



On January 1, 2019, Blue Shield of California will complete the integration of Care1st Health Plan into its operations, and Care1st's name will change to Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan. The newly named health plan will remain a separate company and a wholly owned subsidiary of Blue Shield of California.

In this Q&A column, Greg Buchert, MD, MPH, president and CEO of Care1st, and a CMA member for 27 years, answers questions about this transition and Care1st's commitment to its providers and plan members.

- 1. Will Care1st go away as a company?** No. On January 1, 2019, we will change our name to Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan and will continue to operate independently from Blue Shield of California as a separate company. Our mission and member-first approach will remain the same, as will our strong commitment to building a quality network of providers and partners.
- 2. Why is the Care1st name changing?** There is another member health plan named CareFirst (in Maryland) in the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. We are not able to keep the Care1st name due to the Association's requirements. We will stop using it on January 1, 2019.
- 3. Will you continue to offer the same Medicare Advantage HMO plans you currently provide in 2019?** Yes. There will be no changes to the list of plans we will offer for January 1, 2019 enrollment, although the plan product names will be new. For example, in 2019 the current Care1st Advantage Optimum plan will be renamed Blue Shield Promise Advantage Optimum. Similarly, all the Care1st plans – Medicare, Medi-Cal and Cal MediConnect - will use the Blue Shield Promise name next year.
- 4. Will the Care1st and Blue Shield provider networks be combined starting January 1, 2019?** No, all the Care1st contracted networks of primary care physicians (PCPs), specialists and hospitals will remain separate on and after January 1, 2019. Care1st members will not have access to see other Blue Shield providers unless those providers are also contracted with Care1st.
- 5. Do Care1st providers need to contract with Blue Shield of California?** No, they do not need to contract with Blue Shield of California to continue providing services for Care1st Medicare Advantage HMO, Medi-Cal or Cal MediConnect members. Later this year, we plan to mail a notice amendment to Care1st participating providers to update the provider contracts to reflect the name change. This amendment will not include any material changes, including changes to reimbursement rates.



- 6. Can members continue to see their Care1st primary care physician (PCP) and/or specialists?** Yes, Care1st members can continue to see their PCP and specialists as participating providers. All the Care1st contracted networks, including hospitals, will remain available to our members. We will continue to put our members' care first, and we'll remain focused on providing the same reliable care.
- 7. What is the Care1st data migration?** On January 1, 2019, the newly renamed Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan will be moving member and provider data into Blue Shield of California's systems as part of our information-technology infrastructure improvements to better support our members and providers. This migration will result in several changes and will require some action on the part of current Care1st network providers.
- 8. What are some of the key changes that network physicians and provider organizations will experience because of the data migration?** There won't be many changes but some examples that physicians and provider organizations can expect are new provider identification numbers, new member identification numbers, new member ID cards, and changes to submission processes for encounter data.
- 9. How can providers get more information on the name change or the data migration?** Providers can send an email to Provider_Relations@care1st.com or they can call our new phone number, (800) 468-9935, and choose the department they need to reach through the menu options.
- 10. Will there be one combined company website beginning January 1, 2019?** No, there will continue to be two separate websites in 2019. Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan's website will be www.blueshieldca.com/promise. Blue Shield of California's website will continue as www.blueshieldca.com. In 2019, providers will still be able to view and verify Care1st membership and eligibility at <https://www.blueshieldca.com/promise/provider>. Passwords and user names will remain the same.