



A Specialty Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan

Provider Manual

Effective January 1, 2025

Contracting and Provider Relations

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Section 1: Introduction

We would like to welcome you to PHC California; as a network provider, you play a very important role in the delivery of health care services to our enrollees.

This Provider Manual is intended as a guideline for the provision of covered services to PHC California enrollees. This manual contains policies, procedures and general reference information, including the standards of care required by PHC California.

We hope this information will help you better understand the health plan's operations. We look forward to working with you and your staff to provide quality managed health care services to PHC California enrollees.

PHC California is a specialty Medi-Cal managed care plan designed for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. It was created by AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) and the California Department of Health Services (DHCS), the Medi-Cal Managed Care Division in 1994 and serves eligible Medi-Cal beneficiaries who live in Los Angeles County; PHC California transitioned to a Full Risk (Knox-Keene) Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan effective July 1, 2019.

PHC California is AHF's first managed care plan which was followed in 2006 by PHP, a special needs Medicare Advantage plan with prescription drug coverage. PHC California currently operates in Los Angeles County California. Should you ever have questions about PHC California, please contact Contracting and Provider Relations at (888) 726-5411 or capr@aidshhealth.org, Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 5:30 pm. You may also visit our provider section on our website at www.phc-ca.org/providers.

Section 2: How to Contact the Plan

Contracting/Provider Relations: PHC California 1710 N. La Brea Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90046 capr@ahf.org	Credentialing: Tel: (323) 436-5019 Fax: (888) 235-8256
After-Hours Nursing Advice Line: Tel: (800) 797-1717	Eligibility: Tel: (800) 263-0067 Fax: (888) 235-8552 Email: php@positivehealthcare.org
Care Coordination: Tel: (800) 474-1434 Fax: (888) 235-8327	Member Services: Tel: (800) 263-0067 Fax: (888) 235-8552 Email: php@positivehealthcare.org
Claims Department: Tel: (888) 662-0626 claims@positivehealthcare.org	Pharmacy Services/ Pharmacy Technical Help Desk: Tel: (888) 554-1334 Fax: (888) 238-2244 Email: pharmacyhelpdesk@aidshealth.org
Claim Submissions: Electronic Payer ID: 95422	Utilization Management: Tel: (800) 474-1434 Fax: (888) 238-7463 Email: UMCAAuthCoordinators@ahf.org

Section 3: Eligibility and Enrollment

3.1 Plan Eligibility

PHC California is a voluntary prepaid health plan. Enrollees are not subject to cost sharing for medical services and prescription drugs. Eligibility requirements are as follows:

- Residence in Los Angeles County
- Be 21 years of age or older
- Have full-scope Medi-Cal eligibility (no share-of-cost)
- Have a prior AIDS diagnosis, CD4 count less than 200 or 14% or less, or an AIDS defining illness documented in the medical record
- Be assigned an eligible DHCS aid code

Medi-Cal beneficiaries who are interested in learning more about PHC California or enrolling into the plan should contact Member Services at (800) 263-0067. Agents are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. TTY users should call 711.

Information about the plan, covered services, and provider and pharmacy networks is available at www.phc-ca.org.

3.2 Eligibility Verification

Member Services provides enrollee eligibility to providers by phone. Providers must verify eligibility for the date(s) of service to ensure plan responsibility for services to be rendered. To check the eligibility of a PHC California enrollee, please call Member Services at (800) 263-0067, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. When your staff calls, please have our enrollee's ID number available to give to the agent. The ID number is on the enrollee's plan ID card.

3.3 Enrollee Identification (ID) Card

PHC California sends an enrollee ID card to each enrollee in the plan at the time of enrollment and whenever the enrollee's PCP assignment changes from what is indicated on the card.

An example of the plan's ID card is below.

RxBIN	003585		
RxPCN	97889		
RxGrp	AHF03		
Plan (80840)	7013911129		
ID/RxID	123456789	Issue Date	09/01/17
Name	JANE DOE		
Your PCP	ROBERT SMITH, MD		
Phone	(213) 555-0000		
<small>This is your medical and prescription drug benefit card.</small>			
<small>DHCS 111610 Form 5.4</small>			

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Important Member Numbers Member Services: (800) 263-0067 Pharmacy Customer Service: (888) 436-5018 Mental Health (Magellan Healthcare): (800) 480-4464 Nurse Advice Line: (800) 797-1717 Case Manager: (800) 474-1434 TTY for the Above: 711 Web: www.phc-ca.org	Important Provider Numbers Provider Services/Benefits: (888) 726-5411 Eligibility: (800) 263-0067 Authorizations: (800) 474-1434 Pharmacy Technical Help: (888) 554-1334 Claims: (888) 662-0626 Submit Claims to: Attn: Claims PHP P.O. Box 472377 Aurora, CO 80047
<small>Emergency services rendered to a member by non-contracted providers are reimbursable by the plan without prior authorization. This card does not guarantee coverage. Check eligibility by calling (800) 263-0067.</small>	

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The plan instructs enrollees to show their PHC California ID card and their Medi-Cal Benefits Identification Card (BIC) whenever they obtain medical services or prescription drugs.

If an enrollee does not have an ID card at the time he/she/they presents to your practice or facility, please call Member Services at (800) 263-0067, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The plan will verify eligibility and, if necessary, send our enrollee a new ID card.

3.4 New Enrollee Assignment to Primary Care Provider (PCP)

PHC California will notify PCPs when an enrollee is assigned to him or her either through a new enrollment into the plan, or a PCP assignment change at the request of the enrollee or initiated by the plan. PCPs may opt to receive notice via US mail, fax or secure email. Please contact Contracting and Provider Relations to specify how your primary care practice would prefer to receive notices of new enrollee assignment. Call (888) 726-5411, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. or email capr@aidhealth.org.

a. Enrollee Rosters

PHC California sends enrollee rosters by primary care provider (PCP) assignment to its network PCPs on a monthly basis. The roster includes enrollee ID number,

address, phone number and enrollment effective date. PCPs may opt to receive the roster via US mail, fax or secure email. Please contact Contracting and Provider Relations to specify how your primary care practice would prefer to receive its roster. Call (888) 726-5411, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. or email capr@aidshealth.org.

PCPs should review the roster monthly to ensure each enrollee listed on the roster is a current patient. If any enrollees listed on the monthly rosters are no longer under the care of the assigned PCP or have not seen the PCP within 90 days of appearing on the roster, please advise Member Services by either calling (800) 263-0067, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., or sending a fax to Member Services at (888) 235-8552.

b. Enrollee Disenrollment

Enrollees may voluntarily disenroll from PHC California at any time for any reason. Should an enrollee wish to disenroll, he /she/they may contact Member Services at (800) 263-0067 (TTY 711) Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Enrollees may also request to disenroll from PHC California by contacting California Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS) enrollment broker, Health Care Options (HCO), at (800) 430-4263, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. TTY users should call (800) 430-7077.

Enrollees who wish to leave PHC California will have to choose either LA Care, Health Net, or Kaiser Permanente for their Medi-Cal coverage. Enrollees who wish to enroll in Regular Medi-Cal (fee for-service) must request a medical exemption from plan enrollment from HCO.

PHC California must involuntarily disenroll enrollees from the plan for any of the following reasons:

- Loss of Medi-Cal eligibility;
- Enrollee moves out of the plan's service area, Los Angeles County;
- Enrollee gains Medi-Cal share of cost;
- Enrollee's DHCS-assigned aid code changes to one that is excluded from the plan's contract with DHCS;
- Enrollee requires major organ transplantation (except kidney transplantation), which is covered through Regular Medi-Cal; or
- Enrollee qualifies for certain waiver programs that require disenrollment from the plan.

In addition, PHC California may involuntarily disenroll enrollees from the plan, subject to approval from DHCS, for the following reasons:

- Enrollee refuses to cooperate with his or her primary care provider (PCP);
- Enrollee repeatedly obtains non-emergency care services from providers outside the PHC California provider network without prior authorization; Enrollee behaves in an abusive or violent manner in the presence of PHC California network providers, ancillary or administrative staff;
- Enrollee allows somebody else to use his or her PHC California enrollee ID card or Medi-Cal beneficiary ID card (BIC) to obtain medical services or prescription drugs; or
- Enrollee has been prosecuted and convicted of Medi-Cal fraud involving the inappropriate use of Medi-Cal coverage under the plan.

Should your practice encounter a PHC California enrollee who behaves in an abusive, disruptive, violent or uncooperative manner, please contact Contracting and Provider Relations at (888) 726-5411, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., or fax your concerns to (888) 235-7695. Please also contact Contracting and Provider Relations should you wish to discharge an enrollee for behavior issues. When you report an enrollee for behavior issues, please provide the following details:

- Enrollee name and ID number;
- Date(s) of incident(s);
- Description of incident(s) and enrollee's behavior and actions;
- Names and titles of staff members involved in the incident(s);
- Intervention(s) taken to deescalate and redirect the enrollee's behavior; and any counseling or warnings given to the enrollee.

PHC California will work with providers to determine which course of action is most appropriate to address an enrollee behavior problem, such as warning the enrollee that such behavior could be grounds for involuntary disenrollment; reassigning the enrollee to a new PCP or practice, if applicable; moving the enrollee's specialty care to another specialist or practice; or requesting permission from DHCS to involuntarily disenroll the enrollee from the plan.

PHC California requires that network providers consult with the plan prior to discharging any enrollees from their practices.

Section 4: Covered Services

PHC California covers the medical services, equipment, supplies, and prescription drugs listed in the table below and on the following pages. PHC California enrollees are never subject to any copayments or coinsurance for covered services.

Services	Service Description
Acupuncture	PHC California covers acupuncture services to prevent, modify or alleviate the perception of severe, persistent chronic pain resulting from a generally recognized medical condition. Outpatient acupuncture services (with or without electric stimulation of the needles) are covered; limited to two (2) services per month, in combination with audiology, chiropractic, occupational therapy and speech therapy services; requires prior authorization.
Alcohol Abuse Treatment	Available through the Drug Medi-Cal Program. PHC California will refer members to <u>Los Angeles County Public Health Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Program</u> for such services if necessary. <i>(By clicking on the link above, you will be taken to a website operated by Los Angeles County Public Health and not PHC California.)</i>
Allergy Care	PHC California covers allergy testing and treatment, including allergy desensitization, hypo sensitization, or immunotherapy when medically necessary; no limits; certain services require prior authorization.
Ambulance Services	For emergencies; covered when medically necessary; no limits.
Anesthesiologist Services	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Audiology Services	Covered when medically necessary; limited to two (2) services per month, in combination with acupuncture, chiropractic, occupational therapy and speech therapy services; requires prior authorization.

Services	Service Description
Behavioral Health/Mental Health Services	<p>Behavioral health treatment includes services and treatment programs, such as applied behavior analysis and evidence-based behavior intervention programs that develop or restore, to the maximum extent practicable, the functioning of an individual; covered when medically necessary; requires prior authorization.</p> <p>Managed by Magellan Health Services; Magellan’s Toll-Free number 800-480-4464-Assistance available 7 days a week, 24 hours per day. http://positivehealthcare.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Provider-Bulletin-Magellan-Health-06.03.2019.pdf</p>
Cancer Clinical Trials	<p>PHC California covers a clinical trial if it is related to the prevention, detection or treatment of cancer or other life-threatening conditions and if the study is conducted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Studies must be approved by the National Institutes of Health, the FDA, the Department of Defense or the Veterans Administration.</p>
Case Management and Disease Management Services	<p>Covered; no limits.</p>
Certified Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant Services	<p>Covered when medically necessary; no limits; certain services require prior authorization.</p>
Chiropractic Services	<p>Covered when medically necessary; limited to two (2) services per month in combination with acupuncture, audiology, occupational therapy and speech therapy services; limited to the treatment of the spine by means of manual manipulation; procedures require prior authorization. Coverage includes manual manipulation of the spine to correct subluxation.</p>

Services	Service Description
Clinical Services from Los Angeles County Health Services Clinics	Primary care and preventive physician services covered; limit of one (1) visit per day.
Clinical Services from Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)	Primary care and preventive physician services covered; limit of one (1) visit per day.
Clinical Services from Rural Health Clinics (RHCs)	Primary care, preventive physician and laboratory services covered; limit of one (1) visit per day; certain laboratory services require prior authorization.
Dermatology Services	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; certain services require prior authorization.
Dialysis Services (hospital-based and free standing)	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Durable Medical Equipment and Medical Supplies	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; certain services require prior authorization.
Emergency Room Services	Covered when medically necessary; no limits.
Enteral and Parenteral Nutrition	These methods of delivering nutrition to the body are used when a medical condition prevents you from eating food normally. Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.

Services	Service Description
Family Planning Services	Covered; no limits. Available through any participating Medi-Cal provider.
Hearing Aids	PHC California covers hearing aids if you are tested for hearing loss and have a prescription from your doctor; requires prior authorization.
Home Health Care Services <i>(Includes supplies, appliances and durable medical gear for use in the home.)</i>	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Hospice	Covered for terminally ill members who have a life expectancy of six months or less; requires prior authorization.
Immunizations	Covered; no limits.
Inpatient Hospital Services, including Anesthesiologist and Surgical Services	<p>Covered when medically necessary; no limits; certain services require prior authorization.</p> <p>PHC California requires at a minimum that facilities notify the plan within twenty-four (24) hours of admission. Call (800) 474-1434, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. or send notification via fax to (888) 238-7463.</p> <p>Upon receipt of notification, Utilization Management will request medical records for concurrent review for continued stay authorizations.</p>
Investigational Services	Covered when conventional therapies will not adequately treat condition or prevent disability or death; no limits; requires prior authorization.

Services	Service Description
Laboratory/X-Ray/Imaging Services	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; certain services require prior authorization.
Long-Term Care	Covered; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Major Organ Transplant (MOT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective January 1, 2022, all Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans (MCP) are required to cover the Major Organ Transplant (MOT) benefit for adult and pediatric transplant recipients and donors, including related services such as organ procurement and living donor care. • PHC California must authorize, refer and coordinate the delivery of the MOT benefit and all medically necessary covered services associated with MOTs, including, but not limited to, pre-transplantation assessments and appointments, organ procurement costs, hospitalization, surgery, discharge planning, readmissions from complications, post-operative services, medications not otherwise covered by the MCP contract, and care coordination for transplants that the MCP is responsible for. • PHC California will not be required to pay for costs associated with transplants that qualify as a California Children’s Services (CCS) condition if the MCP does not participate in the Whole Child Model (WCM) program. • PHC California must also cover all medically necessary covered services for both living donors and cadaver organ transplants. • PHC California may authorize MOTs to be performed only in approved transplant programs located within a hospital that meets DHCS criteria.

