SUBJECT: NEW SPECIALTY REQUESTS SECTION: CREDENTIALING POLICY NUMBER: CR-15	EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/01
Applies to all products administered by the Plan except when changed by contract	

Policy Statement: All credentialed practitioners must be recognized only in a specialty that is acknowledged by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC), where reciprocity exists ("Recognized Board"). The recognized specialties include those classified as certificates of special certification. The Plan does not accept specialties not recognized by one of the Recognized Boards. Exceptions include those specialties approved prior to the policy being in place.

Credentials requirements for new specialty requests from Non-Physician Healthcare Practitioners will be documented by a subcommittee of related specialties or a taskforce and forwarded to the Plan's Credentialing Committee for approval. The specialty must be recognized and licensed by the state in which the practitioner holds a valid license to practice medicine.

More extensive exceptions will be considered on an individual basis for those specialties that the Plan believes are not duplicated in the community.

Process:
Upon receipt of application from a practitioner who is requesting participant status in a new specialty, the following steps will be taken:

A. Review the Recognized Board documentation to see if the specialty falls into the recognized status as defined in the policy statement.
B. If the specialty is a secondary specialty, then the practitioner may be reviewed for membership in that specialty.
C. If the Recognized Board documentation does not list the specialty as approved or under consideration, call the Recognized Board to explore the most current status.
D. If the Recognized Board does not recognize the specialty, the practitioner will be sent a letter stating that their credentials will not be reviewed under the requested specialty.
E. Refer to the Plan's Credentialing Policy CR-27 for the description of legacy criteria that may be applied to practitioners who cannot be board certified in the new specialty.

Cross Reference:
Adopted from BlueCross BlueShield of the Rochester Area MCO Policy and Procedure #CR-15 Dated 2/99

Committee Approvals:
Corporate Credentialing Committee 6/16/03, 3/21/05, 6/21/06, 9/19/07, 9/16/09, 9/21/11, 9/18/13, Revised 10/21/15, Renewed 10/18/17, Revised 11/15/2017, Renewed 11/20/2019; revised 11/17/2021; Revised 11/16/2023; Renewed 11/19/2025

Excellus Credentialing Committee 4/2/01
MCOCC 11/13/00, 1/8/01
HCBMC 12/7/00, 3/6/01