



FAQ: East End Health Alliance Negotiation

What happened?

Negotiations between Empire BlueCross BlueShield and the East End Health Alliance (EEHA) have been ongoing for several months. Unfortunately, the parties were unable to reach agreement on a new contract. Therefore, as of 12:01AM on Saturday, August 1, 2009, the three EEHA hospitals will no longer be a part of Empire's extensive hospital network. This means that except for emergency care or as otherwise outlined below, Empire members should seek care from alternate facilities in order to obtain full in-network coverage.

What hospitals are impacted?

- Eastern Long Island Hospital
- Peconic Bay Medical Center
- Southampton Hospital.

Some Empire members may be eligible to continue to receive routine, non-emergency services with full in-network benefits at these facilities if there is not an alternate facility within 30 miles of their residence. Members should contact their benefit administrator or Empire at **800-495-9323**.

I am a physician with privileges at EEHA. What does this mean to me?

Physicians who are impacted by the hospital's termination, and who only have admitting privileges at the above hospitals, should consider obtaining privileges at another nearby network hospital. Empire will work with the hospitals to help facilitate this process.

What members could be affected by this termination?

Any fully-insured or self-insured Empire member with the following plans may be impacted by this termination:

- HMO
- EPO
- POS
- PPO
- Child Health Plus
- Healthy New York
- MediBlue

PPO and POS members have the choice of using in-network or out-of-network providers for their care. However, PPO and POS members will receive greater benefit (less cost) if they use an in-network provider and will not be subject to balance billing.

If EEHA is not a participating hospital network, will I be covered if I receive emergency care services?

Yes. In all instances, emergency services at any appropriate facility or hospital will continue to be covered in accordance with member benefit contracts and governing state and federal laws. This includes EEHA facilities. It is also important to understand that there will be no immediate interruption of care that is already underway at EEHA.

What if I am scheduled for a procedure at an EEHA facility after the contract with Empire terminates on August 1, 2009?

Except for maternity care services and transitional care services, as described below, for any surgeries or procedures that you may have scheduled at EEHA after August 1, 2009, unless authorized in advance by Empire, in order for you to receive in network benefits, it will be necessary for your provider to relocate those surgeries or procedures to another hospital or facility that participates with Empire, or refer you to another provider who can render the care at a hospital or facility that participates with Empire. This will ensure that those services are covered at the highest possible level of benefit.

What if I am pregnant, can I receive maternity care services at EEHA?

Yes. If you are in your second or third trimester of pregnancy as of August 1, 2009, you will continue to be covered through the delivery of your child and post-partum care directly related to the delivery, so long as EEHA agrees to continue to render services under the same terms as those specified under the most recent agreement between EEHA and Empire.

What if I am not pregnant and I am currently receiving services at EEHA as of August 1, 2009, will my care be interrupted?

No. If you are currently receiving services at EEHA and you are in an ongoing course of treatment, you may continue to receive services at EEHA during a transitional period of up to 90 days ending on October 29, 2009. Approval of services during this transitional period is conditioned upon EEHA's agreement to provide services according to the terms of the most recent agreement between EEHA and Empire.

How can I find out what other facilities are in the Empire network?

Empire proudly maintains a very broad, robust network of providers and hospitals. There are several hospitals within relative proximity to EEHA facilities that remain available to members for both emergency and non-emergency care if we would need to continue our negotiations past the contract expiration. Most physicians in Empire's network have privileges at these hospitals as well as at EEHA facilities to serve our member's needs. For the most current listings, you can call the phone number listed on your membership ID card. Please see the attached list of alternative hospitals on Long Island that remain participants in our network.

I still have questions – what do I do?

Members with specific questions may call **the phone number printed on their membership card** or **800-495-9323**. There is also a complete listing of our network providers at **www.empireblue.com**.

Media can contact Craig Andrews, Public Relations Director, at 212-476-7007 or via email at craig.andrews@empireblue.com.