



COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions: MBM Orthopedic Health Support (OHS) and Bariatric Resource Services (BRS)

What is the current COVID-19 situation?

Health agencies around the world are responding to an outbreak of a flu-like respiratory disease pandemic caused by a novel (new) coronavirus, named COVID-19. On March 18, 2020, CMS and ASC recommended that all elective surgeries be delayed due to the COVID-19 outbreak in order to preserve personal protective equipment (PPE), beds, ventilators, and hospital staff.¹ Additionally, the CDC recommends against unnecessary face to face medical visits and to reschedule non-urgent outpatient visits and elective surgeries as necessary.²

What changes are occurring with BRS and OHS programs?

Optum® is devoting significant effort and resources to responding to this serious situation.

We are closely monitoring COVID-19 developments and have teams of clinical and operational experts working around the clock to mitigate risks. As necessary, we will share more specifics on actions we are taking as it relates to your business and those you serve.

In response to the CMS, ASC, and CDC guidelines on elective surgeries, MBM intake and clinical teams associated with elective procedures, including bariatric surgery and some of those within Orthopedic Health Support, are canceling appointments, so that their time can be allocated to higher risk members.

The program changes are being made to allow our MBM intake and clinical teams to best support and meet the increased needs of our highest risk and most vulnerable populations. Thus, some of the clinical teams have been temporarily redeployed to support these members.

We expect the situation will continue to evolve rapidly over the coming weeks and months. We will continue to monitor this situation, adjust accordingly, and provide updates as new information becomes available.

How has the experience of members currently enrolled in BRS and OHS programs been impacted?

BRS and OHS will keep most of the active cases open and as circumstances allow, will attempt to connect with actively enrolled members. Post-op calls will be prioritized first.

BRS and OHS teams are prepared with talking points for members with open cases that may be affected by cancellation, and will be calling members to cancel their appointments. During the call, they will let the member know any follow-up calls will also be postponed until the nurses return to their roles and are able to reengage cases.

Can the BRS and OHS programs support new enrollments?

We are not enrolling new members into BRS or OHS programs at this time. While we do not have an estimated timing on how long this will last, we continue to actively monitor this situation and will provide updates as new information becomes available.

If new members do call the BRS or OHS number, they will be told the programs are not enrolling any new members at this time, as the situation and time adjust, we will contact the people wanting to enroll.

There is not a wait list for BRS or OHS enrollment as member, business, and provider priorities can change rapidly given these unprecedented circumstances.

How are we serving high-risk members?

The Optum clinical and operations teams key priority is ensuring the health and wellbeing of our customers, patients, and safety of our team members. We are doing everything possible to support the health of those we are privileged to serve. We have made it a priority to address and meet the increased needs of our highest risk and most vulnerable members.

The clinical team is following up with post-surgical members to ensure they are managing their recovery, and risk and exposure to COVID-19. They are also helping the member manage pain, and coordinate services when necessary.

What else are the MBM teams doing to serve members in greatest need?

MBM is focusing its efforts through active outreach to the most vulnerable members we serve - our transplant, cancer, and dialysis patients, to insure their needs are being met at this most difficult time.

Sources:

¹ <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/31820-cms-adult-elective-surgery-and-procedures-recommendations.pdf>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/guidance-hcf.html>



11000 Optum Circle, Eden Prairie, MN 55344

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