



# Getting preapproval

For Total Choice, PLUS, and Community Choice

members Effective July 1, 2025

## What is preapproval?

Preapproval (also called **preauthorization**) confirms that a service you're having will be eligible for benefits. By getting a service preapproved, you can make sure that the service is covered under the Plan.

In most cases, your doctor will provide Wellpoint with the information necessary to get services preapproved and you won't need to do anything. But, occasionally, you may need to work with your doctor to arrange for preapproval. For example, if you use a non-contracted provider outside Massachusetts, you may need to ask that doctor to contact Wellpoint about preapproval.

If someone (you or your provider) doesn't get preapproval when it's required, your benefits may be reduced or not paid at all. If you need help with a preapproval, Wellpoint Member Services can contact your provider to make the arrangements.

## What else should I know?

- ☐ **Submitting a claim for a service does not meet the requirement for preapproval.**  
Your provider must contact Wellpoint for preapproval before the service takes place.
- ☐ **You don't need to get preapproval if you are outside the continental United States**  
(the continental U.S. includes all states except Alaska and Hawaii).
- ☐ **If you're not sure whether a service needs preapproval, ask your doctor** to check the list or contact Wellpoint to find out.

## Who does the preapproval reviews?

Depending on the service, reviews for preapproval are handled by **Wellpoint**, **Carelon Medical Benefits Management**, or **CarelonRx**. Carelon Medical Benefits Management and CarelonRx are Wellpoint-affiliated companies that provide support for the preapproval process. Your provider will need to contact the appropriate reviewer for the service needing preapproval.

- ☐ **Wellpoint** – Behavioral health services; some medical services  
800-442-9300 TTY: 711 (toll free)
- ☐ **Carelon Medical Benefits Management** – BPAP/CPAP equipment; some cardiology procedures; high-tech imaging; genetic testing; musculoskeletal services; oncology drugs; radiation therapy; sleep studies  
866-766-0247 (toll free)  
[www.providerportal.com](http://www.providerportal.com)
- ☐ **CarelonRx** – Certain specialty drugs  
833-293-0659 (toll free)  
[www.covermymeds.com/main/prior-authorization-forms/](http://www.covermymeds.com/main/prior-authorization-forms/)

## How to reach Wellpoint Member Services

If you aren't sure whether you need to get preapproval, or if you have other questions about preapprovals, please contact Wellpoint Member Services at the number shown on your Wellpoint ID card.

## Types of medical services that need preapproval

### Ambulance services (non-emergency)

### Cardiology services

- Arterial duplex
- Diagnostic cardiac catheterization
- Diagnostic coronary angiography
- Percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI)
- Physiologic study arterial
- Resting transthoracic echocardiography
- Stress echocardiography
- Transesophageal echocardiography

### Cleft palate and cleft lip services

### Colonography (virtual colonoscopy)

### Durable medical equipment (DME)

- For equipment costing more than \$1,000
- Doesn't apply to oxygen and oxygen equipment

### Enteral/oral therapy

### Gender affirmation (reassignment) surgery

### Genetic testing

### High-tech imaging

- CT/CTA scan
- MRI/MRA scan
- Nuclear cardiology
- PET scans
- SPECT scans

### Home health care

### Hospice care

### Hyperbaric oxygen therapy Inpatient hospital admissions (Hospital at Home)

### Musculoskeletal services

- Interventional pain management
- Joint surgery
- Small joint surgery
- Spine surgery

### Oncology services

- Chemotherapy
- Supportive drugs

### Prosthetics and orthotics

### Radiation therapy

- Brachytherapy
- CyberKnife
- IMRT
- Proton beam
- Traditional radiation

### Rehabilitation services

- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Speech therapy

### Skilled nursing facility admissions

### Sleep services

- CPAP and BPAP equipment
- Sleep studies

### Specialty drugs

### Transplants

- Doesn't apply to cornea transplants

### Varicose vein treatment

- Includes sclerotherapy

## Behavioral health services that need preapproval

Behavioral health service	Contracted providers	Non-contracted providers
<b>Inpatient services for mental health treatment</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acute residential treatment</li> <li>▪ Transitional care units (TCU)</li> </ul>	Needs preapproval	Needs preapproval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community-based acute treatment (CBAT)</li> <li>▪ Inpatient psychiatric services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In Massachusetts: N/A</li> <li>▪ Outside Massachusetts: Needs preapproval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In Massachusetts: N/A</li> <li>▪ Outside Massachusetts: Needs preapproval</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Crisis stabilization units (CSU)</li> </ul>	Needs preapproval for stays over 5 days	Needs preapproval for stays over 5 days

Behavioral health service	Contracted providers	Non-contracted providers
<b>Inpatient services for substance use disorders (adults and adolescents)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acute residential withdrawal management (ASAM level 3.7 detox)</li> <li>▪ Clinical stabilization services (CSS) (ASAM level 3.5)</li> <li>▪ Dual diagnosis acute treatment (DDAT) (ASAM level 3.5)</li> <li>▪ Inpatient substance use disorder services, medically managed (ASAM level 4 detox)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>In Massachusetts:</b> Notify Wellpoint within 48 hours</li> <li>▪ <b>Outside Massachusetts:</b> Needs preapproval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>DPH-licensed providers in Massachusetts:</b> Notify Wellpoint within 48 hours</li> <li>▪ <b>All other non-contracted providers:</b> Need preapproval</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Crisis stabilization units (CSU)</li> </ul>	Needs preapproval for stays over 5 days	Needs preapproval for stays over 5 days
<b>Outpatient services</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acupuncture withdrawal management</li> <li>▪ Community support programs (CSP)</li> <li>▪ Day treatment</li> </ul>	N/A	Needs preapproval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)</li> <li>▪ Dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT)</li> <li>▪ Family stabilization teams (FST)</li> <li>▪ Family support and training</li> <li>▪ In-home behavioral services</li> <li>▪ Intensive care coordination</li> <li>▪ Mobile crisis intervention</li> <li>▪ Partial hospitalization programs for mental health conditions (PHP)</li> <li>▪ Psychiatric visiting nurse services</li> <li>▪ Therapeutic mentoring services</li> <li>▪ Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS)</li> </ul>	Needs preapproval	Needs preapproval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Partial hospitalization programs for substance use disorders (PHP) (ASAM level 2.5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>In Massachusetts:</b> Notify Wellpoint within 48 hours</li> <li>▪ <b>Outside Massachusetts:</b> Needs preapproval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>DPH-licensed providers in Massachusetts:</b> Notify Wellpoint within 48 hours</li> <li>▪ <b>All other non-contracted providers:</b> Need preapproval</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Intensive outpatient programs (IOP)</li> <li>▪ Structured outpatient additions programs (SOAP)</li> </ul>	Notify Wellpoint within 48 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>DPH-licensed providers in Massachusetts:</b> Notify Wellpoint within 48 hours</li> <li>▪ <b>All other non-contracted providers:</b> Need preapproval</li> </ul>

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**What is a DPH-licensed provider?** The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) issues licenses to Massachusetts facilities that provide health care services. To be licensed, facilities must meet specific quality and safety standards.

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