Services	Service Description
Maternity Services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery and postpartum care • Prenatal care • Diagnosis of fetal genetic disorders and counseling 	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; certain services require prior authorization.
Medical Supplies, Equipment and Appliances	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Medical/Drug Treatment Therapies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemotherapy • Radiation Therapy 	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Occupational Therapy	PHC California covers occupational therapy services, including occupational therapy evaluation, treatment planning, treatment, instruction and consultative services when medically necessary; limited to two (2) services per month, in combination with acupuncture, audiology, chiropractic and speech therapy services; requires prior authorization.
Ophthalmology Services	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.

Services	Service Description
Ostomy and Urological Supplies	PHC California covers ostomy bags, urinary catheters, draining bags, irrigation supplies and adhesives when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Outpatient Hospital Services	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Outpatient Surgery (Hospital-Based)	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Optometric and Vision Services	<p>Routine eye exam once every 24 months; PHC California may pre-approve (prior authorization) additional services as medically necessary.</p> <p>Eyeglasses (frames and lens) once every 24 months; contact lens when required for medical conditions such as aphakia, aniridia and keratoconus.</p> <p>Managed by VSP; VSP's Toll Free number is 800-877-7195.</p>
Outpatient Rehabilitation Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardiac Rehabilitation • Pulmonary Rehabilitation 	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Palliative Care	Covered; requires prior authorization.
Physical Therapy	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Physician Primary Care Services	Covered; limited to one (1) visit per day.
Physician Specialty Care Services	Covered when medically necessary; limited to one (1) visit per day per specialist; referral and/or prior authorization required.

Services	Service Description
Podiatry Services	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; certain services require prior authorization.
Prescription Drugs <i>(Includes drugs administered during a medical office visit or in an emergency room.)</i>	Carved out to Medi-Cal RX program
Prosthetic and Orthotic Appliances	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Reconstructive Services	PHC California covers surgery to correct or repair abnormal structures of the body to improve or create a normal appearance to the extent possible. Abnormal structures of the body are those caused by congenital defects, developmental abnormalities, trauma, infection, tumors, or disease. No limits; requires prior authorization.
Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Testing, Counseling and Treatment	Covered, no limits. Available through any participating Medi-Cal provider.
Skilled Nursing Facility Services	Covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization.
Speech Therapy	Covered when medically necessary; limited to two (2) services per month in combination with acupuncture, audiology, chiropractic and occupational therapy; requires prior authorization.
Substance Abuse Treatment	Available through the Drug Medi-Cal Program. PHC California will refer members to <u>Los Angeles County Public Health Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Program</u> for such services if necessary. (For further information concerning the Los Angeles County Public Health Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Program please review http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/sapc/)

Services	Service Description
Transgender Services	PHC California covers transgender services (gender-affirming services) as a benefit when they are medically necessary or when the services meet the criteria for reconstructive surgery. Requires prior authorization.
Transplant Services	Kidney transplants are covered when medically necessary; no limits; requires prior authorization. Other major organ transplants are covered under regular Medi-Cal (fee for service) and require disenrollment from the plan.
Transportation (Non-Emergency)	Covered; no limits; plan must arrange transportation to and from plan-approved locations
Expanded Benefits	Limitations
Health and Wellness Benefit	PHC California members have the choice of either a gym membership at 24 Hour Fitness OR up to \$200 worth of over-the-counter (OTC) pharmacy items every calendar year for no cost.

4.3 Enhanced Care Management

Enhanced Care Management (ECM) is a statewide Medi-Cal benefit available to select members with complex needs. Enrolled members receive comprehensive care management from a single lead care manager who coordinates all their health and health-related care, including physical, mental, and dental care, and social services. Through ECM, members can also be connected to Community Supports services to help address their health-related social needs, such as access to healthy foods or safe housing to help with recovery from an illness. ECM is available to PHC California members in the following specific groups (called "Populations of Focus"):

- Adults experiencing homelessness
- Adults who are at risk for avoidable hospital or emergency department care
- Adults with serious mental health and/or substance use disorder needs
- Adults living in the community and at risk for long-term care institutionalization
- Adult nursing facility residents transitioning to the community

- Adults transitioning from incarceration
- Pregnant and postpartum individuals; birth equity population of focus

There is no cost to the member for ECM services. Members must opt-in to receive ECM services; PHC California's ECM team contacts members who qualify to get consent. If you have a patient you want to refer for possible ECM services, please contact PHC California's Utilization and Case Management department at (800) 474-1434, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. or fax (888) 238-7463.

4.4 Community Supports

Community Supports are services provided by PHC California to address members' health-related social needs, help them live healthier lives, and avoid higher, costlier levels of care. Members may receive a Community Supports service if they meet the eligibility criteria, and if PHC California determines the Community Supports service is a medically appropriate and cost-effective alternative to services covered under the California Medicaid State Plan.

PHC California offers the following Community Supports:

- Community Transition / Nursing Facility Transition to a Home
- Environmental Accessibility Adaptations
- Home Meals / Medically Tailored Meals
- Housing Deposits
- Housing Tenancy and Sustaining Services
- Housing Transition Navigation Services
- Nursing Facility Transition / Diversion to Assisted Living Facilities
- Personal Care Services
- Recuperative Care (Medical Respite)

There is no cost to the member for Community Supports services. Members must opt-in to receive Community Supports. If you have a patient you want to refer for possible Community Supports services, please contact PHC California's Utilization and Case Management department at (800) 474-1434, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. or fax (888) 238-7463.

4.5 Services Available Through Medi-Cal Fee-for-Service (FFS)

The following services are available to PHC California enrollees through Medi-Cal FFS. PHC California Care Managers are available to assist members with care coordination of services available through Medi-Cal fee-for-service (FFS) system:

- Dental services such as the following below are available through Denti-Cal. Medi-Cal covers these dental services for adults effective January 1, 2021.
 - Exams and x-rays
 - Cleanings (prophylaxis)
 - Deep cleanings (scaling and root planning)
 - Fluoride treatments
 - Fillings
 - Laboratory and prefabricated crowns
 - Partial dentures
 - Root canals in front and back teeth
 - Full dentures
 - Other medically necessary dental services

If medically necessary, dental services may exceed the yearly \$1,800 limit.

PHC California enrollees who require dental services should call Denti-Cal at (800) 322-6384 (TTY (800) 735-2922) or visit denti-cal.ca.gov.

4.6 Excluded Services

The following services are not covered by PHC California or regular Medi-Cal:

- Experimental procedures
- Cosmetic surgery (except when required to repair trauma or disease related disfigurement)
- Drugs and medications when used for cosmetic purposes
- Common household items which can be used as durable medical equipment
- Routine non-medically necessary foot-care services
- Personal comfort or convenience items, such as, but not limited to, telephones, televisions, and guest trays
- Erectile dysfunction drugs or therapies

4.7 Limitations

PHC California will make all reasonable attempts to provide covered services; however, it is not responsible for a lapse in care under the following conditions:

- Delay or failure to render service due to major disaster or epidemic affecting facilities or personnel;
- Interruption of services due to war, riot, labor disputes, or destruction of facilities; or
- Failure to provide service when a member has refused a recommended service for a personal reason and/or when a plan provider believes no professionally acceptable alternative treatment exists.

Questions of medical appropriateness or necessity of treatment will be subject to review by PHC California's Medical Director who will consider all opinions and determine whether services are covered by the contract.

4.8 Transportation

PHC California covers emergency (ambulance) transportation and coordinates and arranges non-emergency medical and non-medical transportation for its enrollees follows:

- **Emergency transportation** is covered when an enrollee's medical or physical condition is acute and severe and requires immediate diagnosis and treatment so as to prevent death or disability. Emergency transportation may be provided via ground or air ambulance.

If an enrollee presents in a facility and experiences a medical emergency requiring hospitalization, the attending practitioner must arrange emergency transportation by a licensed ambulance company to the nearest emergency room or call 9-1-1 to obtain ambulance service.

- **Non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT)** is covered when prescribed in writing by a physician, dentist, behavioral health provider, etc. for an enrollee to obtain medically necessary covered services. NEMT is subject to prior authorization, except when an enrollee is transferred from an acute inpatient facility to a SNF. PHC California may provide NEMT through:
 1. Ambulance
 - a. Transfers between facilities for enrollees who require continuous intravenous medication, medical monitoring, or observation.

- b. Transfers from an acute care facility to another acute care facility.
 - c. Transport for enrollees who have recently been placed on oxygen (does not apply to enrollees with chronic emphysema who carry their own oxygen for continuous use).
 - d. Transport for members with chronic conditions who require oxygen if monitoring is required.
2. Litter van service when an enrollee's medical and physical condition does not meet the need for NEMT ambulance but meets both the following: a. Requires that the member be transported in a prone or supine position, because the member is incapable of sitting for the period needed to transport.
 - a. Requires specialized safety equipment over and above that normally available in passenger cars, taxicabs, or other forms of public conveyance.
3. Wheelchair van services when an enrollee's medical and physical condition does not meet the need for litter van services, but meets any of the following:
 - a. Renders the enrollee incapable of sitting in a private vehicle, taxi or other form of public transportation for the period of time needed to transport.
 - b. Requires that the enrollee be transported in a wheelchair or assisted to and from a residence, vehicle, and place of treatment because of a disabling physical or mental limitation.
 - c. Requires specialized safety equipment over and above that normally available in passenger cars, taxicabs, or other forms of public conveyance.

PHC California requires all wheelchair van transport requests submission of a signed Physician Certification Statement (PCS) form to PHC California. Enrollees with the following conditions may qualify for wheelchair van transport following PHC California's receipt of the PCS form:

- Members who suffer from severe mental confusion
- Members with paraplegia
- Dialysis recipients
- Members with chronic conditions who require oxygen but do not require monitoring

4. Air service only when transportation by air is necessary because of the enrollee's medical condition or because practical considerations render ground transportation not feasible. The necessity for transportation by air shall be substantiated in a written order of a physician, dentist, podiatrist, or behavioral health or substance use disorder provider.
- **Non-medical transportation (NMT)** is provided to enrollees so that they may obtain medically necessary services, including those not covered PHC California, but available through Medi-Cal FFS or Los Angeles County providers. NMT does not include transportation of sick, injured, invalid, convalescent, infirm, or otherwise incapacitated members who need to be transported by ambulances, litter vans, or wheelchair vans licensed, operated, and equipped in accordance with State and local statutes, ordinances, or regulations. PHC California may authorize NMT for an enrollee who uses a wheelchair, but whose limitation is such that the enrollee is able to ambulate without assistance from the driver. The NMT requested must be the least costly method of transportation that meets the enrollee's needs. PHC California provides NMT in a form and manner that is both physically and geographically accessible for the member and is consistent with applicable State and federal disability rights laws.

PHC California provides round-trip transportation for an enrollee by passenger car, taxicab, bus, train, or any other form of public or private conveyance (including a private vehicle). NMT also includes mileage reimbursement for medical purposes when conveyance is in a private vehicle arranged by the enrollee and not through a transportation broker, bus passes, taxi vouchers, or train tickets.

Round-trip NMT is available for the following:

1. Medically necessary services, including those not covered under the Contract.
2. Members picking up drug prescriptions that cannot be mailed directly to the member.
3. Members picking up medical supplies including prosthetics, orthotics, or other equipment.

Enrollees who wish to book NMT should call Member Services at (800) 263-0067, Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. TTY users should call 711.

4.9 PCP Scope of Services Requirements

A PCP is required to provide the following services to members assigned to them:

- Conduct an initial health assessment of new members
- Detect, diagnose, and effectively manage common symptoms and physical signs.
- Treat and manage common acute and chronic medical conditions.
- Perform ambulatory diagnostic and treatment procedures (injections, aspirations, splints, minor suturing, etc.)
- Periodic health assessments including history and physical examinations appropriate for the age, sex and medical history of the patient.
- Preventive medical care including health risk identification, reduction and periodic screening.
-
- Foster health promotion and disease prevention (age-specific screening, health assessment and health maintenance activities, health education and promotion, etc.).
- Provide medical case management (refer to community resources and available supplemental programs, coordinate care with specialists, etc.). Refer to specialists appropriately.
- Follow required procedures for specialist, diagnostic, or service referral as promulgated by PHC California.

Section 5: Member Rights and Responsibilities

This document explains the rights of PHC California members, as stated verbatim in the Member's Membership Services Guide. Providers and their office staff are encouraged to be familiar with this document, post in their office (poster provided by PHC California) and are expected to abide by these rights. PHC California's member rights and responsibilities are as follows:

5.1 Member Rights

A PHC California member has the right to:

- To be treated with respect, with PHC California giving due consideration to your right to privacy and the need to maintain confidentiality of your medical information.
- To be provided with information about PHC California and its services
- To be able to choose a Primary Care Provider within PHC California's network
- To participate in decision making regarding your own health care, including the right to refuse treatment
- To file grievances and appeals, either verbally or in writing, about the organization or the care received (Please see Section 11, Grievances and Appeals for specifics.)
- To receive oral interpretation services for your language
- To formulate advance directives
- To have access to family planning services, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Indian Health Service Facilities, sexually transmitted disease services and Emergency Services outside the Contractor's network pursuant to the Federal law
- To request a state Medi-Cal fair hearing, including information on the circumstances under which an expedited fair hearing is possible, the availability of assistance in filing for a hearing, continuation of benefits during a hearing, and the representation rules at a Hearing. (Please see Section 11, Grievances and Appeals for specifics.)
- To have access to, and where legally appropriate, receive copies of, amend or correct your Medical Record
- To dis-enroll upon request
- To access minor consent services
- To receive written Member informing materials in alternative formats, including Braille and large size print upon request
- To be free from any form of restraint or seclusion used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation.

- To receive information on available treatment options and alternatives, presented in a manner appropriate to your condition and ability to understand.
- The freedom to exercise these rights without adversely affecting how you are treated by PHC California, your provider, or the State.

