

WINTER 2022

ACQA ADVISOR

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ACQA Advisor is a quarterly newsletter dedicated to sharing news, updates and best practices with our ACQA partners



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Clinical CORNER

Here we are in 2022. Our health care system has entered its third year of battling COVID-19.

It has been a demanding balancing act of providing affordable, quality care while simply attempting to provide care to all of those in need. Health care providers are facing staffing shortages, complexities of working in the COVID environment, multiple waves of illness taxing the system's resources, and the added stress that has resulted.

Excellus BlueCross BlueShield recognizes the incredible adversities that you all continue to face.

I have heard from several of you how, despite the difficulties in these uncertain times, you and your teams still realize the importance of what we are trying to accomplish collectively. Your commitment remains strong.

Our value-based payment team remains committed to working with you and your staff to ensure success and continuity of the program.

Feel free to reach out to us and explore the initiatives available to help ensure continued engagement with your patients, especially related to preventive care and screenings. These include our member outreach and reminder efforts, use of telehealth, and more.

Most importantly, on behalf of Excellus BCBS and me personally, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to each of you for your commitment to the medical profession and for the care that you provide our members – your patients – who are neighbors, friends, and family to us all.

Thank you!



Nicholas Massa, MD, CPC

Vice President
Medical Affairs,
Clinical Services



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Arcadia Healthcare Solutions

Earns NCQA Prevalidation Status

Arcadia Healthcare has years of experience helping clients attain **Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH)** certification and built its platform capabilities based on firsthand experience related to client needs. Excellus BlueCross BlueShield is excited to share that Arcadia has demonstrated its platform's capabilities to the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) successfully and has received acknowledgment from NCQA that Arcadia Analytics has achieved PCSP 2019 and PCMH 2017 Prevalidation approval for its V4.10 - V6 platform solutions.

What does this mean for my practice?

Excellus BCBS and Arcadia know that achieving PCMH recognition can require substantial organizational investment. We are pleased that practices can save time and resources from reduced documentation for criteria components designated as receiving transfer credit if all other requirements are met. This allows groups to leverage the platform and make strides towards PCMH recognition. Also, the platform can be used to support submission for many other factors designated as practice support during the PCMH recognition process, which can save an organization days or weeks of documentation preparation and ensure documentation is submitted correctly.

How do I obtain transfer credit?

The instructions for obtaining auto credit are outlined in NCQA's Prevalidation Step-by-Step Guide for Client Practices, found in the Letter of Credit Approval. You will need to obtain a copy of the Letter of Credit Approval and the Letter of Product Implementation from Arcadia.

What are the PCMH criteria components for which I can receive transfer credit?

Arcadia Analytics has been approved for transfer credit for the following PCMH criteria components:

KM09	A, B, C
KM10	A
KM12	A-1, A-2, B-1, B-2, C-1, C-2, D-1, D-2
QI01	A-2, B-2, C-2, E-2
QI02	A-1, B-1
QI15	A, B

Additionally, the following criteria have been approved for Practice Support:

KM20	A-1, A-2, B-1, B-2, C-1, C-2, D-1, D-2, E-1, E-2, F-1, F-2, G-1, G-2
CM01	A
CM02	A
CC01	A, B, E, F
CC14	A, B
QI05	A
QI16	A, B

Interchangeable Biologics Hold Hope for Much Needed Market Competition

Biological products are the fastest growing therapeutic category in the United States. Biosimilar products are highly similar to the reference biologic product, which means the biosimilar has no clinically meaningful differences from the reference product with regards to safety, purity, and potency. However, not all biosimilars are interchangeable with the reference biologic product.

To be granted interchangeable status, the manufacturer must meet additional requirements described in the Biologics Price Competition and Innovation Act.¹

Specifically, the manufacturer must show that the interchangeable product is expected to produce the

same clinical result as the reference product in any given patient. Additionally, for products administered to a patient more than once, the manufacturer will need to show there is no safety risk or decreased effectiveness if the patient switched back and forth between biosimilar and reference product.¹

As market exclusivity (or patents) on biologics expire, more biosimilar products will come to market. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued guidance on proper naming conventions to clearly identify a biosimilar from the reference product and biosimilars from multiple manufacturers. Moving forward, all

continued



Interchangeable Biologics Hold Hope (cont.)

biologic and biosimilar products should have a proprietary name and a distinguishing unique suffix of four letters (e.g., yfgn) that is devoid of meaning. This will help with proper dispensing and ordering, prevent inadvertent substitution (where the biosimilar is not interchangeable), and aid in safety monitoring of all products.²

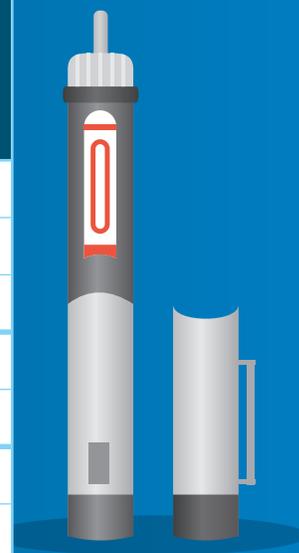
Diabetes is amongst the most expensive chronic conditions in the United States.³ Biosimilar insulin products could offer a strategy in reducing total cost of care while maintaining positive clinical outcomes. Viatris, Inc. has two biosimilar long-acting insulin products available that reference Lantus as the originator. While both biosimilars, Semglee-yfgn and insulin glargine-yfgn, are less costly than Lantus, the insulin glargine-yfgn offers the largest differential with a list price approximately 65% lower than Lantus.⁴

