



# Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Musculoskeletal (MSK) Management Program

Provider Training



# Evolut Program Agenda

## Our MSK Program

- ✓ Authorization Process
  - Other Program Components
- ✓ Provider Tools and Contact Information
- ✓ RadMD Demo
- ✓ Questions and Answers

# Evolut

Connecting Our Brands is About Connecting Care



# MSK Prior Authorization Program



- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska will expand its prior authorization program through Evolent for the management of MSK Services.



- Medicare Advantage program start: Jan. 1, 2025
- Commercial plan program start: Sept. 1, 2015
- Begin obtaining authorizations from Evolent on Jan. 1, 2025, for services rendered on or after Jan. 1, 2025.



- Interventional pain management
- Inpatient and outpatient lumbar and cervical spine surgeries
- Surgery Center
- In Office
- Hospital



- Medicare Advantage Programs
- Commercial Programs



- Evolent will manage services through Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska's contractual relationships.

# Interventional Pain Management (IPM)

## IPM Procedures Performed Outpatient

- Spinal Epidural Injections
- Paravertebral Facet Joint Injections of Blocks
- Paravertebral Facet Joint Denervation (Radiofrequency (RF) Neurolysis)

# IPM Exclusions

## Exclusions

- Hospital Inpatient
- Observation Room
- Emergency Room/Urgent Care Facility



# Lumbar and Cervical Spine Surgery

## Lumbar and Cervical Spine Surgeries Performed Inpatient and Outpatient

- Lumbar Microdiscectomy
- Lumbar Decompression (Laminotomy, Laminectomy, Facetectomy and Foraminotomy)
- Lumbar Spine Fusion (Arthrodesis) With or Without Decompression
  - Single and Multiple Levels
- Lumbar Artificial Disc – Single and Multiple Levels
- Cervical Anterior Decompression with Fusion – Single and Multiple Levels
- Cervical Posterior Decompression with Fusion – Single and Multiple Levels
- Cervical Posterior Decompression (without fusion)
- Cervical Artificial Disc Replacement – Single and Multiple Levels
- Cervical Anterior Decompression (without fusion)



# Surgery Exclusions

## Exclusions





- Emergency Surgery – admitted via the Emergency Room



Reconstructive spinal deformity surgery does not require prior authorization. However, Evolent will monitor provider use of CPT codes 22800-22819.

