

2nd.MD FAQ for A&M System Employees

2nd.MD offers direct access to the world's best doctors via video or phone, delivering expert 2nd opinions within just 3 days. 2nd.MD's revolutionary services provide members with resources to make better decisions and gain peace of mind. When facing a new diagnosis, possible surgery, or change in medication, access to specialists from top institutions, such as Mayo Clinic, Massachusetts General, and Johns Hopkins, can make a world of difference in discovering the best possible treatment options. 2nd.MD delivers a concierge level of care from expert recommendations, records retrieval and consultation coordination to detailed expert notes and follow-up. 70% of expert second opinions lead to a change in treatment plan, resulting in the cancellation in 1 out of 9 surgical procedures.

Who can use this new service?

2nd.MD is available to eligible members, including all employees, retirees and their covered dependents enrolled in the A&M Care, J Plan and 65+ Plans.

Do the A&M Care plans require a second opinion?

No, the A&M Care plans do not require a second opinion. Use of 2nd.MD is completely optional and there is no cost to members.

When can/should eligible members use 2nd.MD?

Eligible members can use 2nd.MD when they have been diagnosed with a new condition and have received a plan of treatment, if they are facing a possible surgery, or even if they are considering a medication change.

How does it work?

First, the member will go online or call 2nd.MD to activate her account. During this process, it will ask for the person's medical question or concern. Asking a question is not necessary, but does begin the case.

Then, 2nd.MD assigns a trained doctor/nurse to handle the case. They recommend specialists who are a best fit for the case, selected from their network of world-renowned, U.S. medical specialists that cover over 120 subspecialties. 2nd.MD employs a rigorous selection process for its physicians, evaluating a physician's training, professional achievement, research, board certifications, recognitions, etc. Physicians can apply, but must be invited to join the network. 95% of 2nd.MD physicians work or were trained at a U.S. News & World Report's "Best Hospitals" designated medical center.

Once a specialist is selected, they schedule a video or phone consultation providing direct access to the best doctors available, regardless of the member's location. In addition, they help retrieve medical records and provide them to the chosen specialist ahead of time, so that the specialist has time to review the files prior to the consultation.

After the consult is completed, the specialist will provide written notes to the member. Referrals for top local doctors who accept the member's insurance are available, as well as referrals to top institutions that are best equipped to carry out the treatment.

Are members required to follow the advice provided by the 2nd.MD specialist?

No. The patient may choose to follow the specialist's advice or not. Patients may choose to share the information with their own local physicians or not. Those choices are up each patient.

Is 2nd.MD HIPAA-compliant?

2nd.MD service is compliant with the latest privacy and security requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Assurance Act, as well as the refinements made by the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). These Legislative Acts have laid down guidelines for the protection of health insurance coverage of workers and their families, and created national standards for electronic health care transaction. Any and all communications on 2nd.MD's networks promise confidentiality. 2nd.MD also makes maximum effort to release only the minimum required information for any transaction requested.

What security measures are taken to protect the physician and consumers?

2nd.MD respects the privacy rights of its members and doctors and is committed to protecting their personal information. 2nd.MD protects against anticipated threats and hazards to the security and integrity of customer information and personal records by blocking unauthorized access. All information on 2nd.MD is kept encrypted and secure. Information is never shared with third parties or the public. Your information is encrypted using SSL secured web pages. Chats take place on a secure connection. Safety, privacy and security are paramount at 2nd.MD.

How is 2nd.MD different from its competition?

Members need not wait months for an appointment or take off from work to travel to a specialist, because they are now able to receive cutting edge medical advice from anywhere via video or phone.

What equipment is required for 2nd.MD users?

For a video consultation, an internet connection, a microphone and a web cam are required. Video consults are also available via mobile devices. 2nd.MD works directly through all major browsers including Firefox, Safari and Chrome.

A phone alternative is also available. Members uncomfortable with video chat or who may not have the necessary equipment or those with unreliable Internet speeds can still enjoy access to an expert physician from home via phone. For international or non-English speaking members, 2nd.MD offers a free optional translator add-on where a translator will join a video consult with the doctor and patient.

Surely there is a cost for this?

The A&M System pays a per-member/per-month cost for those enrolled in the A&M Care plans listed above. There is no cost to members whether or not the service is used.

Are the 2nd.MD specialists in-network and are their recommendations covered by our plan?

The visit with the 2nd.MD physician is covered by the 2nd.MD service. So, that part is at no cost and will not show up on any BlueCross BlueShield (BCBSTX) as a claim or otherwise. They also do not prescribe your medication or equipment or deliver true medical services. They only provide a report, based on their expertise, about things that they recommend based on your particular case.

2nd.MD usually recommends that the member share that information with a personal physician or specialist regarding the second opinion. What 2nd.MD finds is that most often the physician will recognize the 2nd.MD specialist as an expert in the field and will honor the recommendations of that person. Then, the personal physician will work with the member to change medications or treatments.

2nd.MD specialists are not part of the BCBSTX network necessarily and will not know the limitations of the Texas A&M System health plan. It is the member's responsibility to know the plan. A member may find out more on the System Benefits website at (<http://www.tamus.edu/business/benefits-administration/>) under Employee/Retiree Benefits and then under Health. Depending on circumstances, the member may also want to contact Blue Care Connection at the phone number on the back of the BCBSTX card. They can help with case management and will be able to help members understand what the plan will cover.