Drug Administration-approved to treat the flu, there are currently no drugs or other therapeutics approved by the FDA to prevent or treat COVID-19. The National Institutes of Health, however, has developed guidance on treatment of COVID-19.*

If you have any questions, contact your Blue Cross Complete provider account executive or call Provider Inquiry at **1-888-312-5713**.



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Michigan Department of Health and Human Services introduces immunization awareness campaign

In July 2020, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services reported a decline in child vaccinations in March and April during the COVID-19 pandemic. Though doses administered increased in June and continue to increase, MDHHS indicated that there is still a [gap in the average dose administration](#)* when compared to 2018 and 2019.

MDHHS reported a 10.4% decrease in doses across the lifespan in June, an improvement from the 44.2% decrease in May and 63.6% decrease in April. MDHHS states that decreased immunization rates puts Michiganders at risk for disease outbreaks and is urging families to get caught up on recommended vaccines for children and adolescent adults as soon as possible.

To help increase vaccinations, MDHHS introduced a new campaign titled [#MIHeroForHealth](#),* which promotes the importance of vaccinations and getting caught up on doses that may have been missed due to COVID-19.

Providers can download materials for #MIHeroForHealth by visiting [Michigan.gov](#)* or ordering printed materials at [Healthymichigan.com](#).*



*Our website is [mibluecrosscomplete.com](#). While website addresses for other organizations are provided for reference, Blue Cross Complete does not control these sites and is not responsible for their content.



Provider health equity training: Reducing health disparities and improving health outcomes

The low birth weight rate for African American women living in the city of **Detroit*** is higher than state and **national averages.*** A low birth weight (less than 2,500 grams) places a baby at higher risk for difficulty breathing, gaining weight and fighting off infections. Later in life, babies born with **low birth weight*** are more likely to have learning and developmental disabilities, and health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure.

Blue Cross Complete is working with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and four other health plans on a number of initiatives to reduce the low birth weight rate disparity among African American women and their babies in the city of Detroit.

As part of these initiatives, Blue Cross Complete is requesting that OB/GYN providers who serve women residing in Detroit participate in MDHHS' no-cost health equity training. The training provides the latest information on health equity and health disparities, and the populations most affected. It covers how you can help improve health equity for the residents of Michigan.

This training initiative will begin in October 2020. Providers will receive an introductory letter from Blue Cross Complete in October, along with instructions on how to complete the training.

Blue Cross Complete will keep you updated on the project as more information becomes available. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

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Avoid antibiotic treatment for acute bronchitis

Antibiotic resistance has become a serious public health problem in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has been educating both physicians and patients to improve how we prescribe and use antibiotics.

According to the [U.S. National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health](#), acute bronchitis is the fifth most common reason why adults see their primary care physician. While the majority of acute [bronchitis cases](#) (more than 90%) have a nonbacterial cause, the CDC estimates that 30% of all antibiotics prescribed in outpatient clinics are unnecessary and can cause greater risk of side effects and potential for antibiotic resistance.

We recommend that you let patients know that antibiotics:

- Don't work on viruses.
- Are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria.
- Won't work for colds or flu.

It's important to only take antibiotics for bacterial infections, since they can put the member or his or her child at risk for harmful side effects and antibiotic-resistant infection.

According to the [CDC](#), nearly four in five emergency room visits are allergic reactions from antibiotics.

Any time antibiotics are used, they can cause side effects. When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help the member, and the side effects could hurt him or her.

For more information, read the CDC article "[Be Antibiotics Aware: Smart Use, Best Care](#)"* or visit its [National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases](#).* If you have any questions, contact your Blue Cross Complete provider account executive or call Provider Inquiry at **1-888-312-5713**.



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Here are health care professional and provider rights

In accordance with legal requirements and upon written request, Blue Cross Complete providers or prospective providers are given the opportunity to:

- Review all applications
- Review Blue Cross Complete’s credentialing policies and procedures
- Review information obtained through primary source verification for credentialing purposes. This includes information from malpractice insurance carriers and state licensing boards. This doesn’t include information collected from references, recommendations and other peer-review protected information. Either attest to the accuracy of that information or correct the information, if erroneous.
- Be notified if any credential information is received that varies substantially from application information submitted by the health care professional or provider: actions on license, malpractice claim history, suspension or termination of hospital privileges, or board-certification decisions with the exception of reference, recommendations or other peer-review protected information. The health care professional or provider will have the right to correct erroneous information if the credentialing information received varies substantially from the information that was submitted on his or her application.
- Upon request, be informed of the status of their application — if application is current and complete, the applicant can be informed of the tentative date that his or her application will be presented to the credentialing committee for approval.
- Providers or prospective providers must submit a written request to review information submitted in support of their credentialing or recredentialing application to:

Email: bccproviderdata@mibluccrosscomplete.com

Fax: 1-855-306-9762

Mail: Blue Cross Complete of Michigan,
Attn: Provider Data Management, Suite 1300,
4000 Town Center Southfield, MI 48075

A two-week notice is required for scheduling a review date and time.