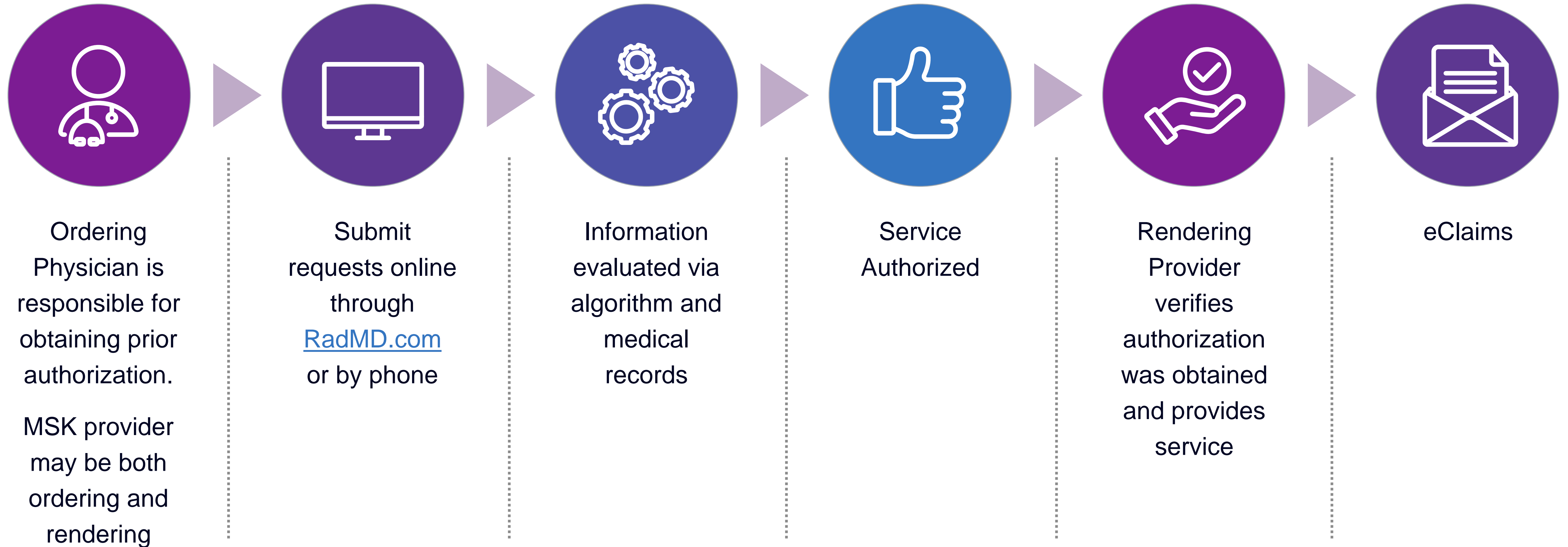


# CPT Codes Requiring Prior Authorization

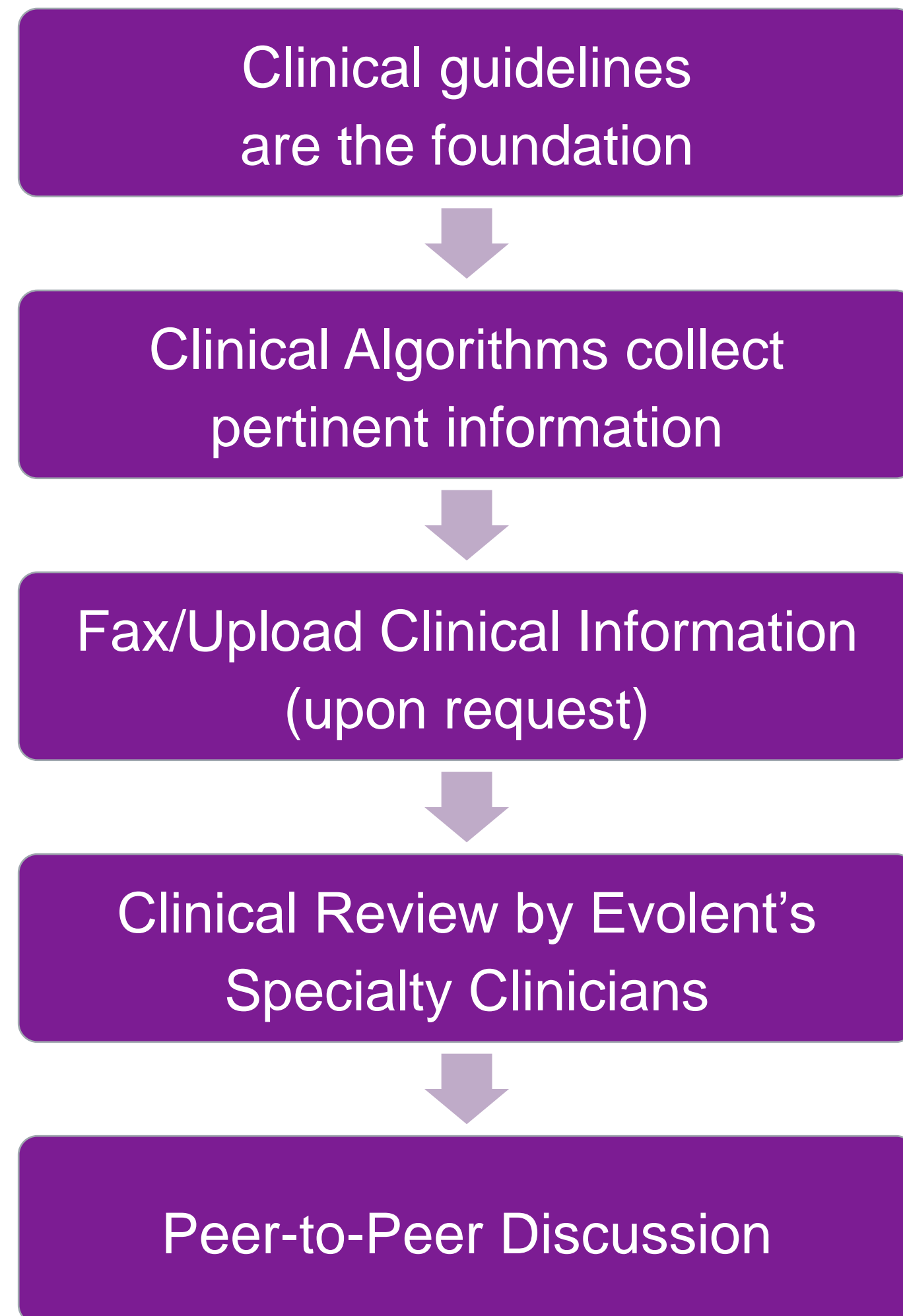
-  Review Claims/Utilization Review Matrix to determine CPT codes managed by Evolent.
-  Includes CPT Codes and their Allowable Billable Groupings.
-  Located on [RadMD.com](https://www.radmd.com).
-  Defer to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska's Policies for Procedures not on Claims/Utilization Review Matrix.

