

BLOCK VISION

PROVIDER ★ NEWSLETTER

Volume 10, Issue 1 – June 2005

OUTREACH TO MEMBERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Block Vision is committed to providing all members on whose behalf we arrange vision services with adequate access to administrative and clinical services within the scope of Block's program. This includes those members who have special needs that affect their ability to communicate with Block Vision and/or our participating providers and to access vision care services. It is Block Vision's policy to make arrangements as necessary to accommodate those members who have special needs to ensure that they have equal access to administrative and clinical services on the same basis as do members who do not have special needs.

Special needs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Non-English speaking
- Hearing impairment
- Physical/visual disability
- Minors who require the involvement of an adult (e.g., parent or guardian) in the coordination of their eye care
- Adults who are not competent to make decisions regarding their eye care

We ask your assistance in identifying and bringing to our attention any member in Block's program who you believe may have a special need that impacts his or her ability to communicate with your office or to receive care. If you identify such a member, please contact our Member Services team, and we will help make the necessary arrangements to ensure that the member receives the care he or she needs. Thank you for your assistance in helping Block Vision serve members with special needs.



WHAT IS VERIFPOINT? WHY YOU SHOULD RESPOND TO THEIR REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION



Credentialing and recredentialing of vision care providers who participate on the Block Vision panel are an important component of our Quality Management Program. We use these tools to ensure that a quality network of providers is available to health plans and other companies who select us to manage their vision care programs. Since 2002, we have used VerifPoint, Inc. for primary source verification of provider credentials. VerifPoint is well qualified to perform this verification having been fully certified by NCQA* four times as a Credentials Verification Organization. Their Certification for 9 out of 9 credentialing elements is current and in good standing until October 5, 2005.

It is our policy to ensure that all providers' credentials meet our standards at the time they join our network and that they remain continuously current thereafter. At the time of credentialing and recredentialing, VerifPoint verifies the following elements:

- License to Practice
- Hospital privileges
- DEA/CDS Registration
- Board Certification/Residency Completion/
Medical School Graduation
- Optometry School Graduation
- Malpractice Insurance
- Malpractice Claims History
- NPDB/HIPDB
- Medicare/Medicaid Sanctions
- Sanctions Against Licensure

In addition to initial credentialing and recredentialing, VerifPoint also performs Continuous Credentialing for Block Vision. Continuous credentialing ensures that the following credentials are always current:

- License to Practice
- Sanctions
- DEA
- Other Drug Certificates (CDS, TPA, etc.)
- Professional Liability Insurance

It is critical that you respond to Verifpoint's requests for updated information as soon as you receive them. **Doing so will prevent the interruption to patient care that will occur if current information is not on file.** If you have any questions or comments about VerifPoint, please call our Provider Relations Department at (800) 243-1401.

*The National Committee for Quality Assurance is an independent, non-profit organization that certifies verification organizations and accredits managed care organizations.

ANNUAL PROVIDER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Block Vision and Block Vision of Texas are committed to achieving a high level of satisfaction among our contracted provider panels. To this end, we conduct annual Provider Satisfaction Surveys to obtain provider feedback. The Provider Satisfaction Survey form asks providers to rate Block Vision and Block Vision of Texas' administrative policies and procedures. Management then uses these survey results to evaluate operations and to identify opportunities for improvement.

We would like to take this opportunity to share the 2004 survey results with you.

BLOCK VISION

| Topic | Score* | Rank |
|----------------------------------|--------|------|
| Members are well informed | 94% | (1) |
| Provider Manual | 83% | (2) |
| Helpfulness and professionalism | 79% | (3) |
| VRU | 78% | (4) |
| Satisfaction as a Block provider | 75% | (5) |
| Reads newsletter | 73% | (6) |
| Claims administration | 69% | (7) |

BLOCK VISION OF TEXAS

| Topic | Score* | Rank |
|----------------------------------|--------|------|
| Members are well informed | 93% | (1) |
| Satisfaction as a Block provider | 84% | (2) |
| Helpfulness and professionalism | 82% | (3) |
| Claims administration | 79% | (4) |
| VRU | 74% | (5) |
| Provider Manual | 65% | (6) |
| Reads newsletter | 44% | (7) |

* The Score represents the percent of respondents who are very satisfied or satisfied.

Block Vision and Block Vision of Texas continue their work to improve provider satisfaction. The most significant action that we have taken is the April 2005 implementation of a new computer system that is entirely internet based and provides you with the ability to verify enrollment, obtain authorizations, submit claims, research claims status, and perform various other functions on-line. The new system includes the following enhancements: multiple users can be logged on under the same provider number, ability to view full claims' history, one time entry of provider numbers, drop down tables for CPT and ICD9 codes and, most importantly, an easier to navigate design with on-line instructions, help functions, as well as the ability to customize your screens and contact and log issues with us over the web. We anticipate that the implementation of this system will result in improved provider satisfaction with both Block Vision and Block Vision of Texas.

This year's annual survey will begin in November. When you receive the survey form, please take a few minutes to complete it and return it to us. We encourage you to be frank and invite you to offer suggestions for change in any area that you believe can be improved upon. We would also appreciate it if you would let us know the areas in which we are performing well so we can focus our attention on those areas you find problematic.

BLOCK VISION PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Block Vision has established standards to ensure that members have adequate access to appointments and eyewear services are made available in a timely manner. These standards are outlined in your Provider Manual. We periodically perform Service Delivery Studies to measure compliance with our standards and consider each provider's results when making a recredentialing decision. The standards are listed below:

Access: Appointment Wait Times

We require that our participating providers offer appointments to members within the following time frames:

- Routine Vision Care – within two weeks of the request.
- Urgent Care – within one day of the request, i.e. on the same day or the next.
- Emergency Care – on the day of the request.

On average, 100% of the Block Vision participating providers that are evaluated meet the appointment wait time standards.

Availability: Materials Turnaround Times

Block Vision requires that eyewear ordered through a participating provider must be made available to the member within five business days from the date of an order.

The 2004 survey revealed that 100% of the Block Vision and Block Vision of Texas participating providers that were evaluated met the materials turnaround standard.

Monitoring of Compliance

The Quality Management Department is responsible for monitoring provider office compliance with the specified standards. To measure compliance, the Quality Management Coordinator periodically calls provider offices and evaluates performance using the following approaches:

- *Appointment Wait Times*

The Quality Management Coordinator calls provider office staff and asks when the next appointment is available. Compliance is then scored based on whether or not an appointment is offered within the access standards. Compliance with appointment wait times are monitored throughout the year.

- *Eyewear Availability*

The Quality Management Coordinator places telephone calls to participating providers who furnished eyewear during the study period. Specific patient encounters are identified and the provider is asked when the eyewear was ordered and the date it was available for the patient to pick up.

A provider's results are evaluated at the time of the study – and again when a provider is re-credentialed.

BLOCK VISION'S PATIENT SAFETY PROGRAM AND INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

Block Vision and Block Vision of Texas are committed to promoting an environment that helps participating providers improve the safety of their practices. To accomplish this, the Company has adopted a Patient Safety Program that includes the following components:

- Provider education regarding the Company's Infection Control Policy and other safety components.
- Public access to information regarding the Company's Infection Control Policy.
- Measurement of provider compliance with the Company's Infection Control Policy and its other safety components.
- Access to information regarding the Company's findings with regard to provider compliance with the Infection Control Policy and other safety components.

The Infection Control Policy adopted by the company is based upon the "universal precautions" guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control ("CDC") and that of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration ("OSHA"). The Infection Control Policy includes practices that are designed to prevent the transmission of disease within health care practices and specifically addresses disinfection of eye care equipment and contact lenses, important issues that are specific to eye care practices.

Other safety measures monitored by the companies are listed below:

- All exits are marked and accessible
- Fire extinguisher is visible
- Smoke detectors are present
- The office enforces a no-smoking policy

The Company measures provider compliance with the Infection Control Policy and other safety measures during onsite reviews of participating provider offices.

Safety-related performance information is shared with any member who requests such information. The results of onsite reviews, which include provider compliance scores, are shared with healthplan clients routinely.

Important Block Vision Contacts

Your telephone calls are important to us. To ensure that your inquiries are responded to without delay, please make a note of the following telephone numbers:

Member Services

1-866-819-4298

Provider Services

1-800-243-1401

Internet Website for services, authorization, claims submission and inquiries: www.blockvision.com

MAIL CLAIM FORMS TO: Block Vision, 120 W. Fayette Street, Suite 700, Baltimore, MD 21201.