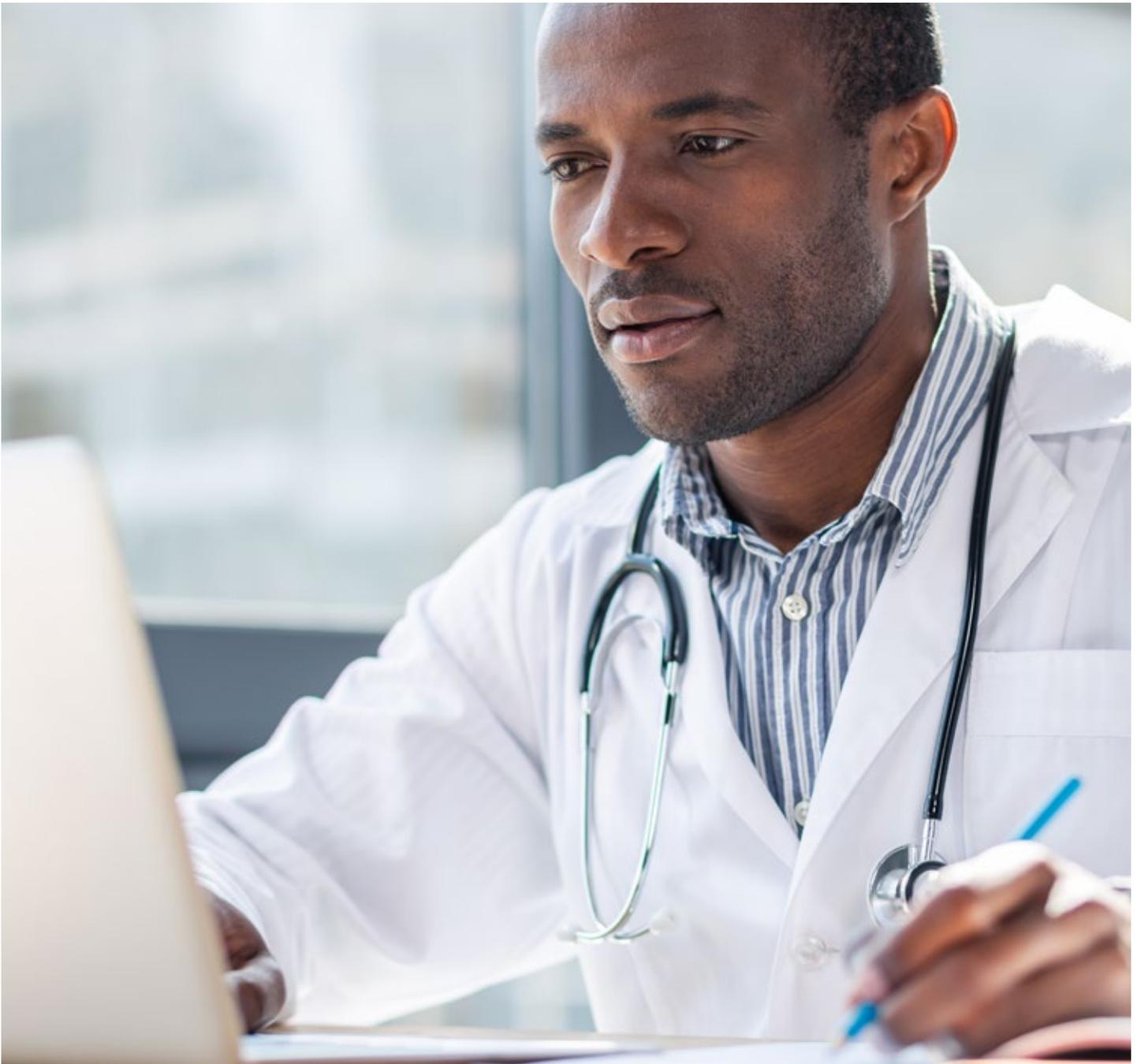
The provider is informed in writing of the dates and times available for the review.

Upon receipt of the provider’s response, the date and time of the scheduled review are confirmed in writing.

If you have any questions, contact your Blue Cross Complete provider account executive or call Provider Inquiry at 1-888-312-5713.



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Review criteria used for Blue Cross Complete utilization management determinations

Criteria used for utilization management determinations are available upon request to all Blue Cross Complete practitioners, providers and members free of charge. Members, practitioners and providers are made aware of the availability of review criteria and how to obtain clinical criteria used for a utilization management determination through the provider and member handbooks and written utilization management determination letters.