LUMBAR SPINE SURGERY PROCEDURES				
Procedure Name	Primary CPT Code	Allowable Billed Groupings	Additional Covered Procedures/Code	Ancillary Procedures/Code
Lumbar Microdiscectomy	63030	62380, 63030, +63035		
Lumbar Decompression	63047	63005, 63012, 63017, 63042, +63044, 63047, +63048, 63056, +63057	<b>Microdiscectomy:</b> 62380, 63030, +63035	
Lumbar Fusion – Single Level	22612	22533, 22558, 22612, 22630, 22633, +63052, +63053	<b>Microdiscectomy:</b> 62380, 63030, +63035 <b>Decompression:</b> 63005, 63012, 63017, 63042, +63044, 63047, +63048, 63056, +63057	<b>Instrumentation:</b> +22840, +22841, +22842, +22845, +22853 <b>Bone Grafts:</b> +20930, +20931, +20936, +20937, +20938 <b>Bone Marrow Aspiration:</b> 20939

# Prior Authorization Process Overview



# Evolent's Clinical Foundation and Review



- **Clinical guidelines** were developed by practicing specialty physicians, through literature reviews and evidenced-based research. Guidelines are reviewed and mutually approved by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska and Evolent Medical Officers and clinical experts. **Clinical Guidelines are available on [RadMD.com](https://www.radmd.com)**
- Algorithms are a branching structure that changes depending upon the answer to each question.
- The member's clinical information/medical record will be required for validation of clinical criteria before an approval can be made.
- Evolent has a specialized clinical team focused on MSK.
- Peer-to-peer discussions are offered for any request that does not meet medical necessity guidelines.
- **Our goal – ensure that members are receiving appropriate care.**

# Authorization for IPM




## Special Information

- Every IPM procedure performed requires a prior authorization; Evolent will not authorize a series of epidural injections.
- Bi-lateral IPM injections performed on the same date of service do not require a separate authorization. An authorization will cover bi-lateral as well as multiple levels on the same date of service. (Please refer to clinical guidelines for potential restrictions)
- Add on codes do not require separate authorization and are to be used in conjunction with the approved primary code for the service rendered.



# IPM Clinical Checklist Reminders

## IPM Documentation

-  **Conservative Treatment:** Frequently, specifics of active conservative treatment/non-operative treatment are not present in office notes. Details such as duration and frequency should be provided in order to ensure **six weeks** has been attempted with the past **six months**. Official physical therapy records do not need to be obtained but the provider should supply a summary of these details. Physical therapy is not the only means of active conservative treatment acceptable; physician directed home exercise programs as well as chiropractic care are among other examples of appropriate treatments.
-  **Visual Analog Scale (VAS) Score and/or Functional Disability:** A VAS score is an acceptable method to relay intensity of pain. However, a description of functional disability is also accepted as a means for measuring pain (e.g., noting that the member is no longer able to perform work duties, daily care, etc.).
-  **Follow Up to Prior Pain Management Procedures:** For repeat treatments, follow up is required in regard to what procedure was completed, how much and for how long relief was obtained, active participation in ongoing conservative treatment, and to what level the pain has returned. A follow up office is not required; documentation of telephone encounters with the member are acceptable to satisfy this requirement.






# Authorization for Surgery

## Special Information

- Most surgeries require only one authorization request. Evolent provides a list of surgery categories to choose from and the surgeon's office must select the most complex and invasive surgery being performed as the primary surgery.
  - Example 1: A lumbar fusion authorization includes decompression, instrumentation, etc.
- ACDF and posterior cervical fusion require authorization for each procedure. These requests can be entered at the same time and will be reviewed concurrently.
- The ordering physician must obtain prior authorization with Evolent prior to performing the surgery/procedure.
- Date of service is required.
- Inpatient admissions continue to be subject to concurrent review by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska.
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Medicare Advantage or Commercial plans require the facility or hospital admission to be authorized through the health plan separately and only initiated after the service has met Evolent's medical necessity criteria.

