

Services Requiring Prior Approval (Precertification)

Prior approval can be requested by a member's First Priority Life Insurance Company® participating provider. Please review your contract/policy/outline of coverage for more information on your specific benefits. **Services that require prior approval are continually reviewed and subject to change, so it is important to check your policy or with our service representatives at the phone number on the back of your ID card when you need care.**

The following services require prior approval:

- Inpatient admissions for certain admitting diagnoses at participating/preferred facilities (See list below)
- All inpatient admissions to non-participating facilities or non-preferred participating providers
- Skilled Nursing Facilities admissions
- Inpatient admissions to Rehabilitation Facility
- All transplant surgeries
- All pre-transplant evaluations/consultations
- Long Term Acute Care admissions
- Certain surgical procedures when done on the same day of admission (See list below)
- Certain Outpatient Services/Treatments/Procedures (See list below)
- Certain Outpatient Diagnostic Radiology Procedures (See list below)
- Home Health visits (except the visit after surgery for breast removal or maternity admission within certain timeframes)
- Behavioral Health Care services (for some plans, if benefit is available)
- Certain Durable Medical Equipment (DME)

Radiology Prior Approval Guidelines

All groups with a radiology benefit management program require prior approval through National Imaging Associates, Inc. (NIA). NIA provides radiology network management services to BCNEPA members. This program includes the management and prior approval of non-emergent, advanced, outpatient radiology services for both First Priority Health® (FPH) and First Priority Life Insurance Company® (FPLIC). This program is consistent with industry-wide efforts to ensure clinically appropriate quality of care and to manage the increasing utilization of these services.

The following outpatient, non-emergent radiology services require prior approval through NIA:

Service	Explanation
CT (Computerized Tomography)	A scan that uses X-rays to provide detailed pictures of internal organs and tissues.
CTA (Computed Tomography Angiography)	A scan that uses CT technology to look at blood vessels.
CCTA (Cardiac Computed Tomography Angiography)	A scan that uses CT technology to look at the structures and blood vessels of the heart.
MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)	A scan that uses radio waves and a strong magnetic field (rather than X-rays) to provide detailed pictures for viewing internal organs and tissues.
MRA (Magnetic Resonance Angiography)	An MRI study of detailed images of blood vessels.
PET (Positron Emission Tomography) Scan	A computerized scan that uses radioactive substance to look for disease in the body. It shows how organs and tissues are working.
Nuclear Cardiology	A test that measures blood flow to your heart muscle both at rest and during stress on the heart.
Stress Echo	Stress echocardiography is a test that uses ultrasound imaging to show how well your heart muscles are working to pump blood to your body.

The following services require prior approval:

Service	Explanation
TPN (total parenteral nutrition)	A way of supplying all of the nutritional needs of the body by bypassing the digestive system and dripping a nutrient solution directly into a vein.
Enteral Nutrition	Nourishment given through a tube directly into the small intestine.
IVIg (Intravenous Immunoglobulin)	A blood product administered into the veins that contains antibodies taken from the plasma of blood donors.
Anti-infective Therapy	Providing medications that are capable of preventing or counteracting infections (such as antibiotics, antivirals or antifungals) directly into the veins.

Please refer to the drug formulary on the Rx Drug Benefits page at www.bcnepa.com for a complete list of all drugs that require prior approval.

The following procedures require prior approval in any setting (if benefit is available):

Procedure	Explanation
Laparoscopy, gastric bypass	Procedure using a scope to reduce the size of the stomach
Gastric restrictive procedure for morbid obesity	Surgery that reduces the size of the stomach and intestine to aid in weight loss
Laparoscopy, surgical, gastric restrictive procedure; placement of adjustable gastric band <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revision of adjustable band ▪ Removal of adjustable band ▪ Removal and replacement of adjustable band 	Placement of an adjustable band around the upper part of the stomach using a scope to reduce the functional capacity of the stomach
Gastric restrictive procedure with partial gastrectomy, duodenoileostomy and ileoileostomy	Surgery on the intestines and partial removal of the stomach for purposes of weight loss
Laparoscopy, surgical, gastric restrictive procedure, longitudinal gastrectomy (i.e., Sleeve Gastrectomy)	Restrictive surgical weight loss procedure that limits the amount of food you can eat, a thin vertical sleeve is created and the rest of the stomach is removed.
Revision of gastric restrictive procedure	Reversal of gastric bypass surgery
Panniculectomy with lipectomy	Removal of fat and excess skin from lower abdomen