Upon request, Blue Cross Complete personnel will fax a copy of the criteria used in the review.

To request criteria, contact Blue Cross Complete at **1-800-228-8554**. TTY users should call **1-888-987-5832**.

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Help us keep the Blue Cross Complete provider directory up to date

Accurate provider directory information is crucial to helping ensure members have access to their health care services. As a Blue Cross Complete provider, you have a responsibility to provide accurate information about your practice annually, or sooner if any changes occur. Please confirm your information is accurate in our online provider directory.

Key items in the directory include:

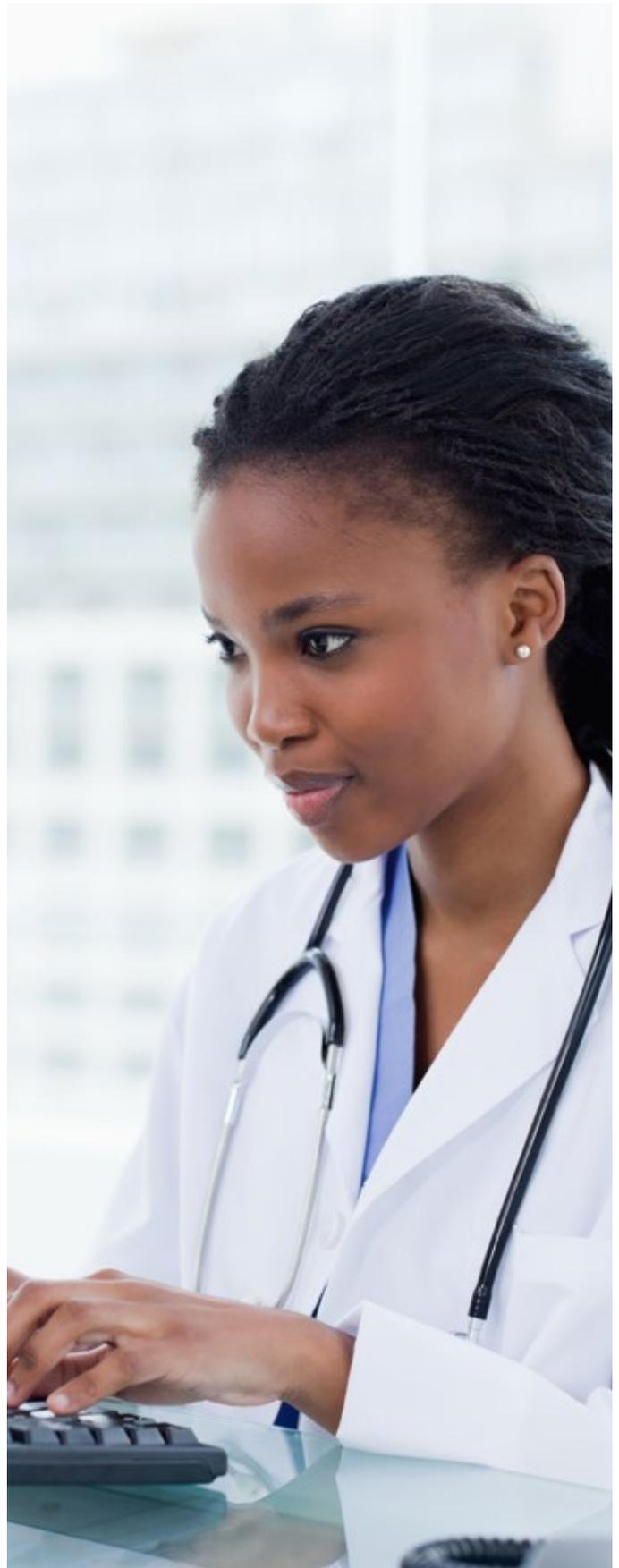
- Provider name
- Office hours
- Address
- Open status
- Phone number
- Hospital affiliations
- Fax number
- Multiple locations

To view your provider information, visit mibluccrosscomplete.com, then click the **Find a Doctor** tab. Submit written notice of any changes to Blue Cross Complete, using the Blue Cross Complete provider change form, also at mibluccrosscomplete.com. Go to the **Providers** tab, click **Forms** and then click on **Provider Change Form**.

