

## Media Advisory

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For more information contact  
Susan B. Towler, APR (BCBSF),  
(904) 791-6803

### **BCBSF, National Transplant Network Form Florida Cooperative**

**WHO:** BCBSF and Health Options to implement the National Transplant Network (NTN) Program in Florida.

**WHAT:** Sixteen Florida hospitals have been invited to apply for participation in the cooperative network.

Hospitals will be selected based on clinical criteria which include a review of the hospital's volume of transplant procedures, duration of the transplant program, transplant team experience, patient outcomes specific to the particular procedure, patient selection process and criteria, appropriate treatment protocols, staffing and facility requirements, and procedures for patient follow-up for at least 12 months post-transplant.

#### **TRANSPLANTS**

**OFFERED:** Bone marrow, heart, liver, combination heart bilateral lung, lung, and simultaneous pancreas kidney

**WHEN:** Evaluations and on-site visits to the eligible institutions should be completed by early fall.

**WHY:** Membership in the NTN offers Health Options members access to transplants at facilities nationwide should the need arise.

35 Blue Cross Blue Shield Plans and 42 facilities currently participate in the NTN. Some of these institutions include: UCLA Medical Center, University of Chicago Hospitals, Duke University Medical Center, Mayo Clinic, St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Tennessee, and Medical College of Virginia Hospitals.

BCBSF and Health Options, Inc. are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies nationwide. A financially strong, tax-paying mutual insurance company, BCBSF is subject to the same regulation by the Department of Insurance as other insurers operating in Florida.

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## **Talking Points/Key Messages for National Transplant Network**

BCBSF has invited 16 Florida hospitals to apply for participation in the Blue Cross and Blue Shield System National Transplant Network (NTN).

Through this cooperative network, Health Options members will have access to the resources of the NTN should they need an organ transplant. Health Options will also cover costs for inpatient services, organ procurement services and fees for the physician. Coverage of related travel and living expenses for the patient and family members may vary depending on the BCBSF's member's contract.

Eligible institutions must meet NTN quality selection clinical criteria, which include the following:

- Volume of procedure
- Duration of the transplant program
- Transplant team experience
- Patient outcomes specific to the particular procedure
- Patient selection process and criteria
- Appropriate treatment protocols
- Staffing and facility requirements
- Procedures for patient follow-up for at least 12 months post-transplant.

The NTN Program includes six different types of transplants:

- Bone marrow
- Heart
- Liver
- Combination heart bilateral lung
- Lung
- Simultaneous Pancreas Kidney

Nationwide, 35 Blue Cross Blue Shield Plans and 42 facilities participate in the NTN and work together to provide access to quality credentialed transplant facilities. Some of these institutions include: UCLA Medical Center, University of Chicago Hospitals, Duke University Medical Center, Mayo Clinic, St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Tennessee, and Medical College of Virginia Hospitals.