On July 28, 2021, the FDA approved Viatris' Semglee® (insulin glargine-yfgn) as the first interchangeable biosimilar product in the United States. This means that pharmacists can legally substitute Lantus prescriptions with Semglee-yfgn or insulin glargine-yfgn, without authorization from the prescriber. This is similar to brand/generic substitution for traditional drugs.

The biosimilar pipeline is robust, and we expect to see more products approved with interchangeable status soon. In diabetes specifically, Viatris has filed an application for approval for Kixelle, which would be an interchangeable insulin aspart competing with reference product Novolog.⁵ Viatris is anticipating an approval date this year. With both a long-acting, and possible rapid-acting interchangeable insulin product, Viatris may help to offer much needed competition in the 2022 market.

SEMGLEE VARIANTS

Drug Name	NDC	Size (ml)	Interchangeable Status with Lantus	2022 Excellus BlueCross BlueShield Commercial Formulary Status
SEMGLEE	49502-0195-80	10	No	Product Discontinued
	49502-0196-71	3	No	Product Discontinued
	49502-0196-75	15	No	Product Discontinued
SEMGLEE (YFGN)	49502-0250-80	10	Yes	T3-PA
	49502-0251-75	15	Yes	T3-PA
INSULIN GLARGINE-YFGN	49502-0393-80	10	Yes	T2
	49502-0394-75	15	Yes	T2



1 <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/biosimilars/biosimilar-and-interchangeable-products>

2 New, Nonproprietary Naming Convention for Biologics and Biosimilars (pocp.com)

3 Cost-Effectiveness of Diabetes Interventions | Power of Prevention (cdc.gov)

4 An Interchangeable Biosimilars vs Authorized Biologics Battle May Be Looming (centerforbiosimilars.com)

5 Express Scripts Biosimilar Pipeline Report. December 2021.

Online Learning Collaborative — Next Evolution of Spine Health Program



Health care providers and systems have faced a plethora of challenges due to the ongoing pandemic. As professional and social lifestyles demanded flexibility and resiliency, individuals, professionals, organizations, and institutions of higher learning had to pivot in countless ways to assure the wellbeing and vitality of their people, systems, resources, and education-delivery strategies.

In the information transfer domain, individuals had to study online, medical professionals had to offer telehealth, and organizations and universities had to move to video conferencing and learning platforms. New adaptations and opportunities have arisen, triggering widespread, easy access and more affordable professional e-learning, telehealth, and online collaboration.

Musculoskeletal health, particularly spine disorders, is one of the most critical domains of health care requiring constant learning and collaboration. Excellus BlueCross BlueShield has met this need by building an online education and collaboration platform to support primary care providers in the spine care. This platform, built with assistance from Spine Care Partners, is called **Primary Spine Provider Network (PSPN)**.

PSPN is a web-based and mobile-friendly platform available 24/7 that provides tools, trainings, and resources to simplify and enhance your evaluation and management of patients with spine-related disorders. It has clinical and educational tools you can start using immediately, as well as a 90-minute training video and other short videos filled with useful information. At the provider and/or ACQA's discretion, research and tool updates can be sent periodically to providers' laptops or mobile devices.

continued

Online Learning Collaborative (cont.)

PSPN FEATURES INCLUDE:

Workshops and Videos

- A compact 90-minute spine pathway training program aimed at helping you simplify, improve, and unburden your approach to spine care
- 3-minute back exam for radicular and mechanical pain
- Patient home exercises
- When to send for surgery
- When to send for MRI
- When to prescribe an opioid
- Nociplasticity, patient low self-efficacy, cognitive behavioral therapy, spinal stenosis, and impaired motor control

