

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Primary Care First?

Primary Care First is a multi-payer model of care delivery and payment. Primary Care First fosters practitioner independence by increasing flexibility for primary care, providing participating practitioners with the freedom to innovate their care delivery approach based on their unique patient population and resources.

What are the eligibility requirements?

The Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield PCF Program eligibility requirements include the following:

1. The practice must apply to participate in the Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield PCF program. Application period will be from October 8, 2021 to October 22, 2021.
2. The provider type must be: Primary Care Physicians (MD, DO); Nurse Practitioner (APRN, APN, NP); Physician Assistant (PA); or Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS), who have a specialty designation (family medicine, internal medicine, general medicine, pediatric medicine, or geriatric medicine).
3. The practice must use 2015 Edition Certified Electronic Health Record Technology (CEHRT).
4. All practices must complete the 2022 PCF enrollment application during the designated PCF enrollment period.
5. Practices must return contract amendments signed by each primary care provider who provides primary care to patients at the PCF practice location no later than November 5, 2021.
6. The provider must not be participating in the Arkansas Blue Cross PCMH or other value-based program or agreement for the same panel of patients.

*Note: Enrollment in the PCF program is voluntary.

How do I enroll?

Clinics and providers will complete the Arkansas Blue Cross PCF enrollment application and return Arkansas Blue Cross contracts with original signatures during the enrollment period.

What is the payment model for Arkansas Blue Cross Primary Care First?

The payment model for Primary Care First is heavily influenced by the CMMI payer rubric. The payer rubric, in general, requires that the payment model move away from fee-for-service and replace it with risk adjusted payments. Additionally, participating practices can earn upside and downside adjustments to their payment based on their performance on certain utilization, quality, and patient experience measures.

Are non-CPC+ practices eligible to join PCF as part of the second cohort, which will join the model in 2022?

CMS announced in February 2021 that in addition to CPC+ practices, other non-CPC+ practices will also be eligible to apply for participation for the 2022 program year. Practices are eligible to participate in Arkansas Blue Cross Blue Shield PCF Model even if they don't participate in the CMMI PCF model.

Can Pediatricians participate in PCF?

The 2022 Arkansas Blue Cross PCF program will include pediatricians. The PCF – Pediatrician track will include quality metrics specific to pediatrics. Advanced Practice Providers working in collaboration with a pediatrician are also eligible to participate in the PCF-Pediatrician track. See provider manual for more details.

Does Arkansas Blue Cross PCF have a flat visit fee?

The Arkansas Blue Cross PCF payment model does not have a flat visit fee. Instead, practices will receive a reduced fee for service amount for E&M codes.

If I add a provider to my practice mid-year, how are care management fees calculated?

New providers will earn base care management fees until they have a full quarter of performance to measure. Adjustments to care management fees are paid the 2nd quarter after the performance period.

What type of data will be shared with the clinics?

Arkansas Blue Cross Care Management Portal houses data by practice, provider, and patient.

- Quality data shows patients who have care gaps, and reports can be exported for practices to work on closing care gaps.
- Utilization data provided can be drilled down to the patient level to identify those patients with frequent ED visits and inpatient hospitalization who may need additional care management, self-management support, education, or disease management.

Who should I contact if I have additional questions?

If you have additional questions, you may submit them via email to primarycare@arkbluecross.com.