

PROVIDER QUICK POINTS

PROVIDER INFORMATION



August 14, 2018

Action Required: Apply for Designation as a Blue Distinction® Center for Knee and Hip Replacement

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota in coordination with Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (BCBSA), invites providers to participate in the application process, which will begin in **September 2018**, for a nationwide designation as a **Blue Distinction Center for Knee and Hip Replacement**.

About Blue Distinction

Blue Distinction is a national designation awarded by Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) Plans to recognize providers that demonstrate expertise in delivering quality specialty care – safely, effectively, and cost efficiently. The goal of the Program is to help consumers find both quality and value for their specialty care needs, while providing a credible foundation for local Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield Plans to design benefits tailored to meet employers' quality and cost objectives¹. The Blue Distinction Specialty Care Program includes two levels of designation:

- **Blue Distinction Centers (BDC):** Healthcare providers recognized for their expertise in delivering specialty care.
- **Blue Distinction Centers+ (BDC+):** Healthcare providers recognized for their expertise and cost-efficiency in delivering specialty care.

Quality is key: only those providers that first meet nationally established, objective quality measures for Blue Distinction Centers will be considered for designation as a Blue Distinction Center+.

Value of the Knee and Hip Replacement Program

This highly respected Program affirms that designated providers demonstrate expertise in delivering total knee and total hip replacements. Providers designated as BDC or BDC+ for Knee and Hip Replacement can differentiate themselves from other knee and hip replacement providers, within their own community as well as nationally.

Total knee and total hip replacement procedures are moving out of the inpatient hospital setting and into the outpatient setting. To keep track with the changing market, designations for the BDC Knee and Hip Replacement Program will now be available to Hospitals (with or without an Intensive Care Unit [ICU]) and Ambulatory Surgery Centers (ASC). Beginning mid-year 2019, each eligible provider can achieve designation as BDC or BDC+, as either a Hospital or ASC.

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¹ Benefit design is determined independently by the local Blue Plan and is not a feature of any Blue Distinction Program.

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Important Note: The Knee and Hip Replacement Program will **require** ASCs to have one of the following advanced orthopedic certification(s):

- Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) Advanced Orthopedic Certification
- OR-**
- The Joint Commission (TJC) Advanced Total Hip and Total Knee Replacement Certification

As an added advantage of participating in the evaluation process, every provider will receive a confidential report providing useful and constructive critical insights into its own performance. This report can provide a foundation for internal discussions with your executive management or medical staff to assess and improve your program's quality and cost performance through comparisons to national benchmarks.

[Application Process](#)

The application process to be evaluated for nationwide designation as a Blue Distinction Center for Knee and Hip Replacement will begin in **September 2018**.

All providers seeking new designation, or seeking to maintain their current designation under the Blue Distinction Centers for Knee and Hip Replacement Program, must complete a Provider Survey. This process allows all providers to be evaluated against the same national selection criteria that will be used for the upcoming designation process. The Provider Survey is administered through Blue Distinction PortalSM (BD PortalSM), a web-based application that makes it easy for you to respond and track your application from start to finish.

Note: In September, an invitation will be sent that will allow you to complete the online Provider Survey application, and will include instructions on how to access it through BD Portal. The Program launch, with national designation of qualifying providers as BDC or BDC+ for Knee and Hip Replacement, will be **July 1, 2019**.

If you wish to receive an invitation to apply for this Program, by **Wednesday, August 22, 2018** please email:

Blue.Distinction.Centers@bluecrossmn.com

Include the following information in your email:

- First and last name of contact to complete Provider Survey
- Email address and phone number of contact who will be completing the Provider Survey
- List of hospitals / ASCs that will be applying the designation via the Provider Survey including:
 - Facility Address
 - Facility NPI

We look forward to your participation in the Blue Distinction Centers for Knee and Hip Replacement evaluation process.