**Policy:**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont (Blue Cross) adopts and distributes clinical practice guidelines from nationally recognized authorities and/or evidence-based research, in an attempt to decrease variations in clinical practice that could adversely impact patient outcomes as a result of over, under, or inappropriate utilization of services.

These guidelines assist practitioners and members to make decisions about appropriate health care for specific clinical circumstances. Clinical practice guidelines may represent the standard of care upon which Blue Cross profiles network primary care practitioners,
obstetrician/gynecologists, and mental health and substance use disorder (MHSUD) practitioners each year. Blue Cross determines practitioner compliance and performance measurement with the adopted clinical practice guidelines through medical record reviews, targeted clinical studies, and provider performance analysis. Blue Cross uses Health Plan Employer Data Information Set (HEDIS) and other performance measurements in the review.

Clinical practice guidelines are also the scientific evidence used to inform present quality improvement projects. Blue Cross quality improvement staff update the guidelines at least every two years, and more frequently if needed, and gain approval for any changes from the Clinical Community Advisory Group (CCAG).

Blue Cross will provide written notification to practitioners that the information is available on the Blue Cross website, in the Provider Resource Center.

**III. Biennial REVIEW**

The Accreditation Team reviews and updates this policy biennially and as needed.