5.2 Member Responsibilities

Members have the responsibility to:

- Participate in your health care and the health care of your family. This means taking care of medical problems before they become more serious.
- Keep in touch with and regularly visit your PHC California Primary Care Physician (PCP)/doctor.
- Cooperate with your PCP/doctor, follow his/her instructions regarding your care and take all of your doctor-prescribed medications as directed.
- Arrive on time for your doctor visits. Call if you will be late or need to cancel/reschedule your appointment.
- Be courteous and cooperative to people who provide you or your family with health care services.
- Not let anyone else use your PHC California ID card or Medi-Cal (BIC) card or pretend to be you.
- Not participate in Medi-Cal fraud or any inappropriate use of your Medi-Cal coverage through PHC California or Medi-Cal fee-for-service.
- Be proactive in your health care. Let us know how you like our Plan and how we can improve our services. Participate in our Satisfaction Survey, Client Advisory Committee, and Public Policy meetings. Help us ensure that we are providing you with the highest quality of health care.

5.3 Member Confidentiality

According to PHC California's Medi-Cal Member Rights, members have the right to full consideration of their privacy concerning their medical care program. They are also entitled to confidential treatment of all member communications and records. Case discussion, consultation, examination, and treatments are confidential and should be conducted with discretion. Written authorization from the member or his/her authorized legal representative must be obtained before medical records are released to anyone not directly connected with his/her care, except as permitted or necessitated by the administration of the health plan.

5.4 Office Confidentiality Procedure

All participating Providers must implement and maintain an office procedure that will guard against disclosure of any confidential patient information to unauthorized persons. This procedure should be composed of the following elements:

- Written authorization obtained from the member, or his /her legal representative, before medical records are made available to anyone not directly participating in his/her care: except where otherwise permitted or required by law of subpoena.
- All signed authorizations for release of medical information must be carefully reviewed for authorization information and for any limitations to the release of medical information.
- Each medical record should be reviewed prior to making it available to anyone other than the member or legal representative or the member.
- Only the portion of the medical record specified in the authorization should be made available to the requester and should be separated from the remainder of the member's medical records.
- Any portion of the medical record not indicated by the authorization will be omitted.

5.5 Release of Medical Information Forms

All Providers must maintain a proper release of medical information form for each record request within the patient's medical records.

5.6 Confidential Information

Confidential information also refers to any identifiable information about a member's character, conduct, avocation, occupation, finances, credit, reputation, health, medical history, mental or physical condition, or treatment. More than the medical record constitutes, conversations, whether in a formal or informal setting, e-mail, faxes and letters are other potential sources of confidential member information. Member confidentiality must be maintained at all times when providing health care services and during claims processing.

5.7 Member Satisfaction Survey

PHC California or the State of California, conducts an annual satisfaction survey of its Medi-Cal members. The purpose of the survey is to gather information from members regarding their perception of the health plan; their health care, practitioners, access to care and health plan customer service. The data is used to identify systemic issues that need to be addressed.

Section 6: Access Standards

Clinical Access Standards PHC California is committed to timely access to care for all members. The Access to Care Standards below is to be observed by all Providers.

6.1 Appointments with the Primary Care Physician (PCP)

Members are instructed through their member orientation packets to call their Primary Care Provider Office/Health Care Center (HCC) to schedule appointments for routine care or urgent/emergency visits. The HCC is expected to ensure timely access to Health Plan members.

If the need for specialty care arises, the HCC is responsible for coordinating all services that fall out of the scope of its practice.

6.2 Access Standards

Access standards have been developed to ensure that all health care services are provided in a timely manner. These standards are based on community norms and Medi-Cal standards PHC California monitors the PCP's compliance to the standards. Appointment and waiting time standards are listed below:

Type of Care	Standard (Measured from Time of Request)
Emergency/Urgent Care	Immediate response or outgoing voicemail message must instruct members to call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Room for emergent services.
Urgent Care Appointment – Services that Do Not Require Prior Auth.	Within 48 hours
Urgent Care Appointment – Services that Require Prior Auth.	Within 48 hours
Primary Care Appointment (Non-Urgent)	Within 10 business days

Specialist including Ancillary Appointment (Non-Urgent)	Within 15 business days
After Hours Services	Outgoing voicemail message must instruct members to call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Room for emergent services.
Physical Exam/Preventive Care	Within 30 calendar days of request
First Prenatal Visit	Within 2 weeks
Initial/Staying Health Assessment	Within 120 days of enrollment

6.3 After-Hours Care and Emergencies

The Health Care Center designee must be available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. PHC California requires a practitioner or a registered nurse under his/her supervision to maintain a twenty-four (24)-hour phone service, seven (7) days a week. This access may be through an answering service or a recorded message after office hours. The service or recorded message should instruct members with an emergency to hang-up and call 911 or go immediately to the nearest emergency room. After hour phone calls or pages must be returned within thirty (30) minutes.

6.4 In-Office Wait Time

Members should not wait more than 30 minutes after the scheduled appointment time except when emergency instances disrupt your schedule.

6.5 Primary Care Office Hours

Generally, office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. However, Providers have flexibility to maintain his/her own reasonable and regular office hours. All primary care sites are required to post their regular office hours. Office hours are expected to remain the same for all patients, regardless of insurance or other service eligibility.

6.6 Urgent and Emergency Care at the Primary Care Practitioner's Office

The facility must have procedures in place to enable access to emergency services twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. The facility staff needs to be

knowledgeable about emergency procedures and be capable of coordinating emergency services.

The recommended equipment for required emergency procedures needs to be easily accessible. The emergency inventory list needs to be posted with drug expiration dates. Examples of emergency drugs are epinephrine and Benadryl. Oxygen needs to be secured, full and equipped with a flow meter. The mask and cannula need to be attached. Oral airways and Ambu Bags appropriate for patient population need to be available. If there is need for Basic Life Support or Emergency Medical Services (EMS), dial 911.

6.7 Facility Access for the Disabled

PHC California ensures that participating Health Care Centers provide access for disabled members in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Access should include availability of ramps, elevators, modified restrooms, designated parking spaces close to the facility, and drinking water provisions.

6.8 Monitoring Access for Compliance with Standards

PHC California regularly monitors and audits the appointment and access standards identified in this Section, and others per applicable rules, regulations, contracts, and guidance. PHC California conducts quarterly random appointment checks to determine if the providers' offices meet access standards. This may be accomplished through periodic surveys and/or test calls. A random sample of contracted Providers offices are selected for the survey. Results of the survey are distributed to the providers after its completion. Contracted providers are responsible for responding to any appointment and/or access deficiencies identified by PHC California review methods, including the following:

- Access to care survey's
- Facility Site Review (FSR)
- Exception reports generated from Member grievances
- Medical records review
- Random Member surveys
- Feedback from PCP regarding other network services (i.e., pharmacies, vision care, hospitals, laboratories, etc.)
- Provider office surveys or visits including but not limited to, routine care, urgent care, preventative care, after hours information, and secret shopper.

6.9 Timely Access to Care: Sensitive and Confidential Services for Adolescents and Adults Sensitive Services:

- Sexual Assault
- Drug or alcohol abuse for children 12 years of age or older
- Pregnancy
- Family Planning
- Sexually transmitted diseases for children 12 years of age or older
- Abortion Services
- HIV testing/counseling

The following is a brief guide on providing access to members for these sensitive areas.

6.10 Timely Access to Services and Treatment Consent

Members under the age of twelve (12) years require parental or guardian consent for obtaining services in the areas of sexually transmitted diseases or drug/alcohol abuse. Minors under the age of twelve (12) years seeking abortion services are subject to state and federal law. Those aged twelve (12) and over can obtain any and all of the above services by signing the Authorization for Treatment form.

Timely access is required by providers for members seeking sensitive medical services for family planning and/or sexually transmitted diseases. HIV testing & counseling, as well as confidential referrals for treatment of drug and/or alcohol abuse are required to be coordinated in a timely manner.

6.11 Family Planning Services

To enhance coordination of care, PCPs are encouraged to refer members to Plan Providers for family planning. Members, however, do not require prior authorization from their PCPs to seek family-planning services. This freedom of choice provision is the result of federal legislation.

Contract includes an additional section on Out-Of-Network Family Planning Services as reflected below:

Members of childbearing age may access the following services from out of plan family planning Providers to temporarily or permanently prevent or delay pregnancy:

- a) Health education and counseling necessary to make informed choices and understand contraceptive methods.
- b) Limited history and physical examination.
- c) Laboratory tests if medically indicated as part of decision-making process for choice of contraceptive methods. Contractor shall not be required to reimburse out-of-network providers for pap smears, if Contractor has provided pap smears to meet the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force guidelines.
- d) Diagnosis and treatment of a sexually transmitted disease episode, as defined by DHCS for each sexually transmitted disease, if medically indicated.
- e) Screening, testing, and counseling of at-risk individuals for HIV and referral for treatment.
- f) Follow-up care for complications associated with contraceptive methods provided or prescribed by the family planning Provider.
- g) Provision of contraceptive pills, devices, and supplies.
- h) Tubal ligation.
- i) Vasectomies.
- j) Pregnancy testing and counseling.

6.12 Missed Appointments

PHC California contracted Providers are responsible for the follow-up of missed appointments. PHC California physicians must have a process in place to follow-up on missed appointments that includes at least the following:

- Notation of the missed appointment in the Member's medical record
- Review of the potential impact of the missed appointment on the Member's health status including review of the reason for the appointment by a licensed staff member of the physician's office (RN, PA, NP, or MD).
- Notation in the chart describing follow-up for the missed appointment including one of the following actions:

- no action if there is no effect on the Member due to the missed appointment, a letter or phone call to the Member as appropriate, given the type of appointment missed and the potential impact on the Member.
- The chart entry must be signed or co-signed by the Member's assigned PCP or covering physician.
- Three (3) attempts, at least one by phone and one by mail, must be made in attempting to contact a member if the Member's health status is potentially at significant risk due to missed appointments.
 - Examples include Members with serious chronic illnesses, Members with test results that are significant (e.g., critical lab result) and Members judged by the treating physician to be at risk for other reasons.
 - Documentation of the attempts must be entered in the Member's medical record and copies of letters retained.

6.13 Emergency Care Services

Emergency Services means those services needed to evaluate or stabilize an emergency medical condition.

Emergency medical condition means a medical condition, which is manifested by acute symptoms of sufficient severity, including severe pain, such that a prudent layperson who possesses an average knowledge of health and medicine could reasonably expect the absence of immediate medical attention to result in:

- Placing the health of the individual (or, in the case of a pregnant woman, the health of the woman or her unborn child) in serious jeopardy,
- Serious impairment to bodily functions or,
- Serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part

Emergency services using the prudent layperson definition or that meet Title 28, CCR Section 1300.67(g), and Title 22, CCR, Section 53216 criteria for an emergency do not require prior authorization. In accordance with California Department of Health Services policies and current law, members presenting to an emergency room facility may be triaged by the emergency room staff, and PHC California will pay the Medical Screening Exam fee.

Emergency room staff is required to notify PHC California's Utilization and Care Management Department at the following number of a member's emergency room visit: (800) 474-1434.

6.14 Emergency Room Discharge and After-Care

After care instructions should be documented in the emergency facility medical record and communicated to the patient, parent or guardian. Discharge from the emergency facility is performed on the order of a practitioner.

6.15 Notification Requirements

Any emergency service resulting in an inpatient admission requires notification and authorization within twenty-four (24) hours (or the next business day) of the admission. Furthermore, "Out of Area" and/or non-contracted emergency service Providers are required to notify PHC California when the member's condition is deemed stable for follow-up care in PHC California's service area and at a contracted facility. PHC California adheres to the regulations set forth in Title 28, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Section 1300.71.4, Emergency Medical Condition and Post Stabilization Responsibilities for Medically Necessary Health Care Services.

6.16 After Hours Nursing Advice Line

PHC California delegates after hour advice for members to Citra. Access to the advice line is available to all members. Licensed nurses provide the services:

- Advise and refer members to appropriate level of care in a timely manner
- Coordinate the member's care with the physician
- Notify physicians of member's ER visit and need for future care
- Educate members on health issues
- Assist in identifying members who might benefit from care management

Members can contact the PHC California Urgent Care/Nursing Advice Line at (800) 797-1717. The line is available after PHC California's standard business hours of 8:30 am to 5:30 pm PST, Monday through Friday, twenty-four (24) hours a day on weekends and PHC California holidays.

PHC California Holidays include:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (July 4th)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas

Section 7: Utilization Management

Utilization Management (UM) is an on-going process of assessing, planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating the utilization of health care services for PHC California members.

Licensed utilization management staff is responsible for obtaining all pertinent clinical indications and medical record information necessary to perform thorough assessments of requested referrals and service authorizations. The licensed UM staff is responsible for application of utilization review criteria/guidelines to each individual case and for referral to the Medical Director when criteria are not met.

7.1 Admission Review

The UM Department staff are responsible for reviewing submitted clinical documentation on all prior authorization requests. UM staff will make at least three (3) outreach attempts to obtain additional clinical documentation if the submitted request does not contain sufficient information to make a favorable decision. This information is obtained via fax within 24 hours of admission (or next business day) to ensure the admission to an acute care hospital is appropriate/medically indicated in accordance with the illness or condition and confirm information obtained during prior authorization of elective admissions. Medical record review is also required on all emergency inpatient admissions to determine medical necessity.

7.1.1 Notification of Admissions

All elective and emergency inpatient admissions must be reported to PHC California within forty-eight (48) hours of the admission (or the next business day). These notifications can be submitted by faxing the patient's admission face sheet to PHC California UM Department Fax: (888) 238-7463. Providers who have access to our E-Health Solutions Authorization Provider Portal may submit directly to the Portal.

7.2 Concurrent/Continued Stay Review

Concurrent/Continued Stay Review is a process coordinated by the Utilization Management representative during a member's course of hospitalization to assess the medical necessity and appropriateness of continued confinement at the requested level of care. Hospital UM staff must fax the following clinical documentation to support the continued stay:

- Daily Clinical Review
- Emergency Room Report
- Discharge Plan (to begin at time of admission)
- Progress notes (including Admission History & Physical (H&P))
- Consults (including Psychiatric H&P/MSE, as applicable)
- Medication Administration Record
- Lab Results (including culture studies)
- Diagnostic tests (i.e. Radiology, CT, MRI)

Clinical updates must be faxed daily to the Utilization Management Department at (888) 238-7463.

