Training and Certification Frequently Asked Questions

Certification basics: Who needs to be certified and why?

Who needs to be certified for 2017?

All agents representing (marketing, selling and servicing) MedicareBlue Rx (PDP) products must be certified. Certification is required in addition to:

a) Valid state health insurance licensure
b) Valid appointment with a local Blue Cross and Blue Shield plan servicing MedicareBlue Rx (PDP)

In addition to agents, Blue Cross and Blue Shield employees involved with Medicare sales and marketing efforts are also required to complete certification each year.

Please remember that non-licensed and/or non-appointed individuals are not allowed to act in a marketing and sales capacity and will not have a user account assigned to them. They may provide customer service support by assisting current members with their current plan, but they are not allowed to solicit new business, discuss product options, determine suitability or recommend a Medicare product to a beneficiary. Please contact your local plan if you have questions regarding this requirement.

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Why do I have to be certified?

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requires all plan sponsors to conduct annual training and formal testing on the following topics:

- Medicare rules
- Medicare regulations
- Compliance-related information
- Plan products

In addition, plan sponsors must:

- Ensure that agents and other plan representatives comply with CMS regulations
- Conduct sales monitoring and oversight to ensure that compliance is maintained

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I was certified last year. If I don't become certified this year, will I still receive renewal compensation from my past sales?

No. CMS states that plan sponsors must not pay agents who are no longer Medicare certified. If you expect to receive renewal compensation this year, please plan to become Medicare certified again.

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2017 Certification Requirements

What is required to become certified for 2017?

Like last year, Blue Cross and Blue Shield's Medicare certification will have two required components. Both of these components are accessed at the MedicareBlue Online Training Center

- **Core Training:** Pinpoint Global Communications* (Pinpoint), provides Medicare Basics and Compliance & Sales Oversight training. Also included in the core training is Medicare Parts C & D Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA) Training and General Compliance Training, developed by CMS.
  - Benefits of Pinpoint Medicare Basics include:
    - Scenario-based training that creates relevant framework for learners
    - Interactive courses that engage learners, improve understanding, and allows knowledge to be applied in the field
    - Can reduce training time through efficient content that meets all CMS requirements
    - Designed to maximize compliance and sales outcomes through effective training
    - Voice guidance on course content with periodic knowledge checks to reinforce learning
    - Lower cost compared to other Medicare core training programs
  - Note: America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) Medicare training will be accepted in lieu of Pinpoint Medicare training. If you completed 2017 AHIP, you will have the opportunity to upload your 2017 AHIP completion certificate to the Blue Medicare Online Training Center.
- **Product Training**: Product training is provided through Blue Cross and Blue Shield

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What courses do I have to take?

Required courses will be assigned to you by your plan administrator. In addition to the Medicare core and FWA course curriculum, you will be registered in one or both of the following Blue Cross and Blue Shield learning tracks:

Individual Medicare Product Certification Requirements:

- 2017 MedicareBlue Rx Enrollment and Disenrollment
- 2017 MedicareBlue Rx Products
- Attestation of Fraud, Waste and Abuse training

Group Medicare Product Certification Requirements:

Only required for agents representing Group MedicareBlue Rx products

- 2017 Group MedicareBlue Products
- Attestation of Fraud, Waste and Abuse training

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Do I have to take the courses in a particular order?

Medicare Basics training must be taken first and then the other modules in the order they are listed on the screen from top to bottom.

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Is there a criteria for passing the certification training?

- Successful completion of the Pinpoint Medicare Basics training course is 85%.
- Successful completion of Blue Cross and Blue Shield product specific courses is 85%.

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How many times can I take the exams?

Pinpoint Medicare Basics and Blue Cross and Blue Shield modules may be repeated as many times as necessary and must be passed with a score of 85% or higher.

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Is there a deadline to complete certification?

