

Southern California Region

Emergency Department/Hospitalist/Continuing Care Service Agreement

OVERVIEW:

- The following guidelines and processes have been developed to increase consistency of practice across and within medical centers in the Southern California Region when transferring members from the Emergency Department to Skilled Nursing Facilities. These are intended as recommended practices but should not override existing Policies and Procedures or the best judgment of the Emergency Medicine Physicians, Hospitalists, and Continuing Care Physicians, or their designees. ***It is expected that decisions will be made that are in the best interest of safety, quality and service to the patient.***

CONSULTANT COMMUNICATION STANDARD:

- Consultation requests should be made through physician to physician communication. Once a consultant has completed evaluating the patient, it is expected that the consultant discuss the assessment and recommendations with the referring provider.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT TO SKILLED NURSING FACILITY TRANSFERS:

- Patients in the ED will be evaluated by the treating physician in conjunction with the Utilization Management (UM) case manager to determine the appropriate level of care.
- If a patient is identified as appropriate for transfer to a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF):
 - The ED physician will notify the ED case manager or designee.
 - Financial counselor verifies insurance eligibility and provides notice of verification to the ED case manager.
 - May be performed by admitting clerk if no financial counselor available, if applicable
 - The ED case manager or designee complete the following:
 - Verify the member's benefits (including available SNF days)
 - Initiate calls to find an accepting SNF
 - Notify the ED physician and Hospitalist once a receiving SNF has been identified
 - If a Specialist initiated the referral, the ED Case Manager will notify the Treating Specialist rather than the Hospitalist.
 - Work with the member and/or member's designee to arrange for a transfer, including transportation arrangements
 - Transportation may be arranged by an ED Clerk or ED Nurse, if applicable
 - The ED Physician will contact the Hospitalist to transition the case.
 - If a Specialist initiated the referral, the ED Physician will notify the Treating Specialist rather than the Hospitalist to transition the case.
 - The Hospitalist will page the Continuing Care Physician to initiate a warm handoff.

RESPONSE TIME STANDARDS:

- For Warm Handoffs:
 - Physicians on call are expected to return their pages within 20 minutes of being paged.
 - If there is no response after 20 minutes, the physician will receive another page.
- Identification of an accepting SNF:
 - It should take no more than 1 hour for the SNF to determine if they will accept or refuse the transfer.
 - Whether the result is acceptance or refusal of a transfer, a resolution will occur within 2 hours.
- If a physician on call cannot be contacted, the Continuing Care Physician in Charge may be called upon for assistance.