7.3 Discharge Planning Review & Submission of Discharge Information

Discharge planning begins within 24 hours of notification of the inpatient admission. Such planning is designed to identify quality-driven treatment intervention for post-hospital care needs. It is a cooperative effort between the attending physician, hospital discharge planner, PHC California UM staff, including its Medical Director, ancillary providers, and community resources to coordinate care and services.

Discharge Information must be submitted to Utilization Management on the day of discharge but no later than 48 hours from the day of discharge. Discharge Information includes the following documents but not limited to:

- The practitioner responsible for member's care during their inpatient stay
- Procedures or treatment provided
- Diagnoses at discharge
- Testing Results: this includes documentation of pending tests or indicates member has no pending tests
- Discharge Medication List
- Discharge Instructions: this includes instructions for the PCP or ongoing care provider for the member's care post-discharge
- Post discharge orders for medical goods and services, e.g., home health, DME supplies, infusion services, rehab services, etc.

Discharge Information can be faxed to the Utilization Management Department: (888) 238-7463.

Discharge Summaries must be submitted to the Utilization Management Department no later than thirty (30) days following the day of discharge.

7.3.1 Retrospective Review

Retrospective Review is a review process performed by the PHC California UM and/or Claim Review staff and Plan Medical Director, after services have been rendered, to determine:

- If unauthorized services were medically necessary/appropriate.
- If services were rendered at the appropriate level of care and in a timely manner.
- If any quality-of-care issues exists.
- If provider claims appeals are in order.

The attending physician, and/or hospital/facility is notified in writing of the claim payment determinations via the "Explanation of Benefits."

7.4 Ancillary Services (Home Health, Durable Medical Equipment, Hospice)

Referrals for any ancillary services including Home Health and Durable Medical Equipment require authorization from the Utilization Management (UM) Department.

7.5 Skilled Nursing, Long Term Care or Rehabilitation Facility Review

When a member is transferred or admitted to a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) or Rehab facility, PHC California uses Title 22 SNF criteria and guidelines to determine the appropriate level of care. All admissions to SNF, LTC or Rehab facility require authorization by the PHC California UM Department.

7.6 Referral Process Purpose of Prior Authorization

Prior authorization is designed to promote the medical necessity of service, to prevent unanticipated denials of coverage and ensure that participating Providers are utilized and that all services are provided are medically necessary and at the appropriate level of care for the member's needs.

The following services typically require prior authorization:

- Elective Inpatient admissions
- Hospital Admissions via the Emergency Department require notification of admission within one (1) business day.
- Outpatient surgeries (except where otherwise specified, i.e., abortions, minor office procedures)
- Major Diagnostic Tests, e.g. MRI, CT scan, Angiography
- Endoscopies

- Hospice Care
- Durable Medical Equipment
- New Medical Technology (considered investigational or experimental) - includes drugs, treatment, procedures, equipment, etc.
- Pharmacy Drug Formulary overrides
- Home Health Care
- Medical Specialty Referrals
- Non-Participating Practitioners/Non-Contracted Facilities
- Chiropractic (limited to treatment of the spine by means of manual manipulation and to a maximum of two (2) services per calendar month)
- Acupuncture is limited to treatment of chronic pain to a maximum of two (2) services per calendar month
- Vision Services

PHC California does not require referral or prior authorization for the following services:

- Primary care provider (PCP) visits
- Preventive care services
- Urgent or emergency care services, including behavioral health services and substance use disorder services
- Confidential HIV testing and counseling
- Treatment of sexually transmitted infections
- Family planning services
- Obstetrics/gynecology care
- Therapeutic and elective pregnancy termination
- Initial mental health assessment
- Sensitive and confidential services (e.g. services related to sexual assault, drug and alcohol abuse for children aged 12 and over). Note the Health Plan is not contracted to enroll individuals under the age of 21.
- Services provided by certified nurse practitioners (CNPs) within the scope of their practice as authorized by California law.
- Chiropractic services when rendered by a chiropractor, limited to a maximum of two services per calendar month. Authorization is required for chiropractic services that exceed the two-visit per month limit. A referral may be required when chiropractic services are provided by out-of-network FQHCs, RHCs, and IHCPs.
- Routine eye exams

- Immunizations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) are viewed as preventive services. In instances where the Medi-Cal Provider Manual outlines immunization criteria that are less restricted than ACIP criteria, the Health Plan provides the immunization in accordance with the less restrictive Medi-Cal Provider Manual criteria.

Referrals and requests for prior authorization of services are sent by Providers to the PHC California Utilization Management Department by mail, fax, and/or telephone based on the urgency of the requested service.

**PHC California Utilization Management
Prior Authorization Services/Referrals**

Telephone: (800) 474-1434

Fax: (888) 272-7656

Mail: PHC California

1710 N. La Brea Ave.

Los Angeles, CA 90046

Providers are required to supply the following information, if applicable, for the requested service:

- Member demographic information (name, date of birth, etc.)
- Provider demographic information (Referring and Referred to)
- Requested service/procedure, including specific CPT/HCPCS Codes
- Member diagnosis (ICD-10 Code and description)
- Clinical indications necessitating service or referral
- Pertinent medical history, and treatment, laboratory data
- Location where service will be performed
- Requested length of stay (inpatient requests)

Pertinent data and information is required by the UM staff to enable a thorough assessment for medical necessity and assign appropriate diagnosis and procedure codes to the authorization.

7.7 Eligibility

Authorization is based on member eligibility at the time of service and is verified by the Utilization Management staff, by the Eligibility representatives in Member Services or by Medi-Cal's automated Eligibility Verification System (AEVS).

7.8 Benefits

Benefit coverage for a requested service is verified by the UM staff during the authorization process.

7.9 Referral to Non-Participating Practitioners or Non-Contracted Facilities In-Area

Except in true emergencies, PHC California provides coverage for only those services rendered by contracted Providers and facilities. The exceptions are:

- PHC California is notified, approves, and authorizes the referral in advance. In these instances, the UM Outpatient Services/Referrals Department will issue an authorization number for the services to be provided. Prior approval must be obtained by the Provider recommending an out-of-plan referral before arrangements have been made for those services. To obtain an authorization number, contact the PHC California UM Outpatient Services/Referrals Department at (800) 474-1434; Fax (323) 436-5032 or (323) 436-5033.
- The patient's medical needs require specialized or unique service available only through a non- contracted Provider or facility. In this case, PHC California will assist the referring Provider in identifying specialists or facilities with the needed capabilities. PHC California must authorize any such referral.

7.10 Referral Form

The Referral Form must be completed and an authorization obtained for all services described above as requiring prior authorization before the service is provided, except in emergencies.

For a referral to be valid the following conditions must be met:

- The member must be currently enrolled with PHC California.
- The member must be assigned to the PCP initiating the primary referral.
- Authorizations are valid for ninety (90) calendar days.
- A Prior Authorization number must be obtained from PHC California prior to services being rendered as described above (except in emergencies).

7.11 When Referral Forms and Notifications Are Required

Procedures not related to the admitting diagnosis (or presenting symptom/diagnosis in the Specialist's office) require prior authorization by PHC California. PHC California retains the right to retrospectively review inpatient and specialist claims to identify

inappropriate consultations and procedures. The right to deny such consultations and procedures is also reserved.

Inpatient Admission Notification Fax: (888) 272-7656, phone: (800) 474-1434

7.12 Completion of a Referral Form

A thoroughly completed Referral Form is essential to assure a prompt authorization.

- A copy of pertinent clinical notes may be attached and substituted for the Clinical History segment of the Referral Form if the required information is present on those clinical notes.
- The form should be transmitted by fax to PHC California for review by the Utilization Management Department and assignment of an authorization number:
 - Fax: (888) 272-7656.
- To assure maximum benefit from a referral, the PCP must clearly state the purpose of the referral and desired services. Patient progress notes, labs, and imaging should be attached to the referral.
- Referral appointments to specialists must be on the same day for emergency care, within three (3) days for urgent care and within thirty (30) days for routine care.

7.13 Prior Authorization Requests - Primary Care Practitioners (PCPs)

- The PCP is always the initial source of care for members. A member may see the PCP without a referral and the PCP may perform essential services in the office environment.
- Prior Authorization is required for necessary member services ordered by the PCP, which cannot be performed in the office.
- If the PCP determines that a specialist is necessary for consultation or care of the patient, the PCP must complete a Referral Form (see below) and obtain a Prior Authorization Number for that referral (unless the service does not require prior authorization as described above).
- Referrals are only made to specialists in the PHC California Network. Exceptions will be made only in rare circumstances and then only with the prior approval of the Medical Director.
- Complete referrals are essential, stating exactly what is to be done and including any clinical information and previous diagnostic testing for the specialty provider's/practitioner's review.

- A system within the PCP's practice should be developed to assure that written responses from specialty referrals are received and incorporated into the Member's medical record, e.g. a Specialty Referral Log.

7.14 Specialists Referrals

- A specialist may see a PHC California member only upon an initial referral from the member's assigned PCP or as a secondary consultant from the primary referred specialist along with the approved prior authorization from UM (Medical emergencies excluded)
- If there is any question regarding the scope of the referral, the PCP should be contacted for clarification.
- The PCP will specify the type of referral:
 - Consultation for diagnostic purposes
 - Consultation to recommend treatment plan
 - Consultation and request to assume care
- When the member is referred for "Consultation to Recommend Treatment Plan" the PCP will specify on the referral form to UM if:
 - The referral is for a consultation visit only, or
 - The referral is for consultation plus one follow up visit.
- Only those diagnostic procedures, tests, and treatments specifically related to the consultation and not defined in the services/referral guidelines, may be performed by the Specialist. This authorization is obtained directly by the specialist following PHC California's prior authorization policies and procedures.
 - Tests, procedures, and treatments must be performed in network facilities.
 - This type of referral is valid for a ninety (90) day period.
- This authorization is obtained by the PCP following PHC California Prior Authorization policies and procedures. Such tests, procedures, and treatments must be performed in network facilities. This referral is valid for ninety (90) days (unless otherwise specified on the Referral Form).
- If the specialist determines that a secondary specialist who is out of the PHC California Network is required, a Medical Review is required.

NOTE: PHC California is **ONLY** financially responsible for those services that are Medically Necessary and specified in the Referral form by the PCP to Specialist (or Referred Specialist to Secondary Specialist) and have been Prior Authorized by PHC California.

- Verbal communication from the PCP should be provided on any urgent referrals.
- A written response from the specialist should be provided to the PCP within three (3) weeks of care for inclusion in the member's medical record.
- The Prior Authorization/Referral number must be clearly written on the bill submitted to PHC California:

Attention: Claims Department
PHC California
P.O. Box 46160
Los Angeles, CA 90046

If the member is Medicare eligible or has other insurance, submit the claim to that entity first, then to PHC California with the appropriate Explanation of Benefits.

7.15 Prior Authorization Decision Turnaround Time Standards

- Determinations regarding requests for elective services/procedures are made within five (5) working days of request and receipt of medical record information required to evaluate medical necessity and appropriateness.
- Determinations regarding urgent service/procedures are made within seventy-two (72) hours of receipt of medical record information required to evaluate medical necessity and appropriateness. If the request does not meet medical urgency, the UM department will downgrade the status to standard and notify the provider and member accordingly. In the notification, UM will include the member and provide adverse benefits determination process. The PHC California Medical Director makes the final determination to downgrade any authorization from urgent to standard.
- The Provider will be notified of the decision within one (1) calendar day of the decision.
- A list of resources used to make utilization and clinical decisions includes but is not limited to:
 - Medi-Cal Policies and Procedures
 - InterQual
 - US Preventive Services Task Force
 - US Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Health Resources

- and Services Administration HIV/AIDS Bureau (HRSA-HAB)
- Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ)
- American Geriatric Society
- American Diabetes Association
- American Cancer Society
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Medicare Local Care Determinations (LCD) for duals
- Medicare National Care Determinations (NCD) for duals
- American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) Guidelines
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), HRSA-HAB Guidelines for HIV/AIDS Primary Care
- Clinical Practice Guidelines adopted by Utilization Management Committee (UMC) as approved the physician's Medical Administration Policy & Procedure Committee.

Providers who wish to discuss denial or modification of services may contact the PHC California Medical Director at (800) 474-1434.

Clinical Criteria used in a denial or modification decision may be requested by calling (800) 474-1434.

7.16 Provider Referral Tracking System

Providers can track and monitor referrals requiring prior authorization:

1. Staff model providers may access the electronic medical record system, which contains in detail the status of the referral or contact UM as indicated in #2.
2. Contracted providers may contact the Utilization Management Department directly at (800) 474-1434.

7.17 Continuity of Member Care

PHC California and its affiliated health plans and contracted providers must ensure that members receive medically necessary health care services in a timely manner without undue interruption.

The cornerstone of continuity of care is the maintenance of a single, confidential medical record for each patient. This record includes documentation of all pertinent information regarding medical services rendered in the Primary Care Practitioner's (PCP) office or other settings, such as, hospital emergency departments, in-patient and

outpatient hospital facilities, specialist offices, the patient's home (home health), laboratory and imaging facilities.

Providers must have systems in place to ensure the following:

- Maintenance of a confidential medical record.
- Monitoring of patients with ongoing medical conditions.
- Appropriate referral of patients in need of specialty services.
- Documentation of referral services in the member's medical record.
- Forwarding of pertinent information or findings to specialist.
- Entering findings of specialist in the member's medical record.
- Documentation of care rendered in the emergency or urgent care facility in the medical record.
- Documentation of hospital discharge summaries and operative reports in the medical record.
- Coordination of post-hospital follow-up, discharge planning, and after-care.

PHC California does not provide incentives to PHC California Staff for UM decision-making.

7.18 Routine Medical Care

The member's PCP is responsible for providing routine medical care to members, following up on missed appointments, prescribing diagnostic tests and procedures, referrals, and/or laboratory tests. The PCP also ensures that each newly enrolled member receives an initial health assessment within ninety (90) days of enrollment. Each of these items is discussed in more detail within this Provider Manual.

7.19 Referrals

Referrals are made when medically necessary services are beyond the scope of the PCP's practice or when complications or unresponsiveness to an appropriate treatment regimen necessitates the opinion of a specialist. In referring a patient, the PCP should forward pertinent patient information/findings to the specialist. Upon initiation of the referral, the PCP is responsible for initiating the referral tracking system.

