



Priority Partners' Health Plan Accreditation Suspension FAQ For Medicaid Providers

What happened with Priority Partners' Health Plan Accreditation?

On February 19, 2025, the [National Committee for Quality Assurance](#) (NCQA) suspended Priority Partners' health plan accreditation due to quality-related concerns. Priority Partners is working with NCQA on a corrective action plan to address the issues.

Does this mean Priority Partners is no longer a Medicaid health plan?

No. Priority Partners is still a Maryland Medicaid health plan and will continue to provide insurance coverage for their members.

Does the NCQA suspension affect operations for Priority Partners? Will they still pay claims and approve authorizations?

This suspension does not impact the daily operations of Priority Partners. You can still submit authorizations, send claims, and interact with the plan without interruption.

Does the NCQA suspension affect my patients' Medicaid coverage, benefits, or ability to see their doctors?

This suspension does not change your patients' current coverage, benefits, or access to care.

Do my Priority Partners patients need to change to another Medicaid health plan?

No. A Priority Partners member who wants to stay with Priority Partners does not have to change health plans.

However, because of the Priority Partners NCQA health plan accreditation suspension, Priority Partners members can change health plans for a limited time beginning March 17, 2025, until May 16, 2025, if they want to.

For Priority Partners members who want to change, how will they receive more information?

Priority Partners members will receive a notice from the Maryland Department of Health with more information about what to do if they want to change health plans. Your office may receive calls from Priority Partners members asking if your practice accepts other Medicaid health plans.

Can patients in other Medicaid health plans change plans starting on March 17, 2025?

Patients in other Medicaid health plans may only change to another health plan if:

- The member has an annual right to change health plans.
- The member has moved to another area.
- The member wants to keep members of their family together in the same health plan.
- The member is seeking to maintain continuity of their health care.
- The member loses Medicaid eligibility and regains it after more than 120 days.

How will changing to another Medicaid health plan affect my patient's treatment?

Before making a health plan change, Priority Partners members should check that their current providers are participating in the new health plan's network. There are also continuity of care protections for members switching to a new health plan so they can continue their current care if the member contacts the new Medicaid health plan.

- They have the right to transfer an authorization or keep seeing an out-of-network provider if they are currently getting medical care.
- These rights usually last 90 days from when new coverage starts or until the treatment ends—whichever is first.
- Pregnant members can continue seeing an out-of-network provider through pregnancy up to the first doctor's visit after birth.
- These rights do not apply to certain benefits and services (e.g., dental benefits, specialty behavioral health benefits).

What information can my practice share with Priority Partners members if they have questions?

In addition to answering your patients' questions about which health plan your practice participates with, you can share the following resources:

- [Priority Partners Health Plan Accreditation Suspension Member FAQ](#)
- [MCO Comparison Chart](#)
- [HealthChoice Provider Directory](#)

Will Medicaid take any action against Priority Partners because of the health plan accreditation suspension?

The Maryland Department of Health takes health plan quality and program integrity very seriously. It is our priority to ensure a high quality of care for those enrolled in the Maryland Medicaid program. That is why on February 28, the Maryland Department of Health issued sanctions to Priority Partners in response to their health plan accreditation suspension. Sanctions include:

- Suspending new enrollment. No new members may enroll with Priority Partners beginning on March 17, 2025.
- Notifying current Priority Partners members about the option to change health plans between March 17, 2025, and May 16, 2025.

These sanctions will remain in effect until NCQA lifts Priority Partners' health plan accreditation suspension.

Why isn't Priority Partners taking new members after March 17, 2025?

This is one of the sanctions that the Maryland Department of Health imposed on Priority Partners for having their NQCA accreditation suspended. People new to Medicaid may not pick Priority Partners as their Medicaid HealthChoice managed care organization (MCO) beginning on March 17, 2025, until such time that NCQA lifts Priority Partners' health plan accreditation suspension.

Are there any exceptions to Priority Partners not taking new members?

There are three exceptions for new members:

1. A Priority Partners member who lost their Medicaid coverage and regained it within 120 days will rejoin Priority Partners.
2. A family with one or more household members enrolled in Priority Partners and one or more members in a different Medicaid health plan can transfer the members to Priority Partners to maintain family unity.
3. A baby born to a Priority Partners member may join Priority Partners.

Why can the Maryland Department of Health sanction Priority Partners?

Each HealthChoice managed care organization contracts with the Maryland Department of Health to provide members with Medicaid-covered services. The contract lists all the things they must do and what will happen if they do not meet contractual requirements. One of those requirements is having NCQA health plan accreditation. A sanction is a penalty for not meeting all the contractual requirements.

What is the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)?

NCQA is an independent nonprofit that aims to improve the quality of health care. They use data and other industry standards to measure and report on health plans' performance. They also set standards on health care quality by comparing health plans nationally. Their Health Plan Accreditation program is a national standard for evaluation in health care.

What is NCQA health plan accreditation?

It is a process that assesses a health plan's compliance with nationally recognized standards of quality and safety. NCQA health plan accreditation means that they have evaluated a health plan

and found that the plan meets very high standards for quality care. A plan that earns health plan accreditation meets the standards for more than 100 measured elements. Learn more about these [accreditation requirements](#).

What does it mean for a health plan to have its health plan accreditation suspended by NCQA?

It means that NCQA found a compliance issue that needs further investigation. NCQA and the health plan will work on a corrective action plan to fix the issues. An NCQA suspension will remain in place until a health plan fixes the issues that led to the suspension.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

If you have any questions about the Priority Partners' health plan accreditation suspension, call 888-895-4998 option 4.