

Site of service expansion benefit

Value based benefit design for elective surgeries and low-risk births

The Premera site of service benefit reduces member costs for high-value care at selected locations like ambulatory surgical centers (ASC) and freestanding birth centers. It encourages informed choices, ensures clinical oversight, and aligns cost sharing with care quality, while maintaining member-provider decision-making.

Pillars to our value-based benefit design



Improve member satisfaction with self-directed care



Provide cost-effective care without compromising quality



Reduce administrative burden



Lower total cost of care for members and employers

What's an ambulatory surgical center?

Ambulatory surgical centers (ASCs) are a type of outpatient surgical center. ASCs offer patients the convenience of having surgeries and procedures performed safely outside of a hospital outpatient department (HOPD).

What's a freestanding birth center?

Freestanding birth centers are healthcare facilities that use a midwifery model of care to provide services during pregnancy, labor and delivery, and postpartum care. They often provide a more natural and family-centered approach to low-risk pregnancies.

Care starts with a member and their provider

Not all members are a good fit for an ASC or birthing center. For any medical procedure, members should consult with their provider about the best place for them to receive their care.

PREMERA | 

BLUE CROSS

An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association

069227 (07-28-2025)

ASCs deliver better outcomes at a lower cost

Like inpatient hospitals and HOPDs, ASCs are held to rigorous quality and safety standards. With a specialized focus on certain procedures, members often experience better outcomes along with lower costs.

Common ASC procedures and surgeries

Joint and bone	General	Stomach and colon
• Total joint replacement • ACL repair • Hand or wrist procedures	• Biopsies • Appendix removal • Gall bladder removal	• Colonoscopy • Endoscopy • Hemorrhoid removal

Surgeries performed at ASCs can be **45-60% less expensive** than inpatient and outpatient hospital settings¹

Freestanding birthing centers improve outcomes

Freestanding birth centers have become an increasingly popular option for low-risk pregnancies and access to these centers has grown significantly in the United States. The midwifery care model used at birthing centers has consistently shown that women and babies have better outcomes, including lower rates of preterm- and low-weight births, and higher breastfeeding rates.

Maternal and neonatal outcomes²

	Birth centers	National data
Preterm birth %	4.4	9.9
Low birth weight %	3.3	8.2
Cesarean birth %	12.3	31.9
Breastfeeding initiation %	92.2	83.2

Freestanding birth centers often achieve **higher patient satisfaction** due to longer prenatal visits and individualized postpartum care³

²National Health Indicators by Race for American Association of Birth Centers Strong Start Medicaid Participants 2013–2017 Compared to National Data for Same Period.

Site of service value-based benefit		
Fully insured	OptiFlex	Self-funded
Included with small group and Preferred Choice plans. Opt in for flexible plans	Included with Preferred Choice plans. Opt in for flexible plans	Opt in for flexible plans

Contact your **Premera account representative** for more information.

¹Provista. "Huge Cost Savings and Other Benefits Boost Ambulatory Surgery Center Growth." Provista, www.provista.com/blog/blog-listing/huge-cost-savings-and-other-benefits-boost-ambulatory-surgery-center-growth. Accessed 2 July 2025.

²Gadzinski, Andrew J., et al. "The Future of Ambulatory Surgery Centers: Value-Based Care and the Changing Surgical Landscape." Journal of Clinical Urology, U.S. National Library of Medicine, [pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8827343/](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8827343/). Accessed 2 July 2025.

³Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on the Future of Emergency Care in the United States Health System. "Hospital-Based Emergency Care: At the Breaking Point." National Center for Biotechnology Information, U.S. National Library of Medicine, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/books/NBK555483/. Accessed 2 July 2025.