

What is the Spina Bifida Health Care Program?

The Spina Bifida Health Care Program is a federal health benefit program administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs for Vietnam veterans' birth children who have been diagnosed with spina bifida (except spina bifida occulta). We are a fee for service (indemnity plan) program that provides reimbursement for medical services and supplies related to spina bifida and conditions associated with spina bifida.

Who is eligible for the Spina Bifida Health Care Program?

To be eligible for the Spina Bifida Health Care Program, you must first be eligible for a monetary award under the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). The Denver VA Regional Office makes the determination regarding that entitlement. Once a monetary award is made by the VBA, we are provided that information by VBA and enrollment in the Spina Bifida Health Care Program is automatic.

Is preauthorization required for services?

The following services require preauthorization:

- dental services,
- durable medical equipment (in excess of \$2,000),
- mental health services,
- organ transplants,
- substance abuse treatment,
- training of family members,
- travel (other than mileage for local travel),
- hospice.

When is preauthorization required for travel?

Travel to a physician in your local commuting area (generally less than 50 miles from your home) does not require preauthorization. If your local attending physician recommends that you be examined/treated by a specialist that is not in your local area (someone who is in another part of the State or country), you will need to obtain preauthorization. The request for preauthorization should include your attending physician's recommendation for evaluation, an explanation of why the service cannot be performed by a specialist in the local area, and the name and address of the physician to whom you are being referred.

Are there times when travel will not be covered?

Yes. Travel will not be covered in the following circumstances:

- When a medical provider in your local area could provide the same services sought from a provider outside of the local area.
- When the use of an ambulance is not medically necessary.
- When an ambulance is not medically required and used in lieu of regular transportation (privately owned vehicle or taxi).
- Travel for reasons other than to obtain medical service/treatment (for example, travel to attend meetings or conferences).

How do I request preauthorization?

Requests may be made by fax, 303-331-7807 or in writing to the VA Health Administration Center, PO Box 469065, Denver, CO 80246-9065. If the preauthorization relates to a medical service or supply, the medical provider should submit the request.

How much does the Spina Bifida Health Care Program pay for services?

The Spina Bifida Health Care Program allowable charge is based on Department of Defense TRICARE rates (in most cases, equivalent to Medicare rates). There are no co-pays or deductible for beneficiaries. We pay 100% of the allowable charge.

How quickly does the Spina Bifida Health Care Program pay claims?

Normally, 95 percent of claims for services are paid within 30 days of receipt.

How do I get more information?

- Check out our website at www.va.gov/hac, select Spina Bifida
- Write us at PO Box 469065, Denver, CO 80246-9065
- To contact us by email, please go to this web link and follow the directions for submitting secure email: <http://www.va.gov/hac/contact>
- Call 1-888-820-1756, Monday–Friday