7.20 Second Medical/Surgical Opinion

A member may request a second medical/surgical opinion at any time during the course of a particular treatment, in the following manner:

- PHC California members may request a second opinion through their PCP or PHC California's Utilization & Care Management Department. PHC California's Utilization & Care Management Department will assist the member in coordinating the second opinion request with the member's PCP and specialist.
- Members will have their second opinion request submitted to and reviewed by PHC California's Medical Director.
- Second Opinion requests will be reviewed and provided written approval or denial within forty-eight (48) hours of request receipt. In cases where the request identifies an urgent or emergent need, formal approval or denial will be provided within one (1) working day.
- If the request for second medical/surgical opinion is denied, both the member and provider have the opportunity to appeal the decision through the Member Appeals Process.
- If the requested specialty care provider or service is not available within the PHC California network; an approval to an out of network provider will be facilitated by PHC California's Utilization Management Department.
- Only one request for a second medical/surgical opinion will be approved for the same episode of treatment. This applies to both the in network and out of network requests for second medical/surgical opinion.

Under the authorization process utilized by the Utilization Management Department, any medical or surgical procedure that does not meet medical policy criteria (refer to on-line InterQual criteria) is reviewed with a Medical Director. The Medical Director may request a second opinion at any time on any case deemed to require specialty practitioner advisor review. The Utilization Management review criteria may be obtained upon request to the Utilization Management Department.

Upon approval of the request for a second medical/surgical opinion, the PCP's office staff will assist the member in scheduling an appointment with the second opinion practitioner for the member. The PCP or his staff will instruct the member to take a copy of the authorization form and pertinent medical records to the second opinion practitioner.

7.21 Continuity of Care When a Practitioner Contract is Terminated

- Members shall be notified at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the effective date of a practitioner contract termination, or within fourteen (14) calendar days

prior to the change in cases of unforeseeable circumstances. In cases of unforeseeable circumstances, the Compliance Department will coordinate with the Regulatory Contract Managers for approval. PHC California will adhere to the most stringent regulatory standard for all lines of business.

- This policy shall encompass all members assigned to a PCP or that have been treated by a Specialist Practitioner any time during the eight (8) months preceding the effective termination date, currently in treatment or open authorizations.
- PHC California shall arrange for, upon request by the member or a practitioner on behalf of the member, for continuity of care by a terminated practitioner who has been providing care for:
 - An acute condition (defined as medical condition that involves a sudden onset of symptoms due to an illness, injury, or other medical problem that requires prompt medical attention and that has a limited duration).
 - Serious chronic condition (defined as a medical condition due to a disease, illness, or other medical problem or medical disorder that is serious in nature, and that does either of the following: (a) persists without full cure or worsens over an extended period of time, and (b) requires ongoing treatment to maintain remission or prevent deterioration).
 - High-risk pregnancy and/or pregnancy that has reached the second or third trimester.
- For cases involving an acute condition or a serious chronic condition, PHC California will continue to provide the member with health care services in a timely and appropriate basis from the terminated practitioner for up to ninety (90) days or a longer period if necessary for a safe transfer to another practitioner as determined by PHC California's Medical Director, in consultation with the PCP, and terminated practitioner, consistent with good professional practice.
- For cases involving pregnancy, PHC California shall furnish the member with health care services on a timely and appropriate basis from the terminated practitioner, until postpartum services related to the delivery are completed or for a longer period if necessary for a safe transfer to another practitioner as determined by PHC California's Medical Director, in consultation with the PCP, and terminated practitioner, consistent with good professional practice.
- Continuity of care during an inpatient admission shall be reviewed and determined by PHC California's Medical Director in consultation with the PCP, and terminated practitioner.
- Continuity of care for outpatient services, outstanding and ongoing authorizations, for a terminated practitioner, shall be reviewed by PHC California's

Medical Director in consultation with the PCP and other practitioners involved with the patient's care.

7.22 Chronic Care Management Program

PHC California provides a comprehensive Chronic Care Management program to all members. Care Management (CM) focuses on procuring and coordinating the care, services, and resources needed by members with complex issues through a continuum of care.

Care Management is individualized to accommodate a member's needs. In collaboration with and approval by the member's Primary Care Practitioners (PCP), the PHC California RN Care Manager will arrange individual services for members whose needs include ongoing medical care, home health care, hospice care, rehabilitation services, and preventive services. The PHC California RN Care Manager is responsible for assessing all members and notifying the PCP of the evaluation results, as well as making recommendation for a treatment plan.

The RN Care Manager works in conjunction with the PCP, the member, the member's family, other providers, etc., to coordinate and implement the individualized treatment plan of members.

- PHC California adheres to Case Management Society of America (CMSA) Standards of Practice Guidelines in its execution of the program.
- The PHC California RN Care Manager, in conjunction with the PCP and other providers, develops and implements a care plan appropriate to the member's medical needs.
- Care Management services are not delegated to medical groups.

The CM Program is based on a member advocacy philosophy designed and administered to assure the member value-added coordination of health care and services, to increase continuity and efficiency, and to produce optimal outcomes.

7.23 Referral to Medical Care Management

Unlike many other Care Management models, all PHC California Enrollees are eligible for Care Management. All enrollees are assessed to determine their level of acuity and appropriateness for Care Management interventions. Referral by the PCP is not required.

7.24 PCP Responsibilities in Care Management

The member's PCP is the primary leader of the health team involved in the coordination and direction of care services for the member. The PHC California Case Manager provides the PCP with reports, updates, and information regarding the member's progress through the Care Management plan.

The PCP is responsible for the provision of preventive services and for the primary medical care of members eligible for or requiring "carved out" services. The PCP is responsible for early identification of members eligible for "carved out" services and for referrals to specialist/ancillary providers.

Section 8: Claim & Encounter Data

Unless otherwise stated in this Manual, PHC California follows Medi-Cal guidelines for claims processing and payment. These guidelines are contained in the Medi-Cal Provider Manual.

As required by Assembly Bill 1455, the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) has set forth regulations establishing certain claims settlement practices and the process for resolving claims disputes for managed care products regulated by the DMHC.

This section describes PHC California's requirements for provider claims settlement practices and provider disputes.

8.1 Claim Definitions

- **Clean Claim** — a “clean claim” is defined as a claim for services submitted by a practitioner that is complete and includes all information reasonably required by PHC California, and as to which request for payment there is no material issue regarding PHC California's obligation to pay under the terms of a managed care plan.
- **Unclean Claim** – Unclean claims include those with incomplete or missing required information. Claims that contain complete and necessary but invalid information are also unclean. Valid information may be required for all claims or may be required on a conditional basis.
- **Invalid Information** – Claims that include required or conditional information that is illogical, or incorrect (e.g. incorrect Tax ID or NPI when effective) or that is no longer in effect (e.g., and expired number).
- **Timely Filing Limit** — the claim's “Timely Filing Limit” is defined as the calendar day period between the claim's last date of service, or payment/denial by the primary payer, and the date by which PHC California must first receive the clean claim.
- **Received Date** — the “Received Date” is the oldest PHC California date stamp on the clean claim received.
Acceptable date stamps include any of the following:
 - PHC California Claims department date stamp,
 - Primary payer claim(s) payment/denial date

8.2 Initial Claim Submission

Providers are encouraged to submit claims to PHC California electronically. PHC California clearinghouse vendor is Change Healthcare and its electronic payer I.D. 95422

Claims submitted electronically in the appropriate billing format (CMS_1500, UB04, etc.) within 90 calendar days from the date of service, or as stated in the written service agreement with PHC California. The Provider is responsible to submit all claims to PHC California within the specified timely filing limit. PHC California may deny any claim billed by the Provider that is not received within the specified timely filing limit or if the claim submitted does not meet clean claim requirements.

Clean Claims will be paid to contracted providers in accordance with the timeline provisions set forth in the Provider's contract and/or by applicable California State or Federal laws. Unless the subcontracting provider and contractor have agreed in writing to an alternate payment schedule, claims will be adjudicated as follows:

- For clean claims, expect reimbursement within 30 days of PHC California receipt of the claim if submitted electronically.
- For clean claims, expect reimbursement within 45 days of PHC California receipt of the claim if submitted via paper submission.

PHC California will return incomplete claims within fifteen (15) working days of receipt. Providers can check the status of claims status contacting call PHC California's Claims Department at claims@positivehealthcare.org (PHI must be sent securely) or. call (888) 662-0626 to determine whether a claim has been received.

PHC California will adjudicate complete claims, which is a claim or portion of a claim that provides reasonably relevant information or information necessary to determine payer liability and that may vary with the type of service or provider. PHC California may require additional information from a provider where the plan has reasonable grounds for suspecting fraud, misrepresentations or unfair billing practices.

Claims will be submitted to PHC California with the appropriate documentation. The requirements for documentation are designed to streamline the claims payment process. Submission of complete, timely claims allows the payer to process the claims with a minimum of manual handling.

Claims submitted electronically will be adjudicated significantly quicker than paper claim submissions.

Option 1

Claims for services provided to PHC California members should be submitted electronically.

PHC California's electronic submitter I.D. is 95422.

If a claim(s) cannot be submitted electronically through the clearinghouse, paper submission of claims on the appropriate billing form (CMS1500, UB04, etc.) is acceptable.

Option 2

Claims Fax Number:

(888) 235-9274

Claims Submission Requirements

The following information must be included on every claim:

1. Provider name
2. Provider address
3. Name
4. Date of birth
5. Health Plan issued Member_ID
6. Date(s) of service
7. All ICD10 diagnosis code(s) present upon visit
8. Revenue, CPT, HCPCS code for service or item provided
9. Billed charges
10. Place of service or UB04 bill type code
11. Tax ID number
12. NPI number
13. Name and state license number of rendering provider

Claims that do not meet the criteria described above will be returned to the Provider indicating the necessary information that is missing. PHC California will process only-valid

electronic claims received in the proper format that contains the essential data-for electronic claim submission. Claims received from providers that do not meet requirements may be “rejected” for improper billing from the Clearing House. A rejection does not indicate an organizational determination of the Plan, but rather that the claim does not meet the minimum 837 file requirements for review by the Plan and requires correction. Claims submitted and accepted by the Clearing House may be accepted and denied if the claim is missing other required billing elements, i.e., occurrence codes, modifiers, etc. Only current standard procedural terminology is acceptable for reimbursement per the following coding manuals:

- Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) for physician procedural terminology
- International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10-CM) for diagnostic coding
- Health Care Procedure Coding System (HCPCS)

CMS-1500 paper claim submissions must be submitted on form OMB-0938-0999(08-05) as noted on the document’s footer. The Plan accepts the revised CMS-1500 and UB-04 forms printed in Flint OCR Red, J6983, (or exact match) ink.

8.3 Claims Documentation

To ensure timely claim processing, PHC California requires that adequate and appropriate documentation be submitted with each claim filed. Documentation required with a CMS1500 or UB04 claim form:

Documentation	Applies to
Other coverage Explanation of Benefits	All Providers
Dialysis log	Dialysis Service
Doctor’s orders, nursing or therapy notes	Home Health
Full medical record with discharge summary	Hospital
Consult, procedures report	Physician
Emergency room report	Emergency Medicine Physician
Operative report	Surgeon
Minimum Data Set (MDS) Assessment	Skilled Nursing Facility

Providers who are billing PHC California must follow these guidelines.

The following information must be included on every inpatient UB04 claim:

- Patient name, identification number, and date of birth. If subscriber is different from patient, also include subscriber name and identification number
- Provider name and address
- Bill Type
- Tax identification number (Box 5)
- Provider's Medi-Cal identification number (Box 51)
- Accommodation codes (Revenue Codes)
- Attending provider name and Medi-Cal identification number/State License number (Box 82)
- Date(s) of Service
- Admit Type (Box 19)
- Discharge Status (Box 22)
- ICD-10
- Principal procedure code(s) (Box 80-81)
- Authorization number (Box 63)

8.4 Standard Code Sets

Standard Code Sets as required by HIPAA are the codes used to identify specific diagnosis and clinical procedures on claims and encounter forms. All providers are required to submit claims and encounters using current HIPAA compliant codes, which include the standard CMS codes for ICD-10, CPT, HCPCS, NDC, and CDT, as appropriate.

8.5 Claim Receipt Verification

For verification of claims receipt by contacting PHC California's Claims Department:

Attention: PHC California
Claims Department
(888) 662-0626

Claims@positivehealthcare.org

(Do not send unsecured PHI)

8.6 Provider Disputes

A Provider Dispute is defined as a written notice prepared by a provider that:

- Challenges, or requests reconsideration of a claim that has been denied, adjusted or contested.

- Challenges a request for reimbursement for an overpayment of a claim.
- Seeks resolution of a billing determination or other contractual dispute.

All provider disputes require the submission of a Claim Dispute Submission Form, which serves as a written first level request by the provider. Claims Dispute Submission Forms can be located via the following hyperlink:

<https://positivehealthcare.net/california/phc/providers/dispute/>

PHC California will acknowledge the receipt of the dispute within fifteen (15) working days for hard copy submission and within two (2) days for electronic submissions. If additional information is needed from the provider, PHC California has forty-five (45) working days to request necessary additional information. Once notified in writing, the provider has thirty (30) working days to submit additional information or the claim dispute will be closed by PHC California.

Providers may initiate a claims dispute by submitting and completing a Claim Dispute Submission form within three hundred and sixty-five (365) days from the last date of action on the issue. The written dispute form must include the provider name, identification number, contact information, date of service, claim number, and explanation for the dispute. In addition, the following documentation is required to review and process a claims appeal:

Provider Dispute Resolution Request

- A copy of the original claim(s)
- A copy of the disposition of the original claim(s) in the form of the Explanation of Benefit or Remittance Advice
- Documented reason for appeal
- A copy of the medical record/progress notes to support the appeal, when requested Provider Disputes and supporting documentation (via paper) should be submitted to:

**Attn: Claims
PHC California
P.O. Box 47237746160
Aurora, CO 80047
Los Angeles CA, 90046**

The Claim Dispute Submission Form can also be found in the exhibits at the end of this chapter.

For more information related to claims processing and provider disputes please contact the PHC California Claims Department at (888) 662-0626.

8.7 Submission of Provider Inquiry Requests

Please use the Provider Inquiry Request Form for routine claim or payment follow-up and to resubmit claims contested with missing information, mailing them to:

Attention: PHC California
Claims Department
(888) 662-0626
Claims@positivehealthcare.org

Contracted provider disputes involving an issue of medical necessity or utilization review shall have an unconditional right for a secondary level of appeal if filed within sixty (60) working days from the last date of determination.

