Q&A: Bupa Physiotherapy Network

Bupa Physiotherapy Network 2015-2017

Thank you for your interest in continuing to be part of our Physiotherapy Network until 2017, providing out-patient physiotherapy to our customers.

We’ve tried to anticipate and answer some questions you may have. If you’re unclear about anything, please:

- email us at: physiotherapy@bupa.com or
- call our Provider Management Team on 08456 00 40 78*

* Lines are open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Calls may be recorded and may be monitored.

Q. What is the Bupa physiotherapy network?
A. We want our customers to have access to high quality best value healthcare and our physiotherapy network is a very important part of this. Being in the network means your practice will continue to receive funding for treating our customers and promotion on Finder, our online private healthcare directory, which receives over 38,000 visits each week.

Q. Why does my practice need to apply to join the network from 2015-2017?
A. Your current Bupa Physiotherapy Network agreement expires on 17 May 2015 and if you’d like to continue to be a Bupa recognised therapist, we’ll need a new agreement. If you choose not to apply, we’ll be unable to reimburse you for treating Bupa customers after 17 May 2015 and you’ll no longer be Bupa recognised.

Q. What happens if my practice misses the deadline or chooses not to apply, can we apply later?
A. If your practice misses the deadline or decides not to apply to join the Bupa Physiotherapy Network until 2017, you’ll be able to apply later in 2015 when applications reopen. However, we’ll be unable to reimburse you for treating our customers once your current agreement expires on 17 May 2015 until you’ve joined the new network.

Q. What happens if my practice has not signed an agreement before 17 May 2015?
A. If we don’t have a signed agreement for your practice on 17 May 2015, it will no longer be Bupa recognised. However, to enable you to complete any ongoing treatment for your existing Bupa patients, we’ll fund this for up to 12 weeks from 18 May 2015. As you won’t be a Bupa recognised provider after 17 May 2015, you’ll be unable to receive funding for any new courses of treatment for Bupa customers.
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Q. What happens if a member calls without a preference of which physiotherapist to see?
A. When a member calls to preauthorise physiotherapy, if they ask us who they can see, we’ll offer them a choice of network practices taking account of location, specialist services they need and the likely cost of treatment.

Q. I work for my own practice and am a partner with a national physiotherapy network provider. If I don’t renew my network contract, will I still be able to treat Bupa customers under the contract you have with a national physiotherapist network provider?
A. You’ll need to confirm with the national network provider where you are a partner, that they have an agreement with us. If they do, as a partner within their practice, you should be included in the network under their agreement. If you are, the network provider will need to bill us directly.

Changes to the network

Q. Are there any changes to the network terms?
A. Yes, there a few changes to the Terms and Conditions of the Bupa Physiotherapy Network including:

- **five sessions of physiotherapy, pre-authorised as standard**, so that patients and physiotherapists are clear about the initial treatment available for Bupa funding. More than 60 percent of Bupa patients need five or fewer sessions, in fact two is often all they require.

- **additional sessions for more complex cases** can be requested if a Bupa patient needs more treatment. Only a minority of our customers need more than five sessions. When they do, it’s helpful for us to understand why and ensure they have a clear treatment plan, so for these patients, we’ll ask you to send us a ‘Therapies Management’ form so that we can confirm funding. It’s available online at: [http://www.bupa.co.uk/pol-latest-updates](http://www.bupa.co.uk/pol-latest-updates). For more information about how to complete and submit the form, call us on 08456 00 76 63* (Lines are open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday).

- **an overall session average of 5.5 for MSK services over a 6 month rolling period**. Most of our customers need five or fewer sessions, and only 10 percent need more than 10 sessions of treatment. The session average of 5.5 takes account of this variation and helps ensure members get the best value from their out-patient benefit.

We understand that sometimes, there may be clinically valid reasons why a practice’s overall session average for MSK is higher than 5.5. When this happens, we will contact the practice to understand why.
• **named senior clinician for each specialty service** who is able to demonstrate advanced clinical skills in their chosen speciality and able to provide evidence for at least the previous two years that supports their status as a senior clinician in that speciality

• **refer your Bupa patients to a specialist consultant** if out-patient physiotherapy will not effectively treat their symptoms. All you need to do is complete a simple 'open referral form' - available online at: [http://www.bupa.co.uk/physio-renewal](http://www.bupa.co.uk/physio-renewal) and we'll arrange for them to see a Bupa recognised consultant.

**Q. How will I know if my practice’s session average exceeds 5.5?**
A. If you give us a call on **08456 00 40 78***, we'll let you know what your practice’s session average is.

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**Q. What happens if the practice’s session average exceeds 5.5?**
A. If your practice’s session average is above 5.5 we’ll ask you for some clinical information to support the need for these additional sessions.

**Q. Will my practice still be able to see Bupa customers if it doesn’t meet the session average of 5.5 for MSK services?**
A. If your practice has a session average above 5.5 for MSK services, we’ll ask for some information about case mix to help us understand why this might be. If your practice’s case mix is significantly different to other similar practices and this explains the higher session average, there will be no change to your recognition status.

In the unlikely event that your practice can’t provide information about case mix that explains why the session average is higher, we may review your recognition status.

**Q. What should my practice do if we think Bupa has got our session average, or other information, wrong?**
A. We will be happy to look into any queries, just email or call us.

**Q. Do I need to tell my Bupa patients about the new preauthorisation process?**
A. No. When a customer calls us requesting funding for physiotherapy, we’ll let them know that we’ll pre-authorise five sessions and that their therapist will discuss their treatment plan with them.

If, following your initial assessment or during a course of treatment, you identify that a Bupa patient needs more than five sessions, please contact our Therapies Management Team on **08456 00 76 63** (Lines are open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) and give them your assessment of the patient’s condition together with a clear treatment plan. This can be provided by you or the patient. You can use our
medical report template to do this – it’s available online at:  
http://www.bupa.co.uk/pol-latest-updates  If the additional sessions are eligible under the patient’s Bupa policy, we’ll authorise funding.

**About the fees**

**Q. How have you decided the rates you are asking my practice to agree?**

A. As part of the new network, we’ve reviewed the fees we pay physiotherapists for treating our customers, taking into account location and the total cost of an episode of care. The fees we’ll agree enable us to ensure that we offer our customers best value.

**Q. If I don’t agree to these fees can I charge my Bupa patients directly?**

A. No. Our customers tell us that they want all their fees to be paid for directly by us, so our Physiotherapy Network practices agree not to send bills to Bupa patients for any ‘top-up’ fees.

**Q. If I have a longer appointment than my Bupa network contract stipulates, will Bupa pay for the extra time?**

A. No. By joining the Bupa Physiotherapy Network, you agree to offer an appropriate appointment time and fixed fees for all Bupa customers and network fees allow for some appointments to be shorter and some longer.

**Q. Will I receive payment from Bupa for completing the ‘Therapies Management’ form?**

A. No.

**Contacting Bupa**

**Q. I’ve got more questions, who can I contact?**

For further questions please:

- email us at: Physiotherapy@bupa.com or
- call our Provider Management Team on 08456 00 40 78*

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