# Surgery Clinical Checklist Reminders

## Surgery Documentation

-  Details regarding the member's symptoms and their onset/duration
-  Physical exam findings
-  Conservative treatment modalities with dates and duration (e.g., physical therapy, home exercise plan, injections, medications, activity modification)
-  Diagnostic imaging results
-  Ordering physician's surgical plan (including a discussion about the potential risks and benefits of the procedure) (BMI, smoking history, mental status for some surgeries)



# Evolent to Physician: Request for Clinical Information

- ✓ A fax is sent to the provider detailing what clinical information that is needed, along with a fax coversheet.
- ✓ We stress the need to provide the clinical information as quickly as possible so we can make a determination.
- ✓ Failure to receive requested clinical information may result in non certification.

Date: March

ORDERING PHYSICIAN:	Dr. Clifford		
FAX NUMBER:		TRACKING NUMBER:	
RE:	Authorization Request	MEMBER ID:	
PATIENT NAME:	Cindy I		
HEALTH PLAN:			

We have received your request for Lumbar Decompression. We are unable to approve based on the information provided to date, please respond to this fax as soon as possible.

**Missing Clinical: Specific dates and duration of conservative treatment for 6 consecutive weeks in the last 6 months. Must include at least two of the following: physical therapy, physician-directed home exercise plan, epidural steroid injections, and/or medications.**

*Additional information is still needed.*

We have received your request for **Lumbar Decompression** along with additional records. However, the information provided still does not support the medical necessity of these services to make a determination on this case. Please see the documentation needed below which may allow us to make a positive determination. Only sending daily notes may delay authorization.

**Missing Clinical: Specific dates and duration of conservative treatment for 6 consecutive weeks in the last 6 months. Must include at least two of the following: physical therapy, physician-directed home exercise plan, epidural steroid injections, and/or medications.**

You may submit records for this episode of care as requested by uploading them on [www.radmd.com](http://www.radmd.com). Please do not resend the information previously submitted.

***The ordering physician is responsible for obtaining prior authorizations and for submitting the clinical records if requested. Please respond as soon as possible with the clinical information identified above.***

Receipt of written records is required in order to process your request. Once this information has been received, the case will be reviewed by a clinician, and you will be notified of the determination. The ordering provider may call to have a peer to peer discussion.

**Submitting a prior authorization request on RadMD is fast and efficient!**

Our provider portal, RadMD, is the easiest way to request authorizations, upload documents, access clinical guidelines and much more! To get started, visit [www.RadMD.com](http://www.RadMD.com), select **New User** and submit an **Application for New Account**.

# Submitting Additional Clinical Information

- Records may be submitted:
  - Upload to [RadMD.com](https://www.radmd.com)
  - Fax using Evolent coversheet
- Location of Fax Coversheets:
  - Can be printed from [RadMD.com](https://www.radmd.com)
  - Call:
    - 1-866-972-9642 (Commercial)**
    - 1-800-424-4956 (Medicare Advantage)**
- Use the case specific fax coversheet when faxing clinical information to Evolent

## Exam Request Verification: Detail

Upload Clinical Document

Print Fax Cover Sheet

Request Additional Visits

### Cases in this Request

#### Member

**Name:** Evo Lent  
**Gender:** Female  
**Date of Birth:** 5/24/1971  
**Member ID:** AB123456  
**Health Plan:** ABC Health Plan  
HMO  
**Spoken Language:** ENGLISH  
**Written Language:** ENGLISH

#### Provider

**Name:** Memorial Hospital  
**Address:** 123 Main St, New City, ST  
12345  
**Phone:** 123-456-7890  
**Tax ID:** 987654321  
**UPIN:**  
**Specialty:**



# Clinical Specialty Team: Focused on IPM



## IPM Review

Initial clinical review performed by specialty trained IPM nurses

Clinical review team will contact provider for additional clinical information

Anesthesiologists and pain management specialists conduct clinical reviews and peer-to-peer discussions on IPM requests