8.8 Prohibition of Billing Plan Members

A provider or its agent, trustee, assignee, or any subcontractor rendering covered medical services to Plan Members may not bill, charge, collect a deposit or other sum; or seek compensation, remuneration or reimbursement from, or maintain any action at law or have any other recourse against, or make any surcharge upon, a Plan Member or other person acting on a Plan Member's behalf to collect sums owed by Plan.

Should PHC California receive notice of any surcharge upon a Plan Member, the Plan shall take appropriate action including but not limited to terminating the provider agreement for cause. The Plan will require that the provider give the Plan Member an immediate refund of such surcharge.

Your agreement with PHC California requires providers to accept payment directly from the health plan. Payment from the health plan constitutes payment in full, with the exception of applicable co-payments and any other amounts listed as member responsibility on the Explanation of Benefits/Provider Remittance Advice.

This means providers cannot bill PHC California members for:

- The difference between actual charges and the contracted reimbursement amount

- Services denied due to timely filing requirements
- Covered services for which a claim has been returned and denied for lack of information
- Remaining or denied charges for those services where the provider fails to notify the health plan of a service that required prior authorization – payment for that service will be denied
- Covered services that were not medically necessary, in the judgment of the health plan, unless prior to rendering the service the provider obtains the member’s informed written consent and the member receives information that he/she will be financially responsible for the specific services

8.9 Overpayment of Claims

If PHC California determines that a claim was overpaid, then the Health Plan will notify the Provider in writing within three hundred and sixty-five (365) calendar days of the date of payment. Notification of an overpaid claim to the provider requires the following information: Member Name, ID number, Date of Service, and an explanation why PHC California believes the claim was overpaid. Providers have thirty (30) working days to dispute an overpayment notification, which then becomes a provider dispute and follows the applicable procedures listed above under Provider Disputes.

8.10 Long Term Care Share of Cost

Long Term Care (LTC) facilities must submit claims consistent with the Medi-Cal guidelines for Share of Cost (SOC) outlined in the Medi-Cal LTC Provider Manual. LTC facilities must perform an eligibility verification transaction every month for each Medi-Cal recipient residing in the facility. The eligibility verification transaction shows how much SOC a recipient must pay for the month, if any. If a recipient has not spent any of the SOC in the month, the facility bills the recipient for the entire SOC and subtracts the SOC payment collected or the amount of the obligated payment from the claim amount submitted to PHC California.

As a result of the Johnson v. Rank lawsuit, Medi-Cal Members can elect to use SOC funds to pay for necessary, non-covered, medical or remedial care services, supplies, equipment, and drugs (medical services) that are prescribed by a physician and part of the plan of care authorized by the enrollee’s attending physician. The physician’s prescriptions for SOC expenditures must be maintained in the enrollee’s medical record. If an enrollee has spent part of the SOC on non-covered medical or remedial services or items, the facility should

subtract those amounts from the recipient's SOC and bill the enrollee in an amount equal to the enrollee's remaining SOC.

For more information about LTC SOC, please refer to the Medi-Cal LTC Provider Manual, available at <https://mcweb.apps.prd.cammis.medi-cal.ca.gov/publications/manual>

8.11 Timely Claims Processing

Claim payments will be made to providers in accordance with the timeliness provisions set forth in the Provider's contract, DHCS, and the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC).

Unless the Subcontracting Provider and Contractor have agreed in writing to an alternate payment schedule, ninety percent (90%) of "clean" claims will be adjudicated within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt. A "clean" claim is one that may be processed without obtaining additional information from the Provider of service or from a third party. However, "clean" claims do not include claims under investigation for fraud or abuse or claims under review for medical necessity. All claims submitted for which no further written documentation or substantiation is required are to be processed within forty-five (45) working days of receipt.

8.12 Coordination of Benefits

PHC California has the liability for payment of authorized claims after all other third parties. Private insurance carriers, including Medicare, must be billed by the Provider prior to billing PHC California. The Provider must include a copy of the other insurance's Explanation of Benefits with the claim.

Proof of third-party billing is not required for:

- Services provided to Members with Other Health Coverage (OHC) codes A, M, X, Y and Z
- Services defined by DHCS as prenatal or preventive pediatric services
- Child-support enforcement cases

8.13 Third-Party Tort Liability

PHC California must identify and notify the California Department of Health Services within ten (10) days of the discovery of cases in which action by the member involving

the tort or Worker's Compensation liability of a third party could result in recovery by the member of funds to which the Department has lien rights.

PHC California must be notified in writing of all potential and confirmed third party tort liability cases that involve a PHC California member. Notification must include:

- Member name
- Member identification number and Medi-Cal number
- Date of birth
- Provider name and address
- Date(s) of Service
- ICD10 code and/or description of injury
- CPT code and description of service(s) rendered
- Billed charges for service(s)
- Any amount paid by other coverage (if applicable)
- Date of denial and reason(s) for denial

Any requests received by subpoena from attorneys, insurers or members for bill copies must be reported to PHC California. Copies of the request and responses must be forwarded to the Health Plan. Notification and information should be sent to the following address:

Attention: PHC California
Third Party Liability
P.O. Box 46160
Los Angeles, CA 90046

When PHC California receives a request for information from the Department of Health Services (DHCS) on an individual case, a response is required within ten (10) to thirty (30) days of the DHCS request. PHC California will contact the provider for assistance, if needed. Any requested information must be provided within ten (10) days.

All claims for services rendered in relation to a third-party tort liability case should be submitted for processing as described in the "Claims Submission" section of this manual. The claims will follow normal processing guidelines.

8.14 Claims Auditing: Fee-For-Service Providers

To verify the accuracy of fee-for-service provider billings, a PHC California representative will conduct random provider audits.

A sample of claims paid will be pulled and verified against the member's medical record maintained by the provider. This audit may occur in the provider's office or in the offices of PHC California. Where the billing substantially differs from the medical record, the information will be forwarded to the Claims Manager for follow-up and/or screening for fraud and abuse, with subsequent reporting to the DHCS.

8.15 Encounter Reporting (Capitated Providers)

The collection of encounter data is vital to PHC California. Encounter data provides the plan with information regarding all services provided to our membership. Encounter data serves several critical needs. It provides:

- Information on the utilization of services
- Information for use in HEDIS and other quality management studies
- Information that fulfills state reporting requirements

DHCS has implemented standards for the consistent and timely submission of Medi-Cal encounter data. PHC California is required to submit encounter information to DHCS within ninety (90) days following the date of service. To meet this requirement, providers must submit this information to PHC California sixty (60) days from date services were rendered. This allows PHC California thirty (30) days to process the information prior to submission to DHCS.

8.16 Encounter Data Policy

PHC California requires all Providers to submit encounter data reflecting the care and services provided to our members. This policy applies to all contracted hospitals and Primary Care Practitioners (PCPs), contracted with PHC California. It is important to note the encounter data must also reflect services provided by any ancillary personnel that are under the direction of the PCP, including any physicians (specialists) providing care and services to our patients as defined in their contract with PHC California.

8.17 Encounter Data Procedure

Single encounter (for our purposes) is defined as all services performed by a single provider on a single date of service for an individual member.

The following guidelines are provided to assist our providers with submission of complete encounter data:

- Reporting of services must be done on a per member, per visit basis.
- A reporting of all services rendered by date must be submitted to PHC California.
- Encounter Data must reflect all the same data elements required under a fee for service (FFS) program.
- All encounter data reporting is subject to, and must be in full compliance with, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and any other regulatory reporting requirements.

8.18 Important Submission Information

- Encounter data for all Medi-Cal capitated services must be submitted only on a CMS1500 form.
- Hard Copy encounter data must be received within sixty (60) days from the date services were rendered. This will allow PHC California to subsequently submit health plan encounter data to DHCS within the ninety (90) days required timeline following the date of service.

All hard copy encounter data must be submitted via fax to the following number:

Claims Fax Number:
(888) 235-9274

8.19 Sanctions

Providers will be sanctioned for non-compliance. These sanctions may include ineligibility for the encounter incentive program, freezing new enrollment, capitation withhold, and/or ultimately terminating the capitation contract.

Section 9 • Credentialing & Re-credentialing

9.1 Credentialing

The Credentialing and Re-credentialing Program, PHC California ensures that the network consists of quality practitioners who meet clearly defined criteria and standards. The Credentialing and Re-credentialing Program was developed in accordance with the health plan standards of the DHCS and the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) and Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) and relevant federal and state requirements. The Credentialing Program is reviewed annually, revised, and updated as needed. The Credentialing department uses the "California Participating Physician Application" (CPPA), and the Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH) application which is considered a "universal" application.

9.2 Delegation of Credentialing

Organizations that are in compliance with state credentialing regulations, NCQA and AAAHC credentialing standards are welcome to apply for delegated status. Following submission and review of related policies and procedures, an on-site visit or desktop audits is made to audit credential files. Subsequent to the audit, a report is made to the PHC California Credentialing Committee, which makes the final decision about delegation approvals and denials.

If the Provider is a member of a contracted group that is delegated for credentialing, please be aware that the credentialing/re-credentialing accountability guidelines and operational procedures will be relatively unchanged from those described below.

9.3 Provider's Participation in the Process

An applicant, whether being credentialed or re-credentialed, has the burden of producing adequate information for a proper evaluation of experience, background, training, demonstrated ability, and ability to perform as a Provider, without limitation, including physical and mental health status as allowed by law and the burden of resolving any doubts about these or any other qualifications to be a PHC California provider.

Should an application be incomplete in any way, an email or fax will be sent from PHC California requesting the need for information. To keep an application on active status, the provider will be asked to provide the needed information by a specified time. Failure

to provide the information within the required time will result in administrative termination from the PHC California network as a non-compliant provider. Note: All Providers must be in good standing with the Medicare and Medi-Cal programs.

Once appointed, subsequent review of credentials for re-credentialing will be performed no less than every three (3) years. A re-credentialing application and release form or a CAQH application will be download from the CAQH site will be sent approximately six (6) months before your credentialing period is to expire.

9.4 Facility Site Reviews

Facility site reviews are required for PCPs and OB-GYN specialists upon initial credentialing and re-credentialing. A review of office sites that are accessible to PHC California members will be scheduled as soon as the credentialing application is received by the Credentialing Department. A score of ninety percent (90%) or higher is required for submission of a completed application to the Credentials Committee. Cooperation in working with the facility reviewer on resolving any corrective action plans quickly will facilitate a credentialing decision.

9.5. PCP designation

An OB-GYN specialist, or any other kind of specialist requesting designation as a PCP, will be requested to review a scope of services document that requires signed commitment to provide the services required of a PHC California PCP. Also required is documentation of, general medical training or experience, liability insurance coverage for general medicine, hospital privileges in general medicine or an agreement with a PHC California PCP who can admit medical patients, and back- up coverage by a practitioner qualified to treat general medical conditions.

9.6 Verification of Application Information

The Credentialing and Provider Relations Departments, or its agent, will verify at least the following information from primary sources:

- Current, valid license to practice
- Other certifications appropriate to the services offered by the Provider.
- Current, valid Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registration or Controlled Dangerous Substances (CDS) certification.
- Board certification or education from highest level of learning, the latter on initial credentialing only.
- Professional liability claims history for the last seven (7) years on initial credentialing and two (2) years, if applicable, on re-credentialing

9.7 Practitioner Education and Training:

Graduation from the appropriate professional school is verified through the appropriate licensing Board or directly with the educational source. Completion of residency or specialty/sub- specialty training is verified through the appropriate Board Certification body; directly with the specialty/sub-specialty- training program; or through the American Medical Association or American Osteopathic Information Association for physicians.

The following information is verified or attested to from the CPPA or CAQH application:

- Clinical privileges, in good standing, at the hospital designated by the physician as his or her primary admitting facility, as applicable and agreed to in the physician's contract.
- Current, adequate malpractice liability coverage according to PHC California's policy (as of 6/99, coverage of one million per occurrence and three million aggregate are required).

The Medical Staff/Credentialing Department will also:

- Identify any disciplinary actions and/or sanctions.
- Query the National Practitioner Data Bank.

Should any information gathered during the verification process differ substantially from the information provided, the Practitioner will be notified and the Provider's "rights process" will be initiated. This process is explained on the "Notice to Practitioners of Credentialing Rights/Responsibilities" that accompanies the credentialing/re-credentialing application.

9.8 Credentialing Committee Review

PHC California maintains a Credentialing Committee chaired by the Medical Director and made up of your peers. The Committee is required to meet no less than bi-monthly, but can meet on a monthly basis to facilitate timely processing of applicant files.

Once the credentials file contains all the necessary information, verifications and facility site review findings, it will be reviewed by the Credentialing Committee. If the Credentialing Committee determines that further information is necessary to evaluate an application, the Credentialing and Provider Relations Departments will request any such information on behalf of the Credentialing Committee. The Credentialing Committee may, in its sole discretion, request an in-person interview.

9.9 Credentials Committee Recommendation

The Governing Board receives recommendations to either approve or deny applicants from the Credentialing Committee. Once acknowledged, the Credentialing Committee notifies applicants of its decision.

9.10 Corrective Action, Fair Hearing Plan, and Reporting to the Medical Board of California and the National Practitioner Data Bank

Practitioners have a procedural right to appeal in the event that peer review recommendations and actions result in filing a report to the Medical Board of California (MBOC) and the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB). The appeal right, the Fair Hearing Process, and the requirement to report to the MBOC and NPDB are described in PHC California Policy & Procedure CR 2.1 and CR 3.1. Copies of these policies and procedures will be mailed as an enclosure to the Credentials Committee letter advising you of initial approval status. Please review and retain these copies in a file.

9.11 Re-credentialing Requirements

In addition to verifying that Providers continue to meet the basic qualification set forth in PHC California Policy and Procedure CR 1, Practitioner/Provider Credentialing and Re-credentialing-Basic Qualifications for Provider Status, and the following information will be reviewed as part of the re-credentialing process:

- Results of quality reviews. The Quality Management staff will complete a Provider profile for all Providers, gathering information from reported quality performance issues, utilization management performance, member satisfaction surveys, and non-administrative member services reports. Findings will be sent to the Credentialing and Provider Relations Departments for inclusion in the credentialing profile and for the consideration of the Credentials Committee.
- Utilization management issues. PHC California staff will review each Provider's UM profile for acceptability of performance and for compliance with UM requirements. Findings will be forwarded to the Quality Management Department for inclusion in the Provider re-credentialing profile.
- Satisfaction surveys and Member Grievances/Complaints. Member Services will report quarterly to the Credentialing and Provider Relations Departments each Provider who has been identified through member grievances/complaints and member satisfaction surveys as having deficiencies in the area of customer service.

