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## Clinical Practice Guidelines Policy

### Purpose

The Clinical Practice Guidelines policy aims to standardize healthcare practices by adopting evidence-based guidelines, thus minimizing variations in clinical care that could negatively impact patient outcomes. These guidelines assist practitioners and members in making informed decisions about appropriate healthcare for specific clinical situations.

### Scope

This policy applies to all lines of business at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont (Blue Cross VT or the Plan). It pertains to the adoption and dissemination of clinical practice guidelines to support the standardization of care for specific clinical situations. The list of clinical practice guidelines on our website is non exhaustive. The Plan reviews the list every two years, or more frequent as necessary, to ensure the currency of clinical practice guidelines available to our providers and members.

### Regulatory/Accreditation Links

2024 NCQA HP Standards: PHM 3A F2

### Policy Review

**Applies To:** All Lines of Business

**Effective Date:** 05/25/2006

**Revision Date:** 10/2024

**Next Review Date:** 11/2026

**Last Approved:** 10/2024 by Accreditation Committee

**Department:** Quality Improvement

**Reference:** S:\QI Committees\Accreditation Committee\Policies

### Related Policies

PCP Selection Criteria Policy

Quality of Care Risk Investigations Policy

### Revisions

Date of Change	Effective Date	Overview of Change

**Signature:** Tom Weigel, MD  
Tom Weigel, MD (Oct 4, 2024 08:32 EDT)

Tom Weigel, MD  
Vice President and Chief Medical Officer

## Policy

Blue Cross VT adopts and distributes clinical practice guidelines from nationally recognized authorities and/or evidence-based research, in an attempt to decrease variations in clinical practice that could adversely impact patient outcomes as a result of over-, under-, or inappropriate utilization of services.

These clinical practice guidelines serve as a resource to aid practitioners and members in navigating decisions regarding suitable healthcare within specific clinical contexts. Our Plan's staff may also consult them as necessary to evaluate clinical practices in our network. It is important to note that the listed clinical practice guidelines are not comprehensive and are one of Blue Cross VT's many resources utilized to reach decisions on matters of medical policy, benefit coverage, and utilization management. For more details on clinical review criteria, please refer to the provider handbook.

Clinical practice guidelines are also the scientific evidence used to inform present quality improvement projects and quality of care.

## Distribution of Policy to Providers

Blue Cross VT publishes this policy to their non-secure provider website and references the policy in the on-line Provider Handbook. Any changes made to the policy are posted to the Recent News area of the provider website. The plan also provides written notification to practitioners that the information is updated and available on the Provider Resource Center via the provider newsletter.

## Review

The Accreditation Committee reviews and updates this policy every two years, or more frequently as needed. The posted and distributed clinical practice guidelines will be reviewed and updated, on the same timeline, by quality improvement staff with support from the Plan's medical directors. The chief medical officer grants final approval before the guidelines are published.