

MANAGED CARE SYSTEMS  
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## Request for Waiver

Plan Year: 2023

Please ensure that information contained on this waiver request coincides with information provided on the geographical access maps and provider list submitted with this application.

**1. Name and Title of Person Submitting this Document:**

Carrier	Name Network	Network ID	Network Structure*
Blue Plus	Blue Plus Southeast MN Network	MNN007	ACO
Name	Title	Date	Enrollees in Network*
Eric Hoag	Vice President, Provider Relations	5/18/2022	1463

**2. By submitting this form, the above-referenced confirms:**

- A. That person submitting this request has personal knowledge of the network contracting process involved in this submission; and
- B. That access cannot be met for the following provider type(s). Include the county and reason(s) for not meeting the requirements.

Provider Type	County	Reason Code	Notes	Affected Enrollees*	Percent Total Enrollees Affected	Percent Not Covered*	Percent Available Providers Included
General Hospital facilities	Fillmore	1	<p>Based on a review of Internal records and provider directories (between April 1-30, 2022) attained through resources such as Quest Analytics, Medicare Physician Compare and provider websites of several partners organizations including Mayo Clinic Hospitals, St. Elizabeth's Medical Center and Winona Health Services, no General Hospitals are available to cover 100% of this county. These directories give us the most accurate and complete information when determining if a provider is available and offering these services. Quest Analytics is used by many health plans as well as Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for determining network adequacy. Members can access hospital care at the facilities listed above in this county and neighboring counties. Blue Cross and Blue Plus members can access on-line provider directories showing the networks participating providers or call the Customer Service number found on the back of their ID card for provider network information. As a result, waivers are requested for the listed county.</p> <p>On a quarterly basis we have and will continue to assess network adequacy as new providers become available. We continue to use Quest Analytics, Medicare Physician Compare and provider websites to search for new providers. There were no new General Hospitals that opened in this region from Q1 2021 to Q1 2022.</p> <p>In 2020, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota has enhanced their Televideo Consultations/Telehealth/Telemedicine Services policy to support access to and continued expansion of virtual care options.</p>	9	15	15	0
Cardiac Surgery	Martin	4	<p>Blue Plus Southeast MN Network includes major health systems like Mayo Clinic, Northfield Hospital and Clinics, and Winona Health Services. Blue Plus Southeast MN Network plans are offered at a lower cost since eligible individuals agree to use a more focused network of MN Southeast Network providers and facilities. Enrollees can choose to see any licensed provider in the Southeast MN Network for covered services without a referral. For routine or non-emergent medical services outside of the Southeast MN Network, enrollees will need prior approval to receive in-network benefits. Southeast MN providers partner to coordinate the care of Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) members to ensure an exceptional member experience through receiving the appropriate care at the appropriate time and place at an affordable cost. Blue Cross and Blue Plus members can access on-line provider directories showing the networks participating providers or call the Customer Service number found on the back of their ID card for provider network information. Members can access Cardiac Surgery care at Mayo Clinic Health System in Blue Earth, Steele and Mower counties. In 2020, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota has enhanced their Televideo Consultations/Telehealth/Telemedicine Services policy to support access to and continued expansion of virtual care options.</p>				

<p><b>Colon and Rectal Surgery</b></p>	<p><b>Martin</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>Based on a review of internal records and provider directories (between April 1-30, 2022) attained through resources such as Quest Analytics, Medicare Physician Compare and provider websites of several partners organizations including Mayo Clinic Hospitals, St. Elizabeth's Medical Center and Winona Health Services, no Colon and Rectal Surgeons are available to cover 100% of this county. These directories give us the most accurate and complete information when determining if a provider is available and offering these services. Quest Analytics is used by many health plans as well as Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for determining network adequacy. Members can access colon and rectal surgery care at the facilities listed above in this county and neighboring counties. Blue Cross and Blue Plus members can access on-line provider directories showing the networks participating providers or call the Customer Service number found on the back of their ID card for provider network information. As a result, waivers are requested for the listed county.</p> <p>On a quarterly basis we have and will continue to assess network adequacy as new providers become available. We continue to use Quest Analytics, Medicare Physician Compare and provider websites to search for new providers. There were no new colon and rectal surgery providers added in this region from Q1 2021 to Q1 2022.</p> <p>In 2020, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota has enhanced their Televideo Consultations/Telehealth/Telemedicine Services policy to support access to and continued expansion of virtual care options.</p>			
<p><b>Thoracic Surgery</b></p>	<p><b>Martin</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p>	<p>Blue Plus Southeast MN Network includes major health systems like Mayo Clinic, Northfield Hospital and Clinics, and Winona Health Services. Blue Plus Southeast MN Network plans are offered at a lower cost since eligible individuals agree to use a more focused network of MN Southeast Network providers and facilities. Enrollees can choose to see any licensed provider in the Southeast MN Network for covered services without a referral. For routine or non-emergent medical services outside of the Southeast MN Network, enrollees will need prior approval to receive in-network benefits. Southeast MN providers partner to coordinate the care of Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) members to ensure an exceptional member experience through receiving the appropriate care at the appropriate time and place at an affordable cost. Blue Cross and Blue Plus members can access on-line provider directories showing the networks participating providers or call the Customer Service number found on the back of their ID card for provider network information. Members can access thoracic surgery care at Mayo Clinic Health System in Blue Earth, Steele and Mower counties. In 2020, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota has enhanced their Televideo Consultations/Telehealth/Telemedicine Services policy to support access to and continued expansion of virtual care options.</p>			

