



Do you want to know which doctors we've recognized for quality, and more?

Blue Precision is Empire's program that offers information to help members understand the comparative quality and costs between physicians for providing services for an episode of care.

You can find an Empire doctor by going to Empireblue.com. You'll be able to see if the doctor is recognized for quality and cost. If so, doctors will have a next to their name in the Blue Precision column. This program is only in certain regions and only for doctors in certain fields (see below).

In these regions

Connecticut
Maine
New Hampshire
New York
Virginia
Georgia
Indiana
Kentucky
Ohio
Missouri
Wisconsin
Colorado
Nevada

In these fields

Cardiology
Endocrinology
Obstetrics and Gynecology (OB/GYN)
Rheumatology
Pulmonary Medicine

This can be a useful guide when choosing a doctor – not as the only thing you think about.

This is a way of letting you know as much as we can about doctors. Added knowledge can help when choosing a doctor that's right for you. And it can be a good idea to talk to your main doctor (if you have one) when looking for a specialist.

Programs like Blue Precision can have errors and should not be the only source of information you use when selecting a physician. It also doesn't necessarily mean that doctors who are not recognized under this program will provide you a lesser quality of care.

Also, ratings for cost are based on aggregated claims data. So, they don't say for sure that you will have lower health care costs. They're just a way of seeing if doctors appear to have lower costs compared with other doctors in a specialty and geographic region.

How do you know which doctors should get recognized for quality?

Doctors that have shown a level of quality get the Blue Precision quality recognition. That may mean that they have been recognized for quality by National Committee for Quality Assurance ("NCQA") or Bridges to Excellence® ("BTE"). It could also be because they have demonstrated they follow standards that are endorsed by groups like National Quality Forum ("NQF"), the AQA Alliance, and others.

Empire will only say if a doctor *has* received these Blue Precision distinctions.

We won't show if a doctor hasn't received these distinctions, only if they have.

Quality first. Doctors must meet the *quality* criteria first, then they're looked at for *cost*.

- If a doctor is recognized for quality and then for cost, we'll show both results under the Blue Precision designation columns next to the doctor's name on our online directory.
- If a doctor gets recognized for quality and then does **not** get recognized for cost, we'll only show a result in the column for quality. We won't show anything in the column for cost.
- Let's say a doctor doesn't get a quality check mark due to not having the right amount of data, not being recognized by NCOA/BTE or because their claims-based measures did not meet the level of quality that's outlined in the program. They will not get the Blue Precision quality designation. And they won't be looked at for cost. As noted above, not receiving the quality designation does not mean that a doctor will give lesser quality care.

Affordability. Once a doctor qualifies for Blue Precision on quality, we look at them for affordability.

Empire looks at "episodes of care," rather than just looking at costs for specific things like a doctor's visit. Episodes of care include all types of care associated with each patient for a treatment of a condition such as inpatient or outpatient care, drugs, labs, X-rays and physician claims, measure over a specific two year period.

These costs are then compared to other doctors in the same specialty and geographic area. Doctors that meet certain criteria will get a next to their name in the Blue Precision cost column.

The more input, the better.

We're always looking to make our program even better. We often ask for input and feedback from health experts and organizations, our clients and others. Empire is also working closely with national organizations such as National Committee for Quality Assurance ("NCQA"), the National Quality Forum ("NQF"), the Ambulatory Care Quality Alliance (AQA), American Medical Association's Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement ("AMA-PCPI"), to push for quality across the country. Empire's philosophy is to use ways of measuring that have been endorsed across the country.

We also work with other organizations that deal with certain diseases or specialties. These include the American College of Cardiology ("ACC") and the Society of Thoracic Surgeons ("STS").

This program is only *opinion*.

Blue Precision doesn't say if a doctor is right for your health care needs. And we don't provide health care services or practice medicine. Doctors are the ones who make health judgments and give treatments. The designation of a doctor does not say for sure that you will get a certain level of quality. It also doesn't say what the cost of any of the health care services may be. And it can't predict what will happen from any health care services you may get.

On that same note, if a doctor isn't recognized by this program, it does not mean that the physician doesn't provide quality or cost effective health care services.

You have access to all PPO doctors in the Empire national BlueCard PPO network (as further described under your benefit plan), whether they're recognized by this program or not.

As with all programs like this, there can be errors. There is a chance of errors in the claims data used in the evaluation, the way of scoring the doctor(s) and the way the program decides if a doctor was the one treating the patient. Choosing a doctor is a big part of getting the right care for you. Be sure to do what you need to do to choose a doctor that's right for you.

What if my doctor does not have a designation?

Not all doctors will have a designation. Doctors may not have the right amount of claims data. Or they might practice in a specialty that's not looked at under the program. There also may not be a program where they are.

Questions or Complaints?

If you have questions about the Blue Precision program, you may call Member Services at the number found on the back of your member ID card. You can also file a complaint about this program with Empire by calling that number. Or visit empireblue.com.

This recognition program is not its own network – or a network within a network. The program is provided to our members for informational purposes only. Please click [here](#) for the full disclaimer.