# Clinical Specialty Team: Focused on MSK



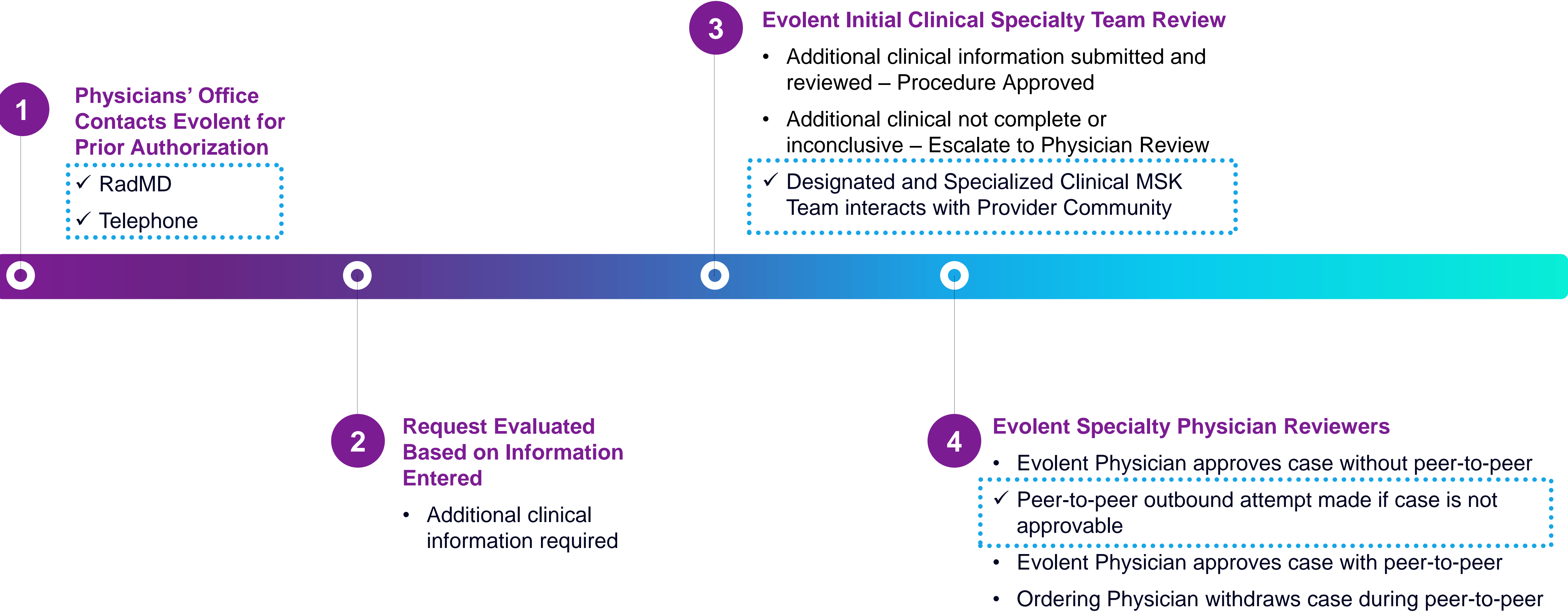
## MSK Surgery Review

Initial clinical review performed by specialty trained surgery nurses

Surgery concierge team will contact provider for additional clinical information

Orthopedic surgeons and Neurosurgeons conduct clinical reviews and peer-to-peer discussions on surgery requests

# MSK Clinical Review Process



**LEGEND**

✓ Key Evolent differentiator

**Turnaround times meet all applicable regulations contingent upon receipt of sufficient clinical documentation.**

# Urgent/Expedited Authorization Process

- If an urgent clinical situation exists (outside of a hospital emergency room) during business hours, please call Evolent immediately.
- The Evolent website [RadMD.com](https://www.RadMD.com) cannot be used for medically urgent or expedited prior authorization requests during business hours. Those requests must be processed by calling the Evolent call center at **1-866-972-9642** for Commercial plans and **1-800-424-4956** for Medicare Advantage plans.
- Turnaround time is within **one** business day not to exceed **72** calendar hours.

# Authorization Validity Period

- **IPM**
  - **90** days from date of request
- **Surgery**
  - Inpatient — **90** days from date of request
  - Outpatient — SDC/Ambulatory – **90** days from date of request



# Denial Notification

- Notifications include an explanation of services denied and the clinical rationale.
- A peer-to-peer discussion can be initiated once the adverse determination has been made **(Commercial)**
- **Medicare plans:** Effective 8/5/2024, peer-to-peer discussions must be performed before a final determination has been made on the request.
- **Medicare** re-opens are only allowed if the request complies with the CMS definition of a re-open. Providers will continue to have the option to submit an appeal utilizing the health plan's process.
- Reconsiderations for commercial plans are available with new or additional information within **seven calendar days** from the date of denial and prior to submitting a formal appeal.
- In the event of a denial, providers are asked to follow the instructions provided in their denial letter.

