



BlueCross BlueShield
of Delaware

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April 1, 2009

Dr. Sofranski
Delmarva Bariatric Center
1324 Belmont Avenue
Salisbury, MD 21804

Dear Dr Sofranski:

Thank you, very much, for sending your bariatric surgical outcomes data and for sharing results of the surgeries, including your gastric banding and bypass patients' starting and most recent weights, and their most recent BMI. We received data from three, in-network, credentialed bariatric surgery providers. The goal of this analysis was to determine:

- Success of the surgery by physician group, as measured by the type of surgery (gastric banding/bypass) and by the associated, average weight loss,
- If there was a significant difference in outcomes among groups and, if so, encourage the sharing of best practices, and
- Whether or not Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware (BCBSD) should modify our pre-certification process for the procedures and/or contracts with bariatric provider groups.

Data by group showed that the overall, average weight loss for gastric banding was lower than gastric bypass by a range of 37%-57.6%. Among patients who reported a follow-up weight, the average was 27-61 lbs. for gastric banding and 63.5-97 lbs. for gastric bypass.

Average weight loss, by group, varied as suggested, above. Of the patients who reported a recent weight, the average weight loss for gastric banding was calculated at 27, 36 and 61 pounds for the three physician groups. For gastric bypass, reported average weight loss was 63.5, 63.7 and 97 pounds. Groups may structure their pre- and post-operative programs differently, resulting in the different outcomes. We are interested in a stronger relationship with the group that is able to achieve the highest sustainable weight loss.

Average weight loss for your patients who reported a recent weight post surgery was calculated at 61 pounds for gastric banding and 97 pounds for gastric bypass. The range of weight loss was 29.5-103.8 pounds for gastric banding and 61.5-158.4 pounds for gastric bypass. Your group reported the highest average weight loss of the three groups, and we encourage you to share your process for achieving success with other bariatric surgeons.

Dr. Sofranski
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Recognizing that the population you treat extends beyond BCBSD members and as a means to standardize the data we are reviewing we are asking you for a copy of the most recent report that you sent to the American Society for Bariatric Surgery. This information may be returned by mail in the enclosed envelope or faxed to Peggy Bell, RN at (302) 421-8863. If you have any questions, please call (302) 421-3261.

Thank you for your assistance in compiling this outcomes data for your BCBSD of Delaware member bariatric surgical patients. Your continued participation in this project is very much appreciated.

Yours truly,



Paul Kaplan, MD, MBA, CPE, FAAFP
Vice President and Chief Medical Officer
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware