

WellChoice Bulletin

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Important Information About WellChoice Plan Administration

AUDIENCE:

WellChoice Network Hospitals

SUBJECT:

Reimbursement for Outpatient Laboratory Service Provided to WellChoice Members Enrolled in our HMO Product

EFFECTIVE DATE:

Immediately

SERVICE CHANGE:

BACKGROUND

In December 2001, WellChoice entered into an agreement with Quest Diagnostics Incorporated to provide referred ambulatory diagnostic laboratory services to WellChoice members enrolled in our HMO product. These members were to be directed to a laboratory or hospital that participated in the QuestNet laboratory network. At that time, WellChoice also implemented procedures to ease the transition, while we educated our members and providers on the new agreement. In certain limited circumstances, this included making payments on claims that would not otherwise have been payable under this new arrangement.

CHANGE

WellChoice will no longer make exceptions for coverage for providers who do not participate with QuestNet. WellChoice will not pay any claims for referred ambulatory diagnostic laboratory services* provided by a laboratory other than a laboratory or hospital participating in the QuestNet network to a WellChoice member enrolled in our HMO product. NO exceptions will be made. Balance billing of the member will not be permitted.

(*NOTE: This requirement applies only to referred ambulatory diagnostic laboratory testing. Presurgical and preadmission testing are NOT required to be performed by a QuestNet laboratory or hospital. Hospitals will continue to be reimbursed for such services in accordance with the terms of their participation agreement with WellChoice.)

IMPORTANT

If a member enrolled in our WellChoice HMO product requests to have lab services rendered at your hospital, and your facility is not participating in the QuestNet network, you must advise the member of your out-of-network status and have the member sign a waiver indicating that he/she accepts full financial responsibility for payment of those services. Only then will you be able to bill the member for diagnostic lab services.

REMINDER:

Go to www.wellchoicenj.com and get more information about our plans and programs.

Please save this bulletin with your Sourcebook for future reference.

CONTACT:

For more information, please contact your Hospital Relations coordinator or call Provider Services at 1-888-476-7245 Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.