For all reason codes, carriers must demonstrate with specific data that geographic access standards cannot be met. Carriers must state what steps were and will be taken to address network inadequacies (MN Statutes § 62K.10, subdivision 5).

**Allowable Waiver Reason Codes and Guidelines for Initial Approval**

Applications to waive the requirements in Minnesota Statutes 62K.10 Subd. 2 or 3 must fit one of the following reason codes. Waivers automatically expire after one year. The commissioner shall only approve a subsequent waiver application that satisfies the requirements in Minnesota Statutes 62K.10 Subd. 5, demonstrates that the carrier took the steps it proposed to address network inadequacy, and explains why the carrier continues to be unable to satisfy the requirements.

**Reason Code 1:**

Carrier has conducted a search for providers and determined that, for each county in the plan service area, there are no providers physically present of the type requested in the waiver.

**Carriers must:**

1. Provide a description of physical geography and/or other factors that affect the location of providers (as relevant)
2. Demonstrate consultation of at least two provider directories and/or data sources. Provide a description of the provider directories and/or data sources consulted, including a brief explanation of why the sources are believed to be accurate and complete. Examples of acceptable provider directories and data sources include, but are not limited to:
  - a. [NPPES NPI Registry](#)
  - b. [Medicare Physician Compare](#)
  - c. [Minnesota Health Care Programs Provider Directory](#)
  - d. [Healthgrades](#)
  - e. [SAMHSA Behavioral Health Provider Directories](#)
  - f. [National Institute of Health \(NIH\) U.S. National Library of Medicine MedlinePlus Directories](#)
  - g. [Quest Analytics](#)
3. For Primary Care, Pediatric Services (Primary Care), General Hospital and Mental Health provider types:
  - a. State the total number and percentage of estimated enrollees affected in the county not meeting the geographic standard as of the submission date of waiver. Select only one county per line.
  - b. State how access will be provided for this provider type for enrollees of the affected county.
 

For example, does the carrier provide transportation services/vouchers, in-home care options, virtual care services, and/or telemedicine services?

    - i. If, in its waiver application, a health carrier demonstrates to the commissioner that there are no providers of a specific type or specialty in a county, the commissioner may approve a waiver in which the health carrier is allowed to address network inadequacy in that county by providing for patient access to providers of that type or specialty via telemedicine
    - ii. If telemedicine is used to provide access:
      1. These services must meet the definition of "telemedicine" in Minnesota Statutes [62A.071, subdivision 3](#)
      2. Carrier must describe the extent to which telemedicine services are available
        - a. How many network providers of the impacted provider type have contracts to conduct/provide telemedicine services?
4. Describe how they will assess the availability of providers who begin practice in the service area where the standard cannot currently be met and agree to conduct this assessment quarterly
  - a. Assessment of availability must include consultation of at least two provider directories and/or data sources, as described in item 2, above

**Reason Code 2:**

Provider does not meet carrier's credentialing requirements.

**Carriers must:**

1. Cite the reason(s) provider does not meet credentialing requirements
2. For Primary Care, Pediatric Services (Primary Care), General Hospital, and Mental Health provider types
  - a. State the total number and percentage of estimated enrollees affected in the county not meeting the geographic standard as of the submission date of waiver. Select only one county per line.
3. State how access will be provided for this provider type for enrollees of the affected county. For example, does the carrier allow enrollees to receive out-of-network care at in-network rates, provide transportation services/vouchers, in-home care options, virtual care services, and/or telemedicine services?
  - i. If telemedicine is used to provide access:
    1. These services must meet the definition of "telemedicine" in Minnesota Statutes

- [62A.671, subdivision 9](#)
2. Carrier must describe the extent to which telemedicine services are available
    - a. How many network providers of the impacted provider type have contracts to conduct/provide telemedicine services?

