



September 30, 2026

**For All Ambetter-specific
Announcements Go Here!**

PRIOR AUTHORIZATION UPDATES



Medicaid Prior Authorization code updates for policy CP.MP.185 Skin and Soft Tissue Substitute for Chronic Wounds effective November 1, 2026 – policy previously posted live.

2027 MEDICAID CHANGES ALERT



Last month, we introduced you to the 2027 Medicaid Work Requirements. This month, we are sharing an overview of the program, what's changing and when things will take effect. We have also included our [3-Question survey for you to share your feedback on how we can help support you.](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Wellcare Brand/Name Updates Coming Soon for 2027

Beginning January 1, 2027, Dual Special Needs Plans (D-SNPs) under the Wellcare name/brand will be renamed to Wellcare By Buckeye Health Plan. [See what you may notice, what is not changing and an important note about ID cards.](#)

Reminder: Ordering, Referring, and Prescribing (ORP) requirements beginning January 1, 2027

Buckeye Health Plan is reminding providers of updated guidance issued by the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) regarding Ordering, Referring, and Prescribing (ORP) requirements

Provider's Corner

buckeye
health plan



September Provider's Corner

Important Tips for Practitioner's Offices

Small Actions, Stronger Outcomes
Flu vaccination and tobacco cessation, mental health conversations, SMART goal setting, and annual kidney health testing.

QUALITY



beginning January 1, 2027. [Please review the details.](#)

Annual Update - International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision, Diagnosis Codes (ICD-10-CM)

ODM is announcing the Annual Update of ICD-10-CM [codes to their claims payment system effective October 1, 2026.](#)

Depression Risk and Care Coordination

This month we discuss the DSF-E HEDIS measure emphasizes depression screening, timely intervention, follow-up, and coordinated care for at-risk patients [to close care gaps and improve outcomes.](#)

Medicare CMS Risk Score Policy Change

Beginning with the mid-year risk score run in PY2027, CMS will exclude DOS 2026 diagnosis submissions on unlinked Chart Review Records (CRRs) from Medicare Advantage risk score calculations. Diagnoses not linked to an eligible encounter may no longer be reflected in member risk scores. [See the details and timelines.](#)

PaySpan Migration to Zelis

Following Zelis' acquisition of PaySpan, Buckeye Health Plan will transition claims and non-claims payments to Zelis. The phased rollout will begin in November and continue through early 2027 across Medicare, Medicaid, Behavioral Health, and Ambetter products. To prevent disruptions to electronic payments and remittance access, providers are encouraged to enroll with Zelis now. [See how to enroll.](#)

Evolent Program Adjustment Date

Buckeye Health Plan, in collaboration with Evolent is implementing updates to how Musculoskeletal services are

Colorectal Cancer Screenings

According to the American Cancer Society (ACS) colorectal cancer is the third leading cause of cancer related deaths for individuals living in Ohio ([ACS, 2026](#)). It is estimated in 2026, that over 158,000 new cases of colorectal cancer will be diagnosed nationwide, while also causing more than 55,000 deaths ([ACS, 2026](#)). [See how you can educate your patients.](#)

Medicare CPTII Codes and HCPCS Billing

Accurate coding helps capture the quality care provided to Medicare Advantage members. [See our flyer.](#)

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Mental Health Awareness Week: What We Can Do Every Day

Mental Health Awareness Week in October highlights a vital part of overall well-being: mental health. At Buckeye Health Plan, we recognize behavioral health as essential to whole-person care. Because mental health conditions affect individuals, families, and communities across Ohio, education, awareness, and access to support are critical to improving outcomes. [See our tips on what you can do every day.](#)

HEALTH EQUITY



Buckeye Provider Z-Code Toolkit

Social needs can affect a member's ability to access care, follow treatment plans, and achieve better health outcomes. Buckeye Health Plan encourages providers to identify, document, and address these needs to better understand the whole person and

reviewed and administered to enhance the member and provider experience. [See the details.](#)

support coordinated, member-centered care. [See our Toolkit/Reference Guide.](#)

Somatus New CKD/ESKD Support Program Effective November 1, 2026

New CKD/ESKD healthy living support program set to improve outcomes, quality of life of shared members. [See the details.](#)

REMINDER



Clinical Practice and Preventive Health Guidelines (All Products)

The most up to date guidelines applicable to all product lines, are available by linking to the following site, [Clinical Practice and Preventive Health Guidelines.](#)

Provider Communications Sign-Up Form

We communicate essential information to make working with Buckeye easier. In respect for your time, every effort is made to limit the number of communications to just one monthly ***Bulletin*** with all you need to do business with Buckeye. Whether you are an office manager, clinical staff, physician, billing or front desk worker, or serve in another role, we want to share relevant, timely information. Please complete the [Provider Communications Sign Up Form](#) to receive this critical information. If you already receive our communications, but have not completed a Sign-Up Form in the past, please complete the form to allow us to streamline communications, when possible, to targeted audiences.

Visit us at: [Buckeye Provider Home Page](#) | [Provider Communications Archive](#)
Buckeye Health Plan Provider Services | 866.296.8731 | Mon - Fri 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Wellcare by Allwell Provider Services | 855.766.1851 | Mon - Fri 8 a.m.-Noon 1-5 p.m.
Ambetter Provider Services | 877.687.1189 | Mon - Fri 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.