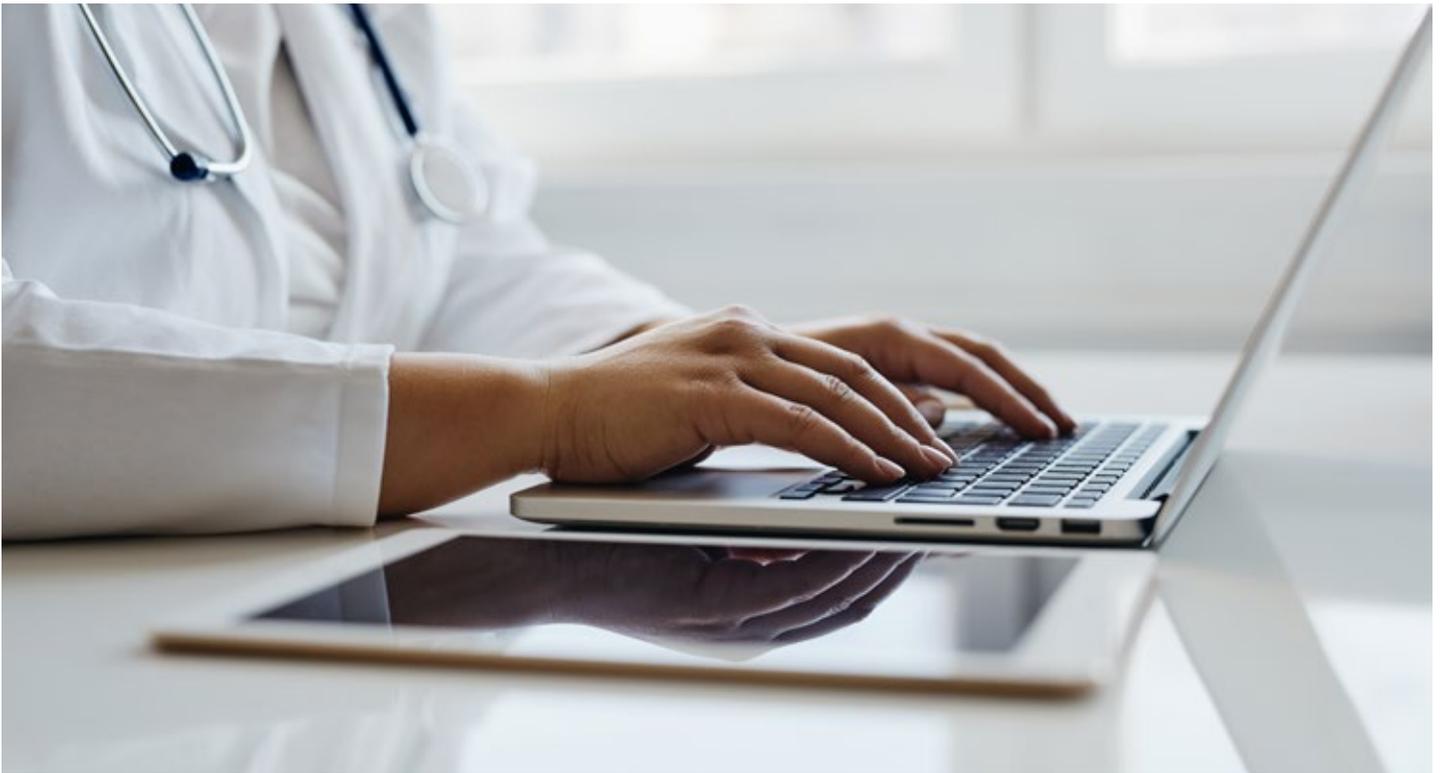
Send completed forms by:

- **Email:** bccproviderdata@mibluccrosscomplete.com
- **Fax:** 1-855-306-9762
- **Mail:**
Blue Cross Complete of Michigan
Provider Network Operations
Suite 1300
4000 Town Center
Southfield, MI 48075

In addition, you must make these changes with NaviNet.* Call NaviNet at **1-888-482-8057** or email support@navinet.net. If you have any questions, contact your Blue Cross Complete provider account executive.



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Report suspected fraud to Blue Cross Complete

If you suspect another Blue Cross Complete provider, employee or member is committing fraud, notify Blue Cross Complete's Special Investigations Unit:

- Phone: **1-855-232-7640** (TTY 711)
- Fax: **1-215-937-5303**
- Email: fraudtip@mibluccrosscomplete.com
- Mail:
Blue Cross Complete Special Investigations Unit
P.O. Box 018
Essington, PA 19029

Blue Cross Complete's Special Investigations Unit supports local and state authorities in investigating and prosecuting fraud. You can also report suspected fraud related to Blue Cross Complete to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services by:

- Phone: **1-855-MI-FRAUD (1-855-643-7283)** or Welfare Fraud Hotline **1-800-222-8558**
- Website: michigan.gov/fraud*
- Mail:
Office of Health Services Inspector General
P.O. Box 30062
Lansing, MI 4890

You can make reports anonymously.

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