# Claims and Appeals

## Claims Process:

- Providers should continue to submit their claims to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska.
- Providers are strongly encouraged to use EDI claims submission.
- Check on claims status by logging on to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska website at [www.navinet.net](http://www.navinet.net) or by phone at **1-888-505-2022**.

## Appeals Process:

- In the event of a prior authorization or claims payment denial, providers may appeal the decision through Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska.
- Providers should follow the instructions on their non-authorization letter or Explanation of Payment (EOP) notification.

# IPM Points



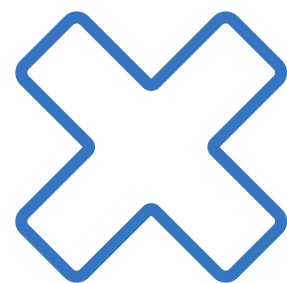
Injections in all regions of spine are managed



Date of Service is required for all requests



Each IPM procedure must be prior authorized



No series of epidural injections

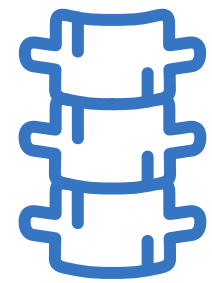


Specialty Nurses and Physicians review IPM requests

# MSK Surgery Points: Lumbar/Cervical Spine Surgery



Inpatient and outpatient non-emergent surgeries



Spine Surgery is focused on lumbar and/or cervical spine surgeries



For spinal surgeries, only one authorization request per surgery. For example, a lumbar fusion authorization includes decompression, instrumentation, etc.



Reconstructive spinal deformity surgery does not require prior authorization. However, Evolent will monitor provider use of CPT codes 22800-22819

# MSK Surgery Points: Spine Surgery

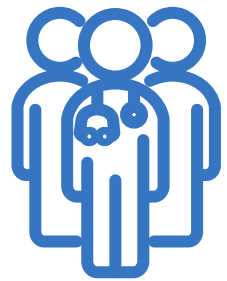


ACDF and posterior cervical fusion require authorization for each procedure. These requests can be entered at the same time and will be reviewed concurrently.



Surgeries addressing the following are not included in the MSK program: trauma, amputation, fracture, active infection, pediatric conditions, congenital malformation, palsy/plegia, tumor, cyst, cancer, joint dislocation, hardware and foreign body removal

# MSK Surgery Points: All Surgeries



Specialized Orthopedic Surgeons or Neurosurgeons will review surgery requests. Inpatient admissions will continue to be subject to concurrent review by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska.

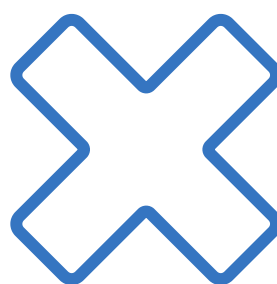


The ordering physician must obtain prior authorization with Evolent prior to performing the surgery/procedure.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Medicare Advantage or Commercial plans require the facility or hospital admission to be authorized through the health plan separately and only initiated after the service has met Evolent's medical necessity criteria.



Authorizations are valid for 90 days from the date of request. Evolent must be notified of any changes to the date of service which can be completed on RadMD or the Evolent call center.

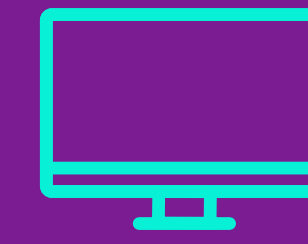


For Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Medicare Advantage and Commercial Members, please continue to submit requests to Evolent's portal, [RadMD.com](https://www.radmd.com).



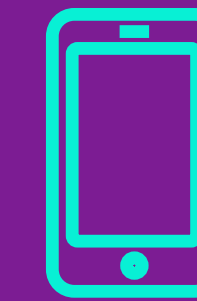
# Provider Tools

- Request Authorization
  - View Authorization Status
  - View and manage Authorization Requests with other users
  - Upload Additional Clinical Information
  - View Requests for additional Information and Determination Letters
  - View Clinical Guidelines
  - View Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
  - View Other Educational Documents
- 
- Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System for authorization tracking



RadMD.com

Available 24/7



Commercial

1-866-972-9642

Medicare Advantage

1-800-424-4956

Available Monday - Friday

7 AM – 7 PM CST



# Evolut Website

[RadMD.com](https://www.radmd.com)

## RadMD Functionality varies by user:

- **Ordering Provider's Office**
  - View and submit requests for authorization.
- **Rendering Provider**
  - View approved, pended and in review authorizations for their facility.
  - MSK providers are typically both the ordering and the rendering provider.