To avoid compliance violations and potential disruption of service fee payments, individuals must complete all required courses in a timely manner. Do not sign an enrollment application or meet with a client to discuss 2017 plans until you have completed all 2017 training. Please contact your local plan for more information.

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Is there a cost for the certification training?

For independent agents and brokers, there is a $89.95 fee associated with the Pinpoint training. You will need to pay this fee when you log in to the Pinpoint Medicare Certification System unless you are uploading a 2017 AHIP completion certificate to satisfy the core training requirement.

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I completed America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) Medicare training. Will Blue Cross and Blue Shield accept that in lieu of Pinpoint's Medicare training?

Yes, AHIP Medicare training will be accepted in lieu of completing the Pinpoint Medicare training. You will be required to upload your AHIP completion certificate to the Blue Medicare Online Training Center.

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Accessing the MedicareBlue Online Training Center

What is the link to the MedicareBlue Online Training Center?

Log on at: **http://bcbsnpa.pinpointglobal.com/Apps/Medicare/default.aspx**

It houses links to the Pinpoint Medicare Certification System for Medicare Basics training and Blue Cross and Blue Shield product training for easy accessibility and completion.

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I am a new user and need to access the site. What do I need to do?
Contact your local plan. Your local plan will pre-register you and give you a registration ID and access code.
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What if I forgot my username?
To look up your username, click **Forgot your username?**
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What if I forgot my password?
To reset your password, click **Forgot your password?**
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How do I make changes or corrections to my profile information?
Email your local plan administrator with the updated information.
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Certification Records

Do I need to submit proof of certification completion to Blue Cross and Blue Shield?
Most plans do not require you to submit documentation of your completion. Blue Cross and Blue Shield will be notified of your completion status through MedicareBlue Online Training Center reporting.* Note: if you completed AHIP Medicare training and wish to use that to satisfy the Medicare Basics training requirement, you will be required to upload your AHIP certificate to the Blue Medicare Online Training Center.

*Agents associated with the following plans **are** required to submit a copy of their completion documentation to the plan administrator:

- Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota

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Continuing Education (CE) Credits for Pinpoint Training

Are Continuing Education credits available?
Pinpoint offers Continuing Education (CE) credits at an additional cost. If you elect to purchase the final exam with CE credits, the fee must be paid on the site. CE credit requirements are different for each state. Some states require the final exam to be taken with a monitor present and an *Exam Monitor Affidavit* must be completed. Individuals electing CE credit should read the *Exam Monitoring Requirements* for the specific states they are interested in. The monitoring requirements are available on the training site if you elect the CE credit option.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield is unable to answer questions regarding CE credits for the Pinpoint course.

If you have questions regarding CE credits or CE completion status, please contact The National Underwriter Company at 1-800-543-0874 or send an email to: certificate@sbmedia.com .

If you need technical support on the Pinpoint Medicare Certification System site, contact Pinpoint at 603-880-8143 or Medicarehelp@Pinpointglobal.com.
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How to get help

Who should I contact if I need assistance?

Please contact the email address or phone number listed below related to the particular concern that you have.

System problems:

- For **MedicareBlue Online Training Center** system problems, contact BCBS Support Request at Medicare_Training_Support@ClearStoneSolutions.com.
- For **Pinpoint Medicare Certification System** problems, contact Pinpoint at 603-880-8143 or Medicarehelp@Pinpointglobal.com.

Certification requirements

- Questions about certification requirements, including course content, should be directed to your local plan, or you may submit your question via the MedicareBlue Online Training Center by clicking on "BCBS Support Request," located on the site.

Sales & Marketing

- Questions about marketing and sales functions and guidelines should be directed to your local plan.
- Questions about Blue Cross and Blue Shield products may be directed to your local plan or the pre-enrollment broker help desk line at 1-866-464-3919.
- Please visit https://www.yourmedicaresolutions.com/ for plan information.
- Questions about your agent appointment, your agent agreement with your local plan or service fee payments must be directed to your local plan.

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