

Credentialing FAQs

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What is credentialing?

Credentialing is primary source verification of a health care practitioner's education, training, work experience, license, etc. A variety of resources are used to verify the information provided by the practitioner. In order to do this, we use an industry standard systematic approach involving direct communication from the educational and training institutions, past and current hospital affiliations and employers, certification boards, licensing agencies and other sources. All information submitted to and acquired by IPN is kept completely confidential.

What is NCQA?

“The National Commission for Quality Assurance (NCQA) is an independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to assessing and reporting on the quality of managed care plans, managed behavioral healthcare organizations, preferred provider organization, new health plans, physician organizations, credentials verification organizations, disease management programs and other health related programs.”

As of August 12, 2014, IPN’s credentialing/recredentialing program has been certified by NCQA.

What types of providers are eligible for credentialing?

We credential the practitioner and facility types listed below whom operate in our service area:

Practitioners:

- Doctors – MD, DO, DPM
- Chiropractors - DC
- Optometrists –OD
- Physician Assistant - PA
- Nurses – NP, CNM, CNS, CRNA
- Counselors – LCPC, LCPCS, LPC, LPCS, LPAS, LPCP
- Marriage and Family Therapists – LMFT, LMFTS
- Social Workers – LSW, LSWI, LCSW, LCSWP, LCSWC-P, LMSW, LMSWI
- Psychologists – Ph.D., Psy.D.
- Dentists – DMD, DDS (For purposes of performing oral and maxillofacial surgery only.)

Facilities:

- Alcohol and Drug Abuse Recovery Centers
- Ambulance – Air, Ground
- Diabetes Education
- Dialysis
- Durable Medical Equipment (DME)
- Durable Medical Equipment (DME) - Craniofacial Pain
- Home Health Services
- In Home Care Services
- Hospice Care
- Independent Diagnostic Testing Facility
- IV Home Infusion Therapy Services
- Laboratory including Laboratory Collection Sites

- Lithotripsy
- Prosthetics/Orthotics Services
- Diagnostic Imaging - Radiology
 - CT
 - Echocardiography
 - Mammography
 - Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
 - MR
 - MRA
 - Nuclear Medicine
 - Nuclear Cardiology
 - PET
- Sleep Disorder Study/Centers

What are the steps in the credentialing process?

Step 1: Request an application from an IPN provider representative.

Step 2: You will receive an application and supporting documents by mail, fax, or email. Complete the application, review the Application Checklist, and then submit your application.

Step 3: Our credentialing staff primary source verifies credentials and prepares applicants' files for review by the credentialing committee. Office site surveys are required during initial credentialing for primary care providers prior to committee review.

*** All primary care provider's offices are subject to review if we receive a patient complaint regarding physical accessibility, physical appearance or adequacy of waiting room and exam room space, or as part of our office site/medical record review quality program. ***

Step 4: The credentialing committee determines whether the application is approved or denied. We will notify you, by mail on initial appointment, of the committee's decision. If you require an approval letter upon recredentialing, please contact the credentialing department.

Credentialing on average takes six to eight weeks from the time an application is submitted to the credentialing department with all required documentation.

What is primary source verification?

Primary source verification is the process of verifying credentials directly with the source. For example, IPN cannot accept a copy of a medical license as evidence that a physician has a license to practice. The Board of Medicine must be contacted directly to verify a physician's licensure. Primary source verification is required to ensure that IPN does not receive fraudulent documents from applicants or other non-primary sources. IPN cannot accept any verification that comes through a third party rather than the primary source. Primary source verification is

a requirement for maintaining NCQA certification in addition to being the cornerstone of IPN's credentialing process.

Why does the credentialing process take so long?

The initial credentialing process could take as little as two to four weeks to complete, if all required information and documentation is returned with the application. The process is delayed if we need to gather the information or documentation ourselves. The application will be held by the credentialing department or your provider representative until all required information is acquired. If any licensure is still pending, this can also be a major delay. In addition, because the credentialing committee meets at the end of each month, final approval for credentialing isn't completed until that time.

What is the credentialing committee for?

The credentialing committee helps IPN maintain the integrity of our network by ensuring that the standards for participation are met through regular application review.

Who makes up the credentialing committee?

The committee is made up of six doctors of varying specialties, four are medical reviewers, one is the committee chair person, and one is IPN's president and medical director. The credentialing staff here at IPN is also on the committee.

Can the decision of the credentialing committee be appealed?

Yes, however, if you have been denied participation status because you have failed to meet IPN's credentialing criteria, you may not appeal. You will receive a letter with your options to appeal should you have the right.

Why does board certification matter?

Although board certification is not a requirement for participation with IPN, it helps patients make an informed decision when choosing a physician for themselves or their family. All board certification is verified with the board in which you are certified. Some of IPN's payors use board certification to designate those practitioners who achieve a higher level of quality measurement and may separate them in their directories at their own discretion.

How do I know if I'm board certified?

Board certification is not proof of your degree, licensure or association membership but is, as a rule, acquired subsequent to your completed specialty education and evidenced by a certificate(s) which may or may not be time limited. In accordance with the Centers for

Medicare and Medicaid Services, board certification must be primary source verifiable. Should you have any questions regarding whether you are board certified, please feel free to contact the credentialing department.

Why is there a credentialing fee?

Because IPN is not an insurance company, we do not receive premiums from patients. The credentialing fee helps off-set the rising costs of primary source verification, application processing, and data management.

How can I find out what the status of my application is?

You can contact your provider representative, customer service or the credentialing department for application status.

Will I have to recredential?

Recredentialing is required every one to three years depending on the decision of the credentialing committee. A recredentialing application will be mailed to you four months before your credentialing appointment expires. Failure to return your application on time would require us to terminate your credentialing with IPN. In addition to recredentialing, IPN also monitors sanctions with all applicable state licensure boards and drug certifying entities on a quarterly basis to ensure no new actions have occurred.

Why do I have to recredential?

Recredentialing is required by the NCQA to ensure that we have the most up to date and accurate information about a practitioner. It is also a chance for you to update IPN on any changes in practice location, phone number, name, etc.