9.11.1 Current Documentation of DEA and Liability Insurance Coverage

Should a DEA, medical license and/or liability insurance coverage expire at some time prior to your next re-credentialing date, you will receive a request for updated information for the credentials file. Failure to provide this information within the specified time will result in automatic suspension from the PHC California network. This will not be an on-going process but only done on an "ad-hoc" basis as may be requested from time to time.

As an applicant for credentialing/re-credentialing, you have a right to review non-privileged information obtained for the purpose of evaluating your application. This includes information obtained from outside sources such as liability insurance carriers, Medical Boards, National Practitioner Data Bank. It does not include review of information that is privileged, such as references or recommendations that are protected by law from disclosure.

You may request to review such information at any time by sending a written request, via fax or letter to:

Director of Medical Staff Office and Credentialing
1710 N. La Brea Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90046
Fax: (323) 337-9142

Following receipt of your request, you will be contacted by the Director, or his/her designee, within three working days in order to arrange a date and time for review of the information in the PHC California Credentialing Department located in Los Angeles.

9.12 Notification of Discrepancy

You will be notified in writing, by email, fax or letter, when information obtained by primary sources varies significantly from information provided on your application. Sources will not be revealed if information obtained is not intended for verification of credentialing elements or is protected from disclosure by law.

9.13 Correction of Erroneous Information

If you believe that erroneous information has been supplied to PHC California by primary sources, you may correct such information by submitting written notification to the Director of Credentialing at the above cited address/fax number. Your notification, via letter or fax, must include a detailed explanation of the discrepancy and must be returned to PHC California within three (3) working days

of your credentials file review date and/or the date that PHC California notified you of the discrepancy.

Upon receipt of your notification, PHC California will re-verify the primary source information under consideration. If the primary source information has changed, an immediate correction will be made to your credentials file. You will be notified of this action. If the primary source information remains inconsistent with your notification, you will be advised of same through letter or fax. You will be requested to provide proof of correction by the primary source to Medical Staff/Credentialing Services of PHC California via letter or fax as cited above within ten (10) working days. Subsequently, a second re-verification of primary source information will be performed by PHC California. If, after ten (10) working days, primary source information remains inconsistent and in dispute, you will be subject to adverse action up to administrative termination from the PHC California Network.

9.14 Physician Facility Reviews: Facility Site Reviews

The review and certification of Primary Care Practitioner (PCP) sites is a requirement of the California Department of Health Services under Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Section 53230. This section mandates that all PCP sites or facilities rendering services to Medi-Cal eligible patients must be certified. Additionally, site review and certification is a standard for accreditation set forth by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

A PCP is defined as a General Practitioner; a Family Practitioner; an Internist; an OB/GYN who requests PCP status; or a Pediatrician who, by contract, agrees to accept responsibility for primary medical care services. PHC California will remain the primary responsible party for the facility review activities and monitoring of all Medi-Cal PCP Sites.

PHC California will assure that facility reviews are part of the credentialing process to be completed on 100% of all PHC California PCPs and OB/GYNs, in compliance with the Department of Health Services (DHCS) and/or NCQA standards as applicable.

9.14.1 Medi-Cal Facility Site Review Process

- Effective July 1, 2002 the State of California's Health and Human Services Agency Department of Health Services mandated that all County Organized Health Systems (COHS), Geographic Managed Care (GMC) Plans, Primary Care Case Management (PCCM) start using the new Full Scope Site Review (FS-SR) and Medical Record Review Tool (MRR). This is found in MMCD Policy Letter 02- 02 (Supersedes MMCD Policy Letter 96-6). To avoid duplication and overlapping of reviews, the managed care plans will have a collaborative procedure to have one managed care plan conduct the review that will be

accepted by all managed care plans. This will establish one (1) certified FS-SR and MRR that the participating PCP will need to pass and be eligible with all the Medi-Cal Plans in a given county.

- Initial Full Scope Review: All primary care sites serving Medi-Cal managed care members shall undergo an initial site review with attainment of a minimum passing score of 80% on both the site review survey and medical record review survey. The initial site review is the first onsite inspection of a site that has not previously had a full scope survey, or a PCP site that is returning to the Medi-Cal managed care program and has not had a passing full scope survey within the past three (3) years. The initial full scope site review survey can be waived by managed care plan for a pre-contracted physician site if the physician has documented proof that a current full scope survey with a passing score was completed by another managed care plan within the past three (3) years.
- Subsequent Periodic Full Scope Site Review: After the initial full scope survey, the maximum time period before conduction of the next required full scope site survey shall be three (3) years. Managed care plans may review sites more frequently per local collaborative decision, or when determined necessary based on monitoring, evaluation or corrective actions plan (CAP) follow-up issues.
- Ten (10) medical records shall be reviewed initially for each physician as part of the site review process and every three (3) years thereafter. During any medical record survey, reviewers shall have the option to request additional records for review. Sites where documentation of patient care by multiple PCPs occurs in the same record shall be reviewed as a "shared" medical record system. Shared medical records shall be considered those that are not identifiable as "separate" records belonging to any specific PCP. A minimum of ten (10) records shall be reviewed if two (2) to three (3) PCPs share records, twenty (20) records shall be reviewed for four (4) to six (6) PCPs, and thirty (30) records shall be reviewed for seven (7) or more PCPs.

9.14.2 Scoring

All PHC California OB/GYN/PCP and Pediatricians (PCP's) must maintain an Exempted or Conditional pass on site review and medical record review. Exempted pass is a score that does not require a Corrective Action Plan. Conditional Pass is a score that does require a Corrective Action Plan.

9.14.3 Facility Site Review

- Exempted: A score of 90-100% without Critical Element Deficiencies
- Conditional: A score of 90-100% with Critical Element Deficiencies or a score of 80 to 89%
- Fail is a score of 79% or below Medical Record Review

- Exempted: A score of 90 to 100%
- Conditional: A score of 80-89%
- Fail is a score of 79% or below Relocation and/or New Site
- PHC California follows the same procedures as for an initial site visit when a PCP relocates or opens a new site.

9.14.4 Compliance & Corrective Action Plan (CAP)

- Physicians with an Exempted Pass Score
- All reviewed sites that score 94% and above, without critical elements deficiencies, on the facility review portion do not need to submit a CAP.
- All reviewed sites that score 90% on the medical record review portion do not have to submit a CAP.

9.14.5 Physicians with a Conditional Pass Score

- Critical Element Deficiencies must have CAP completed and submitted within ten (10) working days of the review.
- A score of 80% to 93% on the facility review portion must submit the CAP for the facility review portion of the Site Review. This must be completed and submitted within thirty (30) days of the review.
- A score of 80% to 90% on the Medical Record Review portion must submit the CAP for the Medical Record Review Portion of the Site Visit. This must be submitted within thirty (30) days of the review completed and signed.

9.14.6 Physicians with a Failing Score

- Will not have new members assigned until the critical element CAP is completed and all deficiencies corrected and verified. The remainder of the review CAP is completed, submitted and fully accepted or a follow-up visit has been made and a focused review completed with a passing score.
- All Medi-Cal Health Plans in the county must be notified under the Department of Health Services, Medical Managed Care Division Policy 02-02 Collaboration section.

9.14.7 CAP Timeline Extension

- There are no time line extensions are for critical element CAP completion.
- A Physician may request a definitive, time-specific extension period, not to exceed ninety (90) calendar days from the date of the review by writing a specific request letter, stating the exact reasons for the request and submitting the completed portions of the CAP within the initial thirty (30) day time periods.
- No extension beyond ninety (90) days from the date of the review can be granted by the plan. Any extension beyond ninety (90) days requires the approval of the Department of Health

Services prior to the extension being granted.

NOTE: An extension for CAP completion beyond 90 days requires that the site visit be re-surveyed within twelve (12) months of the initial survey. This requirement is stated in MMCD Policy letter 02-02 Corrective Action Plan section 1F(2).

- CAP Completion
- Physicians or their designees can complete the CAP by:
- Note the indicated deficiency-x has been placed in the box in Column Two (2) and the specific deficiency is noted in Column Three (3).
- The corrective action has been written in Column Four (4), review to see if a choice must be made. If any attachment is required, it is listed in bold in Column Four (4).
- Enter the date of completion or implementation in Column Five (5) with any specific comments on changes to the corrective action listed that you have implemented and then your initials.
- Enter the name of the physician or designee responsible for completion of the CAP item in Column Six (6).
- When all indicated items have been completed and/or implemented and Columns Five (5) and Six (6) have been filled in for all items, submit the CAP as indicated below.

9.14.8 CAP Submission

- The physician, at his/her discretion, may involve any management company or group with which the physician is contracted to assist in completion of the CAP.
- The CAP must be submitted directly to the reviewing health plan. For Physicians reviewed by PHC California, CAPs must be submitted:

By Fax (323) 337-9142

**By Mail to: PHC California
Attn: Credentialing Department
1710 N. La Brea Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90046**

9.14.9 Identification of Deficiencies Subsequent to an Initial Site Visit

- Any PHC California Department Director or Manager shall concurrently refer concerns regarding member safety and/or quality of care service to Medical Staff/Credentialing Department. Should such a referral be made, the Director of Credentialing, or his/her designee, will be notified.
- Member complaints related to physical office site(s) are referred to Provider Relations Department or Member Services Department, and his/her designee, who will investigate the complaint through performing an on-site facility review and follow-up

of any identified corrective actions. The Quality Improvement Department will be advised of any adverse findings in order to provide a method of tracking these physicians.

- Accusations filed by a Medical/Podiatric Board, against a physician, may be a source for identification of potential site review issues.
- Referrals from PHC California Provider Relations Representatives who have concerns specific to a physician(s) site are referred to the Quality Improvement Manager, or his/her designee.

9.14.10 PHC California's Performance of Facility Site Reviews

An oversight audit of PHC California and contracted physicians and facilities will be conducted by the DHCS.

- These visits may be conducted with or without prior notification by the DHCS
- If prior notification is given, the sites selected by the DHCS for oversight reviews will be contacted for scheduling by either the DHCS auditor or PHC California.
- PHC California will provide any necessary assistance required by DHCS in conducting their facility oversight evaluations and reviews of the quality of care for services rendered to members.

9.15 Reference Tools

This Manual contains information on many subjects to assist physicians and office staff in preparation for the office site visit, including but not limited to:

- CHDP program information
- CPSP program information
- Informed consent process for sterilization
- Access to care standards
- Sample continuity of care, referrals, consultation, and diagnostic-testing tickler log
- Sample medical record medication sheet
- Preventive care information

Please reference Infection Control Practices and Environmental Safety section identified in this Provider Manual for additional information your office should follow for guidelines and requirements that will be evaluated in the event your office requires a facility site review (FSR). These sections contain important details that will help you ensure proper practices, processes, and training for you and your staff are available to ensure high quality care & safety for patients, staff and visitors in your office.

Section 10: Provider Services

10.1 Contracting and Provider Relations Department

The Contracting and Provider Relations Department is dedicated to working with you and your staff to educate, train, and ensure that you have a positive experience working with both PHC California members and the PHC California. Provider Relations is also here to assist you with any questions or concerns you have in your participation with the Plan.

The Provider Relations Department acts as the liaison between PHC California Departments and the external provider network to promote positive communication, conduct orientations, facilitate exchange of information, and to seek efficient resolution of provider issues. Please send all requests to your Provider Relations Representative, as your Provider Relations Representative is your primary source of information.

We encourage you to make recommendations and suggestions to better serve our members and to improve the processes within our organization.

10.2 Provider Manual

The Provider Manual is available to all newly contracted providers upon execution of an agreement with PHC California and can be requested by any contracted provider at any time. It is periodically reviewed and updated as content changes. An electronic version of the provider manual is available on our website at: <https://www.phc-ca.org/providers/pubs>

10.3 Provider Orientations/In-Services

Orientations are conducted by the Provider Relations Representative to educate new providers on plan operations, policies and procedures within ten (10) business days of contracting with PHC California. If, as a new provider, you are unable to schedule your training within the ten (10) day period, as required by DHCS, your training will be scheduled at a more convenient time, but your contract with PHC California will not become effective until your orientation is completed.

As needed, Provider Relations will share training, education, and pertinent required information with providers using a variety of media, including web posting, provider bulletins, newsletters or mailings. Existing providers may also request additional training by scheduling an in-service with a Provider Relations team member.

Provider Orientations/In-Services include the review of the following information:

- Administration overview and contact information

- Enrollment & Eligibility
- Member Benefits
- Utilization Management Processes including Initial Health Appointment (IHA)
- Access and Availability Standards
- Referral Submission, Referral Status, STAT/Urgent Requests
- Claim Submission, Claim Status, Provider Disputes
- Provider Relations Contacts
- Health Education
- Provider Notification requirements including but not limited to relevant Provider Bulletins concerning operational and regulatory requirements.

10.4 Provider Rights

Providers who treat PHC California members have the right to:

- Be informed of participating contractual obligations placed on the provider by the Health Plan and the sponsoring government agency.
- File a grievance or complaint about the program and/or any associated functions of the Health Plan.
- An overview of the PHC California and AIDS Healthcare Foundation.
- Contact information for Health Plan departments.
- Give feedback on the program, including participation in any activity soliciting provider input or feedback as to provider satisfaction and/or Plan performance surveys.
- Receive current HIV/AIDS treatment guidelines from nationally accepted sources.
- View applicable assessments and plans of care upon request.
- Member information obtained through the program in the coordination of disease management services for clinical decisions, as applicable.
- Respectful and courteous interactions with Health plan staff.
- Collaboration with other HIV/AIDS primary care providers and specialists who work with the Health Plan for support when interacting with their patients to make decisions about their healthcare.

10.5 Provider Directory

The PHC California Provider Directory is updated monthly. It is available to enrollees in print and through the PHC California website at www.phc-ca.org/provider-find. The directory is solely used as a member handbook referencing participation to primary care physicians, hospitals, specialty care physicians, ancillary providers and vision providers.

