

Availity Essentials Referral Request Tool Enhancement: Change to Single Code Submission

The Referral Request tool in Availity Essentials™ is the digital platform used by Primary Care Physicians (PCPs) to manage referrals for Florida Blue members enrolled in myBlue HMO and Florida Blue Medicare HMO plans. The tool helps efficiently manage referrals to ensure patients receive timely and necessary care from participating specialists.

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve the referral process, we have implemented a change to how you enter Evaluation and Management (E&M) Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®) codes within the Referral Request tool for Florida Blue and Truli for Health. Effective **December 14, 2024**, referrals can only be submitted with a single E&M CPT code.

What Is Changing

Previously, submitting multiple E&M codes on a referral request would result in a discrepancy for the number of approved specialist visits. If two E&M codes were submitted, the referral response displayed two approved specialist visits for each code, rather than two visits total. To prevent this, the single line format for referral responses was introduced.

This change ensures the referral response shows the accurate number of approved specialist visits for the 180-day period. As a result, only one specialist referral is required from the PCP for the timeframe. Multiple referrals are not required and no additional transactions are necessary for this period.

Claims are processed based on the code billed by the specialist. The E&M code on the specialist's claim does not need to match the code submitted on the referral.

Important Reminders

- Specialist referrals are approved for two visits over a 180-day period, except oncologist referrals, which are approved for six visits during a 180-day period.
- In addition to the referral requirements, specialists are required to request authorizations via Availity for all procedures that must have an authorization prior to rendering the services.
- Do not use E&M procedure codes 99242-99245 for Florida Blue Medicare HMO member referrals. These codes are marked as “(Not for use with Medicare) Office consultations for new or established patients (requiring 3 specific components)” and only apply to myBlue HMO member referrals.