



HEALTH PLAN PROVIDER DIRECTORIES: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

All health plans must publish and maintain up-to-date provider directories to ensure that health care consumers have accurate provider demographic information for determining who is in a plan's network and for accessing health care services. Recognizing the importance of maintaining accurate directories, specific data requirements have been established by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), MassHealth, the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), and provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As a result of these requirements, providers often had to respond to multiple email, phone, and mail requests from different health plans to update their information.

THE SOLUTION

In an effort to improve the accuracy of health plan provider directories, reduce administrative burden for providers, and streamline the process for updating provider directory data, HealthCare Administrative Solutions, Inc.* (HCAS) and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA) have both engaged CAQH's DirectAssure to enhance an existing electronic solution for use in the Massachusetts market.

The DirectAssure solution works in concert with CAQH ProView®, an on-line database currently used by most providers to input their professional and practice information one-time, then share it with participating health plans for credentialing purposes. DirectAssure functions within that current workflow, asking providers to compare, verify, and update practice location information, and to indicate if they are accepting new patients for each insurance plan. Some providers may be familiar with the DirectAssure provider directory solution since there are national payers that have already implemented it in Massachusetts, including United Healthcare and Aetna.

*For this initiative, HCAS represents Allways Health Partners, BMC Healthnet Plan, Fallon Health, Harvard Pilgrim HealthCare, Health New England, and Tufts Health Plan and Tufts Health Public Plans.

THE BENEFITS – STREAMLINED DATA SUBMISSION PROCESS

When fully implemented, providers will submit practice location information, panel status and other details **once** to be shared with participating health plans. Instead of multiple requests from different health plans, providers will receive a system generated alert from DirectAssure® to attest to the accuracy of their provider directory information every 90 days. Providers (or their designees) will also be able to update their directory information as needed, should practice information change between attestation cycles.

It is important to note that providers (or their designees) may still experience multiple notifications until all participating health plans have fully implemented the solution. However, once all health plans have implemented, providers should expect significant administrative simplification through a centralized, streamlined, electronic process that will assist health plans in collecting provider information necessary to maintain accurate directories.

We have compiled some commonly asked questions below. If you have additional questions, please visit the health plan websites or click here for the HCAS website <https://www.hcasma.org>.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will this solution be different from what I am currently doing in ProView?

The DirectAssure solution works in concert with CAQH ProView® and will enable providers to submit or review existing professional practice, program, and plan affiliation information against previously supplied data to update or approve accordingly when they log into the ProView system. New screens will be presented to the provider asking them to review and/or update information.

To learn more, please visit the health plan websites or you can view the latest training videos, announcements and directory information on the CAQH or HCAS websites below:

<http://www.hcasma.org/Directory.htm>

<https://www.caqh.org/solutions/directassure>

Which health plans will be part of this initiative?

The following health plans are participating in this initiative: AllWays Health Partners, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, BMC Healthnet Plan, Fallon Health, Harvard Pilgrim HealthCare, Health New England, Tufts Health Plan and Tufts Health Public Plans. In addition, as mentioned earlier, Aetna and United Healthcare are already using this system.

Is this only for commercial plans? Or are MassHealth and Medicare plans included?

This solution applies to all business lines for each plan listed above including commercial, Medicare Advantage, and Medicaid managed care plans.

What is the timeline for implementation?

Implementation will be staggered by health plans, beginning this summer with a subset of individual, primary care and behavioral health providers, and expanding to other providers over time.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, HCAS and its member health plans will continue to provide important project announcements and implementation information on their websites.

Can providers enter data for the Directory validation before local health plans implement this new process?

Some national health plans are already using DirectAssure. Providers should continue to update practice information in CAQH's ProView system at any time. However, the local health plans will not be accessing this data until each health plan implements the provider directory solution through CAQH.

How long will it take for any changes I make in Direct Assure to be reflected in the health plan's on-line provider directory?

For all non-contractual changes, health plans will update provider information as close to real-time as feasible.

How will providers be educated in the coming months?

The Mass Collaborative, HCAS, each of the health plans, the Massachusetts Medical Society and the Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association will all be providing outreach, education and training. This will be accomplished through newsletter communications, onsite meetings, and health plan provider relations outreach. To learn more, please visit the health plan websites or you can view the latest training videos, announcements and directory information on the HCAS or CAQH websites below:

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If I never made updates in CAQH ProView as an employed physician, will I need to make these updates now?

The medical office staff who currently access and update CAQH ProView information today will likely be the same staff receiving the directory accuracy questions. It will be important for those utilizing the system to have the provider's information readily available since any changes made to the provider's ProView record will impact health plan data for that provider.