## Online Tools Available on RadMD

- Evolut's Clinical Guidelines
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Quick Reference Guides
- RadMD Quick Start Guide
- Claims/Utilization Matrices

The screenshot shows two main sections of the RadMD website interface. The top section, titled "RadMD Sign In", has a green background and contains the text "For URGENT/EXPEDITED authorization requests, please contact the Evolut call center." Below this text are two buttons: "Sign In" (orange) and "New User" (grey). The bottom section, titled "Track an Authorization", has a light beige background and contains the text "Authorization Tracking Number" above a white input field. To the right of the input field is an orange "Go" button.

# RadMD New User Application Process - Ordering

## STEPS

1. Click the **“New User”** button on the right side of the home page.  
*NOTE: On subsequent visits to RadMD, click the “Sign In” button to proceed.*
2. Under the Appropriate Description dropdown select **“Physician’s office that orders procedures”**
3. Complete the application and click **“Submit”**.
4. Open email from Evolent webmaster with new user password instructions

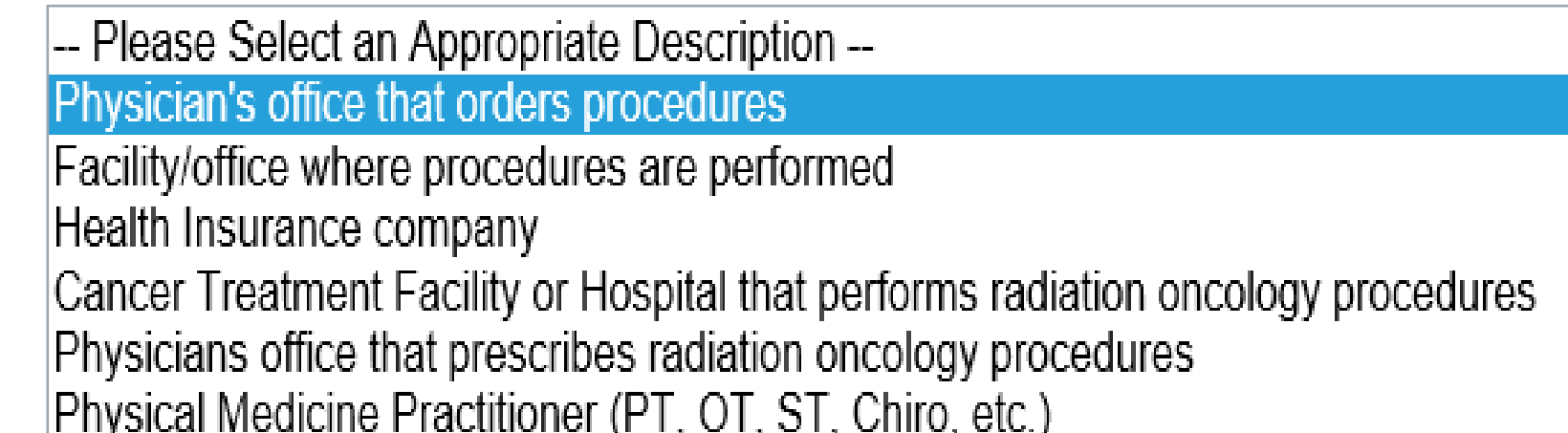
## IMPORTANT

- Users are required to have their own separate username and password due to HIPAA regulations.
- Offices that are both ordering and rendering procedures should request ordering provider access. This will allow you to request authorization on RadMD and see the status of requests.

1



2



3



# RadMD New User Application Process - Rendering

## STEPS

1. Click the **“New User”** button on the right side of the home page.  
*NOTE: On subsequent visits to RadMD, click the “Sign In” button to proceed.*
2. Under the Appropriate Description dropdown select **“Facility/office where procedures are performed”**
3. Complete the application and click **“Submit”**.
4. Open email from Evolent webmaster with new user password instructions