Podcast and Masterclasses

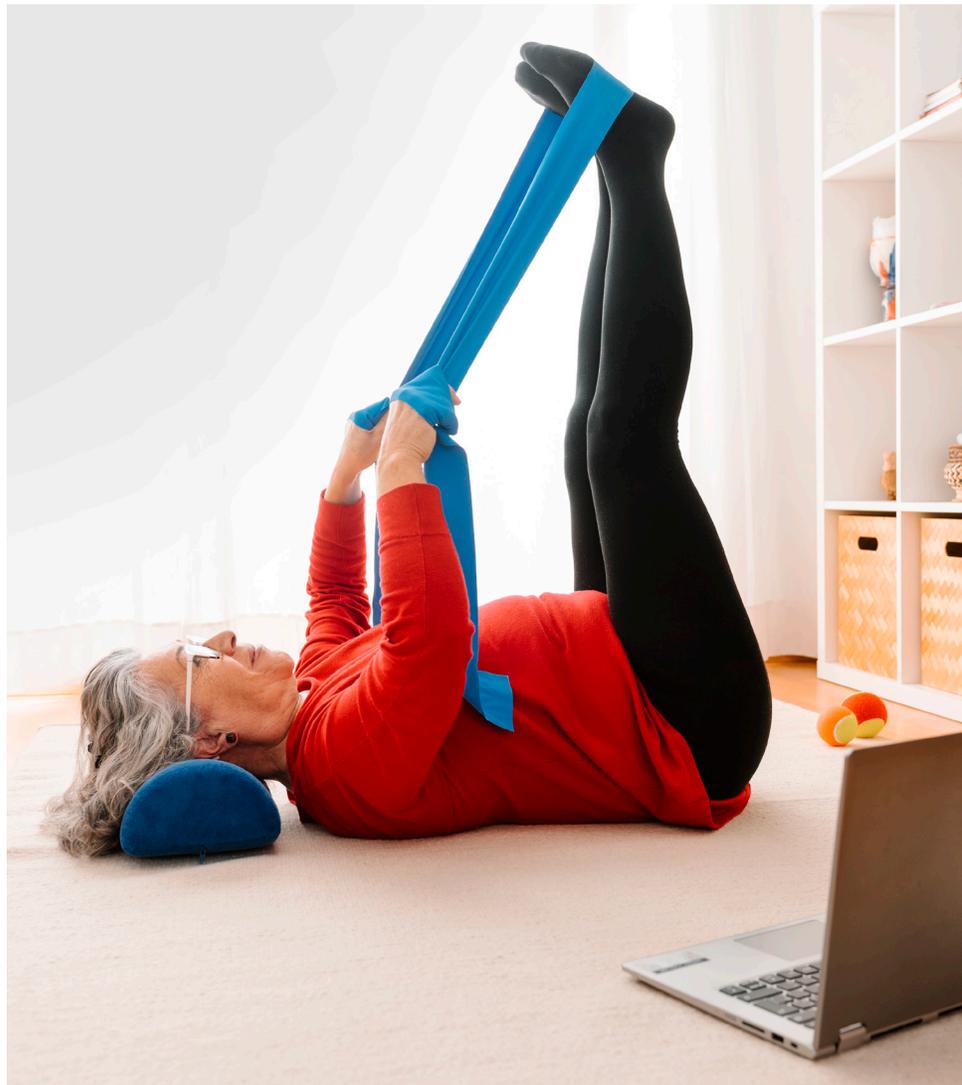
- Key topics of primary spine care addressed in a conversational format. Access these on PSPN and traditional podcast platforms such as Google Podcasts, Apple Podcasts, Spotify
- Masterclass style interviews with leading spine experts and health care thought leaders across the globe

Community Forum

- A private online forum where you can connect with peers and discuss cases

Newsletter and Blog

- Research Made Real, a feature of PSPN that provides compact updates on the latest in primary spine care delivered to your inbox once a month at your discretion
- Blog archive of all previous newsletters



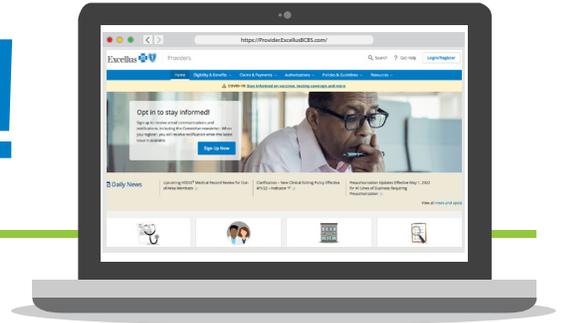
We encourage you to join and explore the PSPN. Simplify and enhance your evaluation and management of patients with spine-related disorders, bring meaningful change into the lives of many back pain sufferers and reduce the global burden of disease. As a participating provider with Excellus BCBS, you have immediate and free access to the nationally recognized 90-minute PCP Spine Pathway Training as well as all the PSPN has to offer. Register using the following link:

Network.PrimarySpineProvider.com/Excellus-PCP-Registration

If you have question about the
Spine Health Program, please contact
brian.justice@excellus.com.



Less Paper in 2022!



Throughout 2022, we'll reduce our footprint with the hard copy mailings and faxes.

The **New & Updates** section of our provider portal, Provider.ExcellusBCBS.com contains our communications, listed in ascending order, with audience indicators and a handy search feature for key words/phrases.

Logging in with your username and password ensures that you can view everything posted to the News & Updates section of our provider portal.



✓ Already opted in to receive our email alerts?

You're all set! We'll send a weekly email alert to promote new content added to the News & Updates section.

✓ Not opted in?

You won't receive the weekly email alert, but you can always access communications at your convenience via the News & Updates area.

✓ Opting in takes less than 5 minutes!

After you submit the **online request form**, you'll receive an email with a link asking you to click to confirm. It's that easy!

✓ At this time, we'll continue to mail key updates, such as:

- Medical/administrative/utilization management policy updates
- Reimbursement-related information
- Contractual updates/amendments