The following inpatient procedures may require prior approval:

Procedure	Explanation
Pacemaker/AICD Defibrillators	An implanted device that recognizes certain types of abnormal heart rhythms (arrhythmias) and corrects them.
Renal/Femoral/Iliac Stents	A small tube that is inserted into the body to prevent blockage and improve the flow of body fluids.
Percutaneous transluminal angioplasty (PTCA)	Procedure with a balloon-tipped catheter to enlarge a narrowing coronary artery.
Laminectomy, Laminotomy, Discectomy	An operation that removes a portion or all of the involved spinal bone.
Operations in thyroid and parathyroid glands	Procedure to remove partial or total gland, which is located in the neck and produces hormones.
Palatopharyngoplasty	A procedure performed to treat cases of snoring.

Procedure	Explanation
Bronchoscopy	A procedure that permits the doctor to see the breathing passages through a lighted tube.
Mediastinoscopy	A procedure in which the doctor inserts a tube into the chest to view the organs.
EPS Studies	A test of the electrical system of the heart.
Cardiac Ablations	A technique to treat abnormal heart rhythms.
EGD	Procedure that allows the doctor to see the esophagus (swallowing tube), stomach and small bowel, using a thin flexible tube.
Laparoscopic Appendectomy	Removal of an inflamed appendix, using a scope inserted into the abdomen.
ERCP	A procedure used to examine diseases of the liver, bile ducts and pancreas.
Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy	The removal of a diseased gallbladder, using a scope inserted into the abdomen.
Herniorrhaphy (inguinal, femoral, incisional or ventral, umbilical, epigastric)	The surgical repair of a hernia (i.e., a bulging of a tissue into a cavity) using an incision or scope.
Insertion or removal urethral sling/suspension	The placement of a sling to support the urinary structures.
Prostatectomy (TURP)	The surgical removal of the prostate gland.
Hysterectomy (supracervical)	The surgical removal of the uterus.
Laparoscopy (myomectomy)	A type of surgery in which small incisions are made in the abdomen, through which a scope or other instruments can be placed within the abdomen and pelvis.
Vaginal Hysterectomy	Removal of the uterus.
Anteroposterior colporrhaphy and repair	Surgical repair of the vagina.
Cystocele/Rectocele Repairs	Surgical repair of the bladder or rectum.
Closed reduction of fractures	The manipulation of bone fracture without surgery.
Rotator cuff repair	The surgical repair to the tendons in the shoulder.
Stereotactic computer assisted volumetric procedure	The usage of computerized images to assist surgeons in surgery.
Kidney & Urinary Procedures for Non-Neoplasm	Procedures to treat noncancerous conditions of the kidneys or urinary tract

Prior approval is required for any of the following diagnoses ONLY if it is the primary/principal or admitting diagnosis:

Diagnosis	Explanation
Abdominal pain	Pain or discomfort in stomach
Angina pectoris	Chest pain
Atrial fibrillation and flutter a pectoris	Irregular heartbeat
Cellulitis	Infection under the skin
Chest pain	Pain or discomfort in chest
Concussion	Mild head injury
Diabetes Mellitus	High blood sugar
Dizziness/Giddiness	Feeling of lightheadedness, weakness, unsteadiness
Gastroenteritis	Stomach virus
Headache	Pain or discomfort in head
Herniated disc, Lumbar Radiculopathy, Medical back pain	Back pain or problems with the back/nerves in the back
Hypertension	High blood pressure
Labyrinthitis	Problems with inner ear