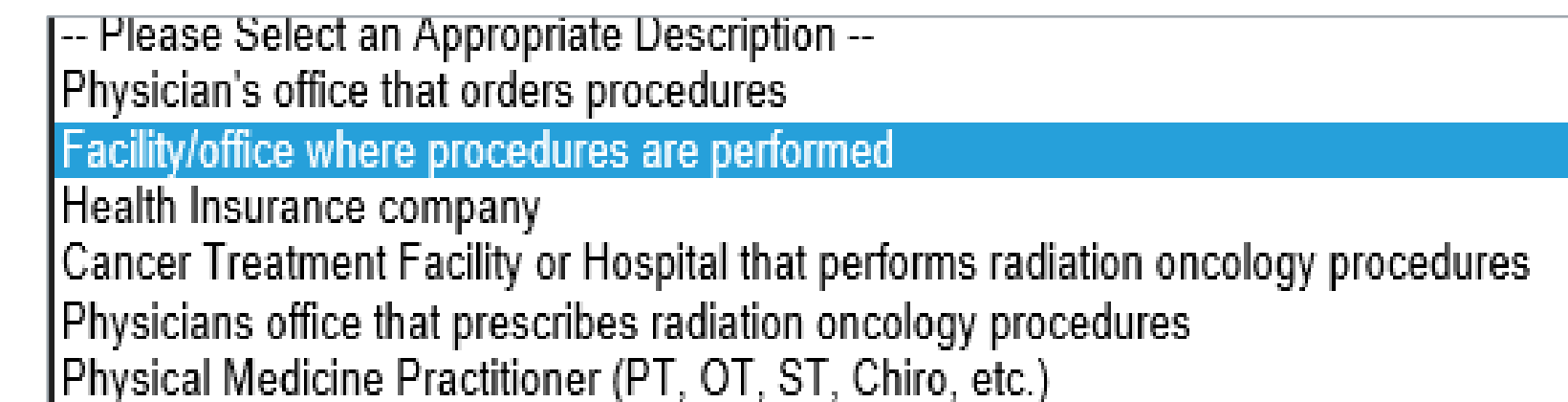
### IMPORTANT

- Users are required to have their own separate username and password due to HIPAA regulations.
- Designate an “Administrator” for the facility who manages access for users.
- If multiple staff members entering authorizations need to view approved, pended, and in-review authorization requests, they will each need to complete and submit a new user application. The account administrator is responsible for granting rendering access for each employee.

1



2



3

# Shared Access

Evolut offers a Shared Access feature on our [RadMD.com](https://www.radmd.com) website. Shared Access allows ordering providers to view authorization requests initiated by other RadMD users within their practice.

If practice staff is unavailable for a period of time, access can be shared with other users in the practice. They will be able to view and manage the authorization requests initiated on [RadMD.com](https://www.radmd.com), allowing them to communicate with members and facilitate treatment.

## Request

**Exam or specialty procedure**

(including Cardiac, Ultrasound, Sleep Assessment)

**Physical Medicine**

[Initiate a Subsequent Request](#)

**Radiation Treatment Plan**

**Pain Management**

or Minimally Invasive Procedure

**Spine Surgery or Orthopedic Surgery**

**Genetic Testing**

## Resources and Tools

Shared Access

1 share offer requires your attention

Clinical Guidelines

Request access to Tax ID

## News and Updates

**Hot Topic:**

Login As Username:

## Request Status

[Search for Request](#)

[View All My Requests](#)

[View Customer Service Calls](#)

Tracking Number:

[Forgot Tracking Number?](#)

# When to Contact Evolent

Initiating or checking the status of an authorization request

- Website: [RadMD.com](https://www.RadMD.com)
- Toll-free number: **1-866-972-9642 (Commercial)**  
**1-800-424-4956 (Medicare Advantage)**

Initiating a Peer-to-Peer Consultation

- Toll-free number: **1-866-972-9642 (Commercial)**  
**1-800-424-4956 (Medicare Advantage)**

Provider Service Line

- [RadMDSupport@Evolent.com](mailto:RadMDSupport@Evolent.com)
- Call 1-800-327-0641

Provider Education requests or questions specific to Evolent

Andrew Dietz, DPT  
*Senior Manager – Provider Solutions*  
407-967-4636 • [Adietz@evolent.com](mailto:Adietz@evolent.com)

# RadMD Demonstration



# THANK YOU!

EVOLENT DOES NOT ALLOW ANY THIRD PARTIES TO USE EVOLENT OR EVOLENT CLIENT DATA FOR ANY PURPOSE OTHER THAN PROVIDING SERVICES ON BEHALF OF EVOLENT OR EVOLENT CLIENTS.

Evolent is an independent company providing MSK and IPM solution programs for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.