

DIRECTORY INFORMATION VALIDATION

Acceptance of Established Patients Only

This field indicates if a practitioner is currently taking new patients. The medical group/provider notifies Saint Mary's Health Plans when it learns a practitioner's practice is "closed" to new patients. Saint Mary's Health Plans periodically contacts medical groups/providers to validate this information. Please note there are times that a medical group/provider may not immediately know that a practitioner has limited his/her practice. Before you select a Primary Care Physician (PCP) it is always best if you contact that PCP's office to verify that they are accepting new patients.*

Hospital Accreditation

To be accredited, a hospital voluntarily submits to an ongoing evaluation process to determine if it meets the standards that have been established by an accrediting body. A hospital that is fully accredited by The Joint Commission is in full compliance with rigorous national healthcare quality and safety standards. Obtaining Joint Commission accreditation is validation of an organization's ongoing performance improvement efforts. Hospitals are required to provide Saint Mary's Health Plans with documents to support their accreditation when they are first credentialed and then, at a minimum, every three years after that as a part of the re-credentialing process. You may verify a hospital's accreditation status by visiting <http://www.qualitycheck.org/consumer/searchQCR.aspx>.

Board Certified Practitioner

A specialist who has successfully completed a residency program approved by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) in a specialty that is recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) or by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), and has been certified by an ABMS or AOA member board is considered board certified. Board certification is verified by Saint Mary's Health Plans when a practitioner is first credentialed; then every three years as a part of the re-credentialing process or as the certification expires. You may verify a practitioner's board certification by visiting <http://abms.org/wc/>. Patients who would like to check the certification status of a D.O should also visit <http://osteopathic.org> if the practitioner is not found on the ABMS website.

All board certifications listed are those issued by an ABMS Board or an AOA recognized board.

Spanish Speaking Practitioner

Languages spoken by a practitioner are reported to Saint Mary's Health Plans by the contracted medical group/provider at the time a provider is initially

credentialed and, at a minimum, every three years as part of the re-credentialing process. Saint Mary's Health Plans does not verify or certify the foreign language skills of the physician. If new information becomes known regarding a practitioner's ability to communicate in another language, Saint Mary's Health Plans will update directories. If you have a specific language need, contact the physician's office directly to verify they can meet your needs.*

Medical Group Affiliations

This field designates the medical group, if any, with whom the physician is associated. When a physician joins or leaves one of Saint Mary's Health Plans contracted medical groups, the contracted medical group must notify Saint Mary's Health Plans.

Specialty

A specialty is a particular branch of medicine in which a practitioner focuses. A specialty may be based on a specific body system, such as the heart, a specific age group, such as pediatrics, or on a complex scientific technique used to diagnose or treat certain types of disorders. A specialist may or may not be Board Certified. Saint Mary's Health Plans contracted medical groups/providers validate specialty information at the time a provider is first credentialed and, at a minimum, every three years during the re-credentialing process or as changes in specialty status occur.*

***Limitations to the accuracy of information in the Saint Mary's Health Plans web-based or print provider directory would be the result of human or computer error in requesting information, responding to a request, a data entry error, or in the timeliness of reporting. Saint Mary's Health Plans print directories are limited to the information available at the time the directory is printed.**