Diagnosis	Explanation
Nausea/Vomiting	A feeling of sickness with an inclination to vomit
Palpitations	Abnormal heartbeat
Renal Colic	Kidney stones
Syncope and collapse	Fainting
Transient ischemic attack (TIA)	Mini stroke
Urinary tract infection	An infection in any part of the urinary system (e.g., kidneys, ureters, bladder or urethra)
Volume depletion	Dehydration
Other specified cardiac dysrhythmias	Heart palpitations
Gastrointestinal Hemorrhage	Loss of blood in the gastrointestinal tract
Gastrointestinal Obstruction	A blockage that keeps food or liquid from passing through the small intestine or large intestine (colon)
Otitis media	A middle ear infection
Sinusitis	An inflammation of the sinuses (i.e., airspaces within the bones of the face)
Influenza	Commonly called the flu, a highly infectious respiratory disease caused by certain strains of the influenza virus
Upper Respiratory Infections (URIs)	An infection of the upper respiratory tract
Fever/Viral Infections	An abnormally high body temperature / any Infection caused by the presence of a virus in the body
Disorders of Biliary Tract	Abnormality of the organs, ducts and other structures that participate in the secretion, storage and delivery of bile (e.g., gallstones)
Seizures	Uncontrolled electrical activity in the brain which may produce a physical convulsion, minor physical signs and/or thought disturbances
Simple Pneumonia / Pleurisy	An infection of the lungs / inflammation of the membranes of the chest cavity that surrounds the lungs

The following outpatient treatment/procedures/services require prior approval:

Service	Explanation
Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBO)	A treatment in which a patient is placed in a chamber and breathes oxygen at higher-than-atmospheric pressure.
Dorsal Column Stimulators	An implanted electronic device that exerts pulsed electrical signals to the spinal cord to help treat chronic pain.
Bone Growth Stimulators	A treatment that promotes bone growth in fractures by applying a low electrical current or ultrasound to the fracture.
Intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT)	A type of radiation therapy used to treat cancer and noncancerous tumors by manipulating beams of radiation to conform to the shape of a tumor.
Sleep Studies	Tests that record what happens to your body during sleep
Pre-transplant Evaluations/Consultations	The initial examination to determine your need for a transplant
Facet Joint Radiofrequency Denervation	The process of deadening certain nerves that provide pain signals to a facet joint
Epidural, Transforaminal Epidural, Facet Joint Injections	Spinal injections given to temporarily block back/leg pain
Uvulopalatopharyngoplasty (UPPP)	A procedure to treat snoring and sleep apnea by removing excess tissue in the throat to widen the airway.
Reduction mammoplasty (<i>if benefit is available</i>)	Surgery to reduce the size of the breast.

Service	Explanation
Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) Therapy	A treatment that uses mild air pressure to keep the airways open; typically used by people who have breathing problems, such as sleep apnea.
JAK2 Gene Analysis	Testing to detect a mutation (i.e., an altered JAK2 gene) within your blood or bone marrow.
Wound VAC	Therapy to promote healing of a wound by the delivery of negative pressure (i.e., a vacuum)
Percutaneous Kyphoplasty and Vertebroplasty	Procedures designed to stabilize vertebral fractures in order to treat pain and prevent further spinal deformity
Cochlear Implant/Implant of Bone Conduction and Bone-Anchored Hearing Prosthesis	A surgically implanted devices for treatment of hearing loss
Osteoarticular Transfer System & Autologous Chondrocyte Transplant	Procedures which treat areas of damaged cartilage in joints
Transcatheter Embolization	Closing off of abnormal vessels with various substances
Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS)	A procedure that uses magnetic fields to stimulate nerve cells in the brain
Home Sleep Test (HST)	Tests performed in the home environment that record what happens to your body during sleep
Fixed Wing Air Ambulance	Ambulance services provided by propeller driven or jet airplane
Myoelectric Prosthesis for Upper Limb, Microprocessor-controlled Prosthesis for the Lower Limb	Artificial limbs controlled by electrical impulses from muscles
Genetic Testing for Long QT Syndrome	Testing to detect gene mutations which can cause Long QT Syndrome (i.e., a heart rhythm disorder)
Pneumatic Compression Devices	A device consisting of an electrical pump that fills a garment with compressed air, used to create pressure on limbs to promote circulation

Upcoming Requirements for Prior Approval

***Please note:** Beginning **July 1, 2015**, ALL inpatient hospital admissions will require prior approval.