

Blue Distinction® Centers for Cardiac Care 2022 Evaluation Components

Blue Distinction

Blue Distinction Specialty Care is local Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) companies' national designation program, which recognizes healthcare providers that demonstrate expertise in delivering quality specialty care that meets consumers' specialty care needs – safely, effectively, and cost efficiently. The goal of the program is to help patients find both quality and value for their specialty care needs, while providing a credible foundation on which employers may customize their employee benefits.

Blue Distinction Centers for Cardiac Care

Blue Distinction Centers for Cardiac Care program (this Program) will evaluate applicant facilities performing the following elective procedures, for adult patients who are at least 18 years old:

- Percutaneous Coronary Interventions (PCI)
- Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG)
- Aortic Valve Replacement (AVR)
- Mitral Valve Replacement and Repair (MVRR)

The applicant facility must provide both PCI and cardiac surgery services to be considered for designation. Additionally, each applicant facility must participate and provide registry data from the American College of Cardiology (ACC), Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), and publicly reported data from Hospital Compare.

Applicant facilities will be evaluated for quality using information from the following third-party data:

- National Cardiovascular Data Registry® (NCDR®) CathPCI Registry® report for PCI procedures;
- Adult Cardiac Surgery Database report for CABG, AVR, and MVRR procedures; and
- Hospital Compare data for Acute Myocardial Infarction (AMI) and CABG procedures.

The following information explains how quality, business, and cost evaluation components will be used to evaluate an applicant facility. An applicant facility will also be evaluated on Local Blue Plan Criteria¹ for Quality and Business and Cost, if applicable. Final selection criteria for quality, business, and cost, including specific scoring thresholds and other details required for eligibility under this Program will be published separately and posted publicly at www.bcbs.com.

¹ An individual Blue Plan, at its own independent discretion, may establish and apply local quality, business, and/or cost requirements as additional Selection Criteria for eligibility in a Blue Distinction Centers program, for facilities located within its Service Area.

Quality

Blue Distinction Specialty Care programs establish a nationally consistent approach to evaluating quality and safety, by incorporating meaningful quality measures and using criteria that evolve over time with medical and quality measurement advances in that specialty area. Applicant facilities will be evaluated for quality for the Blue Distinction Centers for Cardiac Care program in the following domains.

Quality Evaluation Components		
Quality Domain	Quality Data Source	Quality Evaluation Component
General Facility	Provider Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Accreditation Cardiac Program Accreditation/Certification² Collection and Reporting of Race and Ethnicity Data Cardiac Rehabilitation Public Reporting of Cardiac Registry Measures
Cardiac Registry Participation	Provider Survey and Registry Data	Participation in the following Cardiac Registries: American College of Cardiology (ACC): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Cardiovascular Disease Registry[®] (NCDR) CathPCI Registry[®] and Chest Pain – MI Registry[™] Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) Adult Cardiac Surgery Database ACC/STS TVT Registry[™]
Cardiac Patient Outcomes	Third Party Registry Data <i>Most Recent Available at time of application</i>	NCDR [®] CathPCI [®] Institutional Outcomes Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedure Volume Executive Summary Measures Cardiac Rehabilitation
	Third Party Registry Data <i>Most Recent Available at time of application</i>	STS Adult Cardiac Surgery Database, Harvest Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedure Volume Composite Measures for Isolated CABG, AVR, MVRR, and combined procedures
	Hospital Compare Data <i>Most Recent Publicly Available at time of application</i>	Publicly Available Data from Hospital Compare Database : Acute Myocardial Infarction (AMI) and Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG) patients' outcomes for adults (\geq 65 years of age), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospital-level risk-standardized mortality rate following AMI and CABG Hospital-level 30-day, all-cause risk-standardized readmission rate (RSRR) following AMI and CABG

² The 2022 Cardiac Care Provider Survey, Question 6, is not an exhaustive list of all available cardiac accreditations and certifications. Additional cardiac accreditations and/or certifications are not required under the 2022 BDC for Cardiac Care Program, and are not evaluated under the Program's Selection Criteria for designation eligibility.

Quality Evaluation Components		
Quality Domain	Quality Data Source	Quality Evaluation Component
Physician or Group Practice Quality Measures	Blue Plan Healthcare Claims and/or Third-Party Data	<p>Physician or Group Practice Level Quality Measures, which include the following:</p> <p>General Information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical school accreditation status • Board certification, specialty degrees, certifications • License suspensions <p>Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant to Cardiology • Relevant to Cardiac Surgery <p>Isolated and Combined CABG and Valve Procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inpatient Mortality Rate • 30 Day Complication Rate • 30 Day Readmission Rate <p>PCI Procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inpatient Mortality Rate • 30 Day Emergency Department Visit with/without Hospital Admission • Bleeding Event Rate within 3 days

Business

Applicant facilities will be evaluated in the following business categories for the Blue Distinction Centers for Cardiac Care program:

Business Evaluation Components	
Business Domain	Business Evaluation Component
Facility PPO Participation	Participation by facility in the local Blue Plan's BlueCard Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) Network.
Physician PPO Participation*	Participation by physicians and surgeons who perform cardiac medical care and surgical procedures in the local Blue Plan's BlueCard PPO network. ³
Blue Brands Criteria	Facility and its corporate family meet BCBSA criteria for avoiding conflicts with BCBSA logos and trademarks.

Cost of Care

The process to incorporate cost of care measures into the evaluation is designed to provide a consistent, equitable, and objective evaluation. The cost of care evaluation is based on an analysis of the National Blue Claims Dataset (Claims Data). The scope of this analysis includes the following components:

³ Any de minimis exception will be considered on an individual case basis, through a nationally consistent approach.

Cost Data Source

Each facility's cost of care is calculated using adjusted allowed amounts for specific cardiac procedure episodes of care derived from Blue Plans' healthcare Claims Data. The methodology sums all costs incurred during an episode of care (including facility, professional, and other costs related to the cardiac procedure episodes).

Adjustments

Cardiac procedure episode costs may be adjusted for patient-level risk factors, including co-morbidities. Additionally, a geographic adjustment factor will be applied to each episode to account for geographic cost variations in delivering care. Other adjustments may be applied on an objective and consistent basis, where appropriate to account for differences related to patient care settings (e.g., a site of service adjustment).

Deriving a Cost Measure and Setting the Cost Threshold

Costs are aggregated and conformed to a facility cost index for each procedure type. In calculating facility costs, statistical outlier trimming (or 'winsorizing') may be applied to prevent facility costs from being skewed due to a few outlier cases. Each facility cost index is determined relative to a distribution of the facility measures. Facility level cost indices are then evaluated in comparison to a threshold for each procedure type, which is established with consideration for both geographic accessibility and cost savings.

Use of Facility-level Cost Information

After the BDC Participation Agreement for an eligible facility has been fully executed, information displayed on Blue Distinction's public website at www.bcbs.com will confirm that the successful applicant facility is designated as a Blue Distinction Center and that it met the Program's transparent national selection criteria. BCBSA may share a facility's individual Provider Survey responses (Raw Data) and results (Scores) with BCBSA's member Plans and, pursuant to a confidentiality agreement, Member Plans' current and prospective accounts, for purposes of evaluation, care management, quality improvement, and Member Plans' design of customized products and networks. BCBSA may combine a facility's Raw Data and Scores together with other facilities' data to create aggregate information for public dissemination, provided that such aggregate information will not identify the facility by name, and will not contain any Protected Health Information (PHI).