**Reason Code 3:**

Carrier has made a good faith effort to contract with provider and provider has refused to accept a contract.

**Carriers must:**

1. Cite the reason(s) provider state(s) for refusing contract(s)
2. For Primary Care, Pediatric Services (Primary Care), General Hospital and Mental Health provider types
  - a. State the total number and percentage of estimated enrollees affected in the county not meeting the geographic standard as of the submission date of waiver. Select only one county per line.
3. State how access will be provided for this provider type for enrollees of the affected county. For example, does the carrier allow enrollees to receive out-of-network care at in-network rates, provide transportation services/vouchers, in-home care options, virtual care services, and/or telemedicine services?
  - i. If telemedicine is used to provide access:
    1. These services must meet the definition of "telemedicine" in Minnesota Statutes [62A.671, subdivision 9](#)
    2. Carrier must describe the extent to which telemedicine services are available
      - a. How many network providers of the impacted provider type have contracts to conduct/provide telemedicine services?

**Reason Code 4:**

Network is an Accountable Care Organization (ACO) or Narrow Network.

**Carriers must:**

1. Specify the network structure: Accountable Care Organization (ACO) or Narrow Network
  - a. If the network is an ACO, provide a brief description of the major health systems participating in the network
  - b. If the network is a narrow network, describe the features of the network that restrict access
  - c. For both ACOs and Narrow Networks, state what percentage of available Primary Care, Pediatric Services (Primary Care), General Hospital, and Mental Health providers are included in the county and of the provider type for which a waiver is requested
2. State what, if any, steps are taken to inform enrollees of restricted access
3. State the total number of estimated enrollees in the network as of the submission date of the waiver
4. State why the geographic access standards cannot be met. Explain why full geographic access is not possible with this network design
5. State how access will be provided for this provider type for the enrollees of the affected county. For example, does the carrier allow enrollees to receive out-of-network care at in-network rates, provide transportation services/vouchers, in-home care options, virtual care services, and/or telemedicine services?
  - i. If telemedicine is used to provide access:
    1. These services must meet the definition of "telemedicine" in Minnesota Statutes [62A.671, subdivision 9](#)
    2. Carrier must describe the extent to which telemedicine services are available
      - a. How many network providers of the impacted provider type have contracts to conduct/provide telemedicine services?
6. For Primary Care, Pediatric Services (Primary Care), General Hospital and Mental Health provider types,
  - a. State the total number and percentage of estimated enrollees affected in the county not meeting the geographic standard as of the submission date of waiver. Select only one county per line.
  - b. State the estimated percentage of area in that county that is not covered

**Allowable Waiver Reason Codes and Guidelines for Subsequent Approval (Renewals)**

*In accordance with 62K.10 Subd. 5 (d), waivers will automatically expire after one year.*

*Carriers seeking identical, subsequent waivers for plan year 2022 will be required to show steps taken to address network inadequacies in plan year 2021 (see below).*

**Reason Code 1:**

Carrier has conducted a search for providers and determined that, for each county in the plan service area, there are no providers physically present of the type requested in the waiver.

**Carriers must:**

1. Meet all of the requirements set forth for initial approval
2. Provide a description of how access was provided for affected enrollees in the previous approval year
3. Show evidence of quarterly efforts to assess provider availability throughout the last calendar year. Did new providers become available in affected areas? If so, describe any efforts to pursue contracts. If new providers became available and new contracts were not pursued, explain why.

**Reason Code 2:**

Provider does not meet carrier's credentialing requirements.

**Carriers must:**

1. Meet all of the requirements set forth for initial approval
2. Provide a description of how access was provided for affected enrollees in the last approval year

**Reason Code 3:**

Carrier has made a good faith effort to contract with provider and provider has refused to accept a contract.

**Carriers must:**

1. Meet all of the requirements set forth for initial approval
2. Provide a description of how access was provided for affected enrollees in the last approval year

**Reason Code 4:**

Network is an Accountable Care Organization (ACO) or Narrow Network.

**Carriers must:**

1. Meet all of the requirements set forth for initial approval
2. Provide a description of how access was provided for affected enrollees in the last approval year

**Attestation for the Request for Waiver**

The undersigned attests that he/she is a representative of the carrier with personal knowledge of the network and reasons for the above waiver requests, and that the waiver requests meet the requirements for the waiver, as outlined above. The undersigned also attests that good faith efforts have been made to locate and contract with providers, as outlined above, and that if providers become available in the service area, carrier will make a good faith effort to contract with said providers.

Eric Hoag, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, Vice President, Provider Relations

Name, Company, Title

Date Attestation Signed

5/18/2022