All providers are responsible for reviewing their information in the directory and submitting any changes to PHC California's Contracting and Provider Relations Department or via the Provider Information Updates section on the PHC California website

<https://positivehealthcare.net/california/phc/providers/provider-info/>.

Providers may also review information on the PHC California website at www.phc-ca.org/provider-find. PHC California is committed to ensuring the integrity of the directory. The Provider Data Management and/or Contracting and Provider Relations Department will periodically contact your office to validate your information listed in the Provider Directory.

Contracted providers are required to respond to the Plan's request for verification pursuant to Section 1367.27 of the California Health and Safety Code.

Please see detailed Provider Directory requirements outlined in the attached reference document: <https://positivehealthcare.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Provider-Bulletin-SB-137-CA-Provider-Directory.pdf>

10.6 Provider Validation Activities

In addition to verifying provider data, DHCS also requires additional verification/validation of provider information. Every effort is made to make these activities as easy for providers as possible. Such activities include capturing data required by the State for your practice, access and availability for members to obtain routine and urgent appointments, wait times, speed of answer of your office phones, etc. These calls will be as brief as possible, but we may also send surveys or ask to come to your office to make inspections of your office for compliance with mandated DHCS facility site reviews which include ADA measures and ensure members can safely and comfortably be treated in your office.

10.7 Specialty Provider Network Oversight

PHC California monitors the specialty network to identify deficiencies in the provider network service areas. All monitoring efforts are made to ensure the Health Plan's specialist network continues to meet Plans and regulatory network adequacy standard and ensure PHC California members have access to all required specialties. If you find that specialists you work with regularly are not in the PHC California network, we encourage you to contact the Provider Relations department to let us know or have referral specialists call us so we can discuss contracting. It is our commitment to have the best referral network available to our members and providers.

10.8 Provider Network Changes

Please reference Health and Safety Code section 1367.27 Annual Notice for additional specifics regarding the areas outlined in this section. All provider changes should be submitted in writing to PHC California's Provider Relations Department sixty (60) days in advance for the following:

- Terminations
- Office relocations
- Leave of absence or vacation
- Tax Identification Number (TIN) or other billing change.

10.9 Provider Terminations

- Providers must send written notification ninety (90)-days in advance of a termination notification. Termination dates are determined by your contract.
- For continuity of care, PHC California reserves the right to obligate the provider to provide medical services for existing members until the effective date of termination according to the terms of your contract with PHC California.
- PHC California is responsible for transitioning member care for all terminated providers.

10.10 Office Relocations

- PCP's changing office locations require a Facility Site Review. Once the site is approved, the provider's address is updated, and members are transferred to the existing site. If the PCP moves outside of the former office's geographic area, PHC California will reassign the members to a new PCP within Department of Healthcare Services (DHCS) access standards.
- Written notification must also be submitted to PHC California's Provider Relations Department for all telephone and fax number changes.

10.11 Provider Leave of Absence or Vacation

- Please reference Health and Safety Code section 1367.27, Annual Notice for additional specifics regarding the areas outlined in this section.

Section 11: Delegated Entities

All participating Providers and/or Delegated Entities must meet all Federal, state, and contractual requirements. Delegated Entities are audited routinely to ensure compliance with all applicable requirements.

If you would like a copy of all applicable standards, please contact our Provider Relations Department at capr@ahf.org for further assistance.

Credentialing and re-credentialing standards are outlined in Section 9 (Credentialing and Re-credentialing).

Section 12: Grievances & Appeals

This section addresses the identification, review, and resolution process for four distinct topics:

- Provider Appeal (related to an authorization determination)
- Provider Disputes-AB 1455 (related to provider claims appeals)
- Member Appeals (related to an authorization determination)
- Member Grievances

12.1 Provider Grievances or Complaints - the Appeal Process

A provider grievance or complaint is described in Title 22, California Code of Regulations (CCR), as a written entry into the appeals process. two types of appeals:

- Appeals regarding non- payment or
- Processing of claims, known as provider disputes (please refer to the Claims Section above for further information concerning PHC California's Provider Dispute process).

A provider of medical services may submit an appeal concerning the modification or denial of a requested service or the payment processing or non-payment of a claim by the Plan. PHC California will comply with the requirements specified in Section 56262, of Title 22 of the CCR, and the DMHC Assembly Bill 1455 Provider Disputes/Claims Appeals.

12.2 Provider Appeals Regarding Modifications or Denial of a Service Request.

The provider appeal process offers recourse for practitioners who are dissatisfied with a denial or decision form PHC California. There are two (2) types of appeals: provider disputes and appeals for prior authorization denials.

The initial appeal is considered to be a First Level appeal. If the disputed denial is upheld during the First Level appeal, a final or Second Level appeal may be requested from the Department of Health Services, State of California. No punitive action will be taken against a provider who supports a member's appeal or denial or delay of services.

12.3 Member Hold Harmless Indemnification (Balance Billing Prohibition)

PHC California prohibits Providers from balance-billing a member when the denial disputed in a First Level or Second Level appeal is upheld. The Provider is expected to adjust the balance owed if the denial is upheld in the appeals process.

12.4 Member Appeals and Grievances

Health plan members, also known as enrollees, have the right to file a complaint (also known as an appeal or grievance) if they have a problem with their health plan. Authorized Representatives, including Providers, have the right to access the enrollee's medical records and file an appeal or grievance on the enrollee's behalf with written permission from the enrollee. Enrollees or authorized representatives can file a complaint with PHC California a few different ways:

- Over the phone
- In writing
- Fax

If the health problem is urgent, if you already filed a complaint with PHC California and are not satisfied with the decision, or it has been more than thirty (30) days since you filed a complaint with PHC California you may submit an Independent Medical Review/Complaint Form with DMHC.

12.4.1 How to File an Appeal or Grievance

If the Member or Provider on behalf of a member is dissatisfied with an adverse authorization decision or has a grievance, he or she may initiate the appeal/grievance process by telephone, fax or in writing:

Attention: PHC California
Member Services
P.O. Box 46160
Los Angeles, CA 90046
Phone: (800) 263-0067
Fax: (888) 235-8552

Enrollees may appeal adverse benefits determinations to the Health Plan within sixty (60) calendar days from the date of the Notice of Action (NOA) from the Health Plan. The Health Plan continues to furnish disputed services during the appeal process in accordance with regulatory and contractual requirements. Enrollees who are unhappy with PHC California for any other reason can file a grievance at any time.

12.4.2 Standard (30 day) and Expedited (72 hour) Appeal Processes

Health plans have thirty (30) days to process a standard appeal. In some cases, members have the right to an expedited, seventy-two (72) hour appeal. Members can get a faster, expedited

appeal if the member's health or ability to function could be seriously harmed by waiting for a standard appeal, which may take up to thirty (30) days. If a member requests an expedited appeal, the health plan will evaluate the member's request and medical condition to determine if the appeal qualifies as an expedited, seventy-two (72) hour appeal. If not, the appeal will be processed within the standard thirty (30) days. The member and provider will be notified of the downgrade status to a standard appeal process and UM will provide both parties with their rights in regard to adverse benefit determinations.

12.4.3 Standard (30-day) and Expedited (72-hour) Grievance Processes

PHC California will provide the member or representative with written notification acknowledging the member grievance within five (5) working days of its receipt unless the issue submitted can be resolved in less than twenty-four (24) hours. The member or representative will be informed in writing of the proposed resolution or outcome of the grievance within thirty (30) days. In instances where an imminent and serious threat of health of a beneficiary, including, but not limited to, severe pain or potential loss of life, limb or major bodily function that do not involve the appeal of an Adverse Benefit Determination, yet are "urgent" or "expedited" in nature have a timeframe for resolution in seventy-two (72) hours. Grievances can be filed any time from the date of the incident subject to the beneficiary's dissatisfaction.

It is important to note that a member grievance may be a potential quality issue or service issue and PCP's as well as their office staff, should be ready to assist a member with any necessary information. You must have a grievance form in your office conveniently located for your members. If you need to order grievance forms, please contact Member Services at: (800) 263-0067.

Member complaints may include, but are not limited to:

- Excessive waiting time in a Provider's office
- Inappropriate behavior and/or demeanor (PCP's/Office Staff's).
- Denied services. Clinical grievance subject to member/Provider appeal of the UM decision and expedited appeal of the UM decision.
- Inadequacy of the facilities, including appearance.
- Any problem that the member is having with PHC California contracted Providers.
- Members billed for covered services.

PHC California will investigate member grievances, attempt to resolve the concerns, and take action as appropriate. Resolutions and findings are considered confidential and are privileged

under California law. A member must not be discriminated against because he/she has filed a member grievance.

12.5 Independent Medical Review (IMR) and Consumer Complaints

If your patient has a health problem that is urgent, if you already filed a complaint with PHC California and are not satisfied with the decision, or it has been more than thirty (30) days since you filed a complaint with PHC California, the patient may submit an Independent Medical Review/Complaint Form with DMHC. (Please refer to:

<http://www.dmhc.ca.gov/FileaComplaint/SubmitanIndependentMedicalReviewComplaintForm.aspx>)

In most circumstances, the enrollee or representative is required to file a grievance regarding each issue/request with your health plan and participate in the process for thirty (30) days before submitting a complaint to the DMHC. Exceptions to this requirement include when there is an immediate threat to the enrollee's health or the request was denied as experimental/investigational. In either of these instances, you may seek immediate assistance from the DMHC.

An Independent Medical Review (IMR) is a review of the patient's case by independent doctors who are not part of PHC California. The patient has a good chance of receiving the service or treatment he or she needs by requesting an IMR. If the IMR is decided in the patient's favor, PHC California must authorize the service or treatment the patient requested. IMR's are free to enrollees.

Consumer complaints may also be submitted using the same form. Consumer Complaints include issues such as:

- Balance billing
- Billing for services that PHC California states is not a covered benefit
- Disputes on the amount paid on a claim
- A co-pay dispute
- Cancellation of the enrollee's coverage
- A complaint about the plan or provider's attitude or quality of care

If the person who is submitting the Independent Medical Review/Complaint Form needs help, please call the DMHC Help Center at 1(888) 466-2219 or visit

<https://wpsso.dmhc.ca.gov/contactform/>.

12.5.1 Urgent Cases for Independent Medical Review

The IMR process allows for exceptions to be made when there is a serious or imminent threat to the patient's health. CIC Section 10169.3(c) states that if the "insured's provider [doctor/medical professional] or the California Department of Insurance (CDI) certifies in writing that an imminent and serious threat to the health of the insured may exist, including but not limited to, serious pain, the potential loss of life, limb, or major bodily function, or the immediate and serious deterioration of the health of the insured," the IMR organization must make its determination within three days of receiving the proper case information. Moreover, your insurance company must deliver the necessary information and documents to the IMR organization within twenty-four (24) hours of approval from the CDI of your IMR request.

When the CDI reviews your request for an IMR, the Department may waive the requirement that complainant first go through PHC California's appeals/grievance process when an extraordinary or compelling case exists. The Insurance Commissioner may make exceptions based on the criteria listed in CIC Section 10169.3(c) above and based on the Insurance Commissioner finding that you have acted reasonably in the dispute with your insurance company.

12.6 State Fair Hearing

In addition to the grievance processes offered you have the right to request a Fair Hearing from the State of California. Enrollees must exhaust PHC California's internal Appeal process and receive notice that the Adverse Benefit Determination has been upheld prior to proceeding to a State Hearing. If PHC California fails to adhere to the required timeframe when resolving the Appeal, the enrollee is deemed to have exhausted PHC California's internal Appeal process and may request a State Hearing.

You may request a State Fair Hearing by contacting the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) within one hundred and twenty (120) days of the Notice of Appeal Resolution. You may write or call CDSS, toll-free, at any time during the grievance process, at the following address and telephone number:

California Department of Social Services State Hearings Division
P.O. Box 944243, Mail Station 9-17-442
Sacramento, CA 94424-2340
1 (800) 743-8525 (Voice) or 1 (800) 952-8349 (TDD) or Fax 1 (833) 281-0905

You have the right to bring someone who knows about your case to attend the hearing with you, if you wish. You may also seek legal counsel to represent you. For more information on obtaining free legal aid, contact CDSS at their toll-free number.

Enrollees and/or enrollees' authorized representatives have the right to request continuation of benefits during the State Fair Hearing process. Upon request, the Health Plan will not discontinue services for which a State Fair Hearing has been filed until the appeal process has concluded. However, if the Utilization Management Department's initial decision to deny, discontinue or reduce disputed service is upheld, the enrollee may be financially responsible for the cost of the disputed services provided during the external appeal process.

If you are currently receiving a medical service that is going to be reduced or stopped, you may continue to receive the same medical service until the hearing, as long as you request the hearing before the effective date of the action.

12.6.1 Expedited State Fair Hearing

A member may request an Expedited State Hearing by calling, writing, faxing California Department of Social Services State Hearings Division. Expedited Hearing Unit, P.O. Box 944243, Mail Station 9-17-37, Sacramento, CA 94244-2430, Fax: (916) 651-5210 or (916) 651-2789. For a verbal request, call the California Department of Social Services Public Inquiry and Response at (800) 952-5253 (Voice) or (800) 952-8349 (TDD). PHC California or your provider must indicate that taking the time for a standard resolution could seriously jeopardize your life or health or ability to attain, maintain or regain maximum function.

When the Expedited Hearing Unit determines that your appeal satisfies the expedited criteria and when all necessary clinical information has been received by the Unit, the expedited hearing will be scheduled. If the criteria are not met, it will be scheduled for a routine State Fair Hearing as described above.

12.7 Department of Health Services (DHCS) Assistance

The California Department of Health Services (DHCS) is available to provide assistance in investigating and resolving any complaints or grievances you may have regarding your care and services. If you wish to use the services of the DHCS to address your concerns, complaints, or grievances, please call the Medi-Cal Managed Care Ombudsman toll-free at (888) 452-8609, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. excluding holidays.

12.7.1 State Regulations Available

State regulations, including those covering state hearings, are available at the local office of the county welfare department.

12.8 Authorized Representative

Members can represent themselves at the state hearing. They can also be represented by a friend, attorney, or any other person, but are expected to arrange for the representative themselves. Members can get help in locating free legal assistance by calling the toll-free number of Public Inquiry Response Unit (800) 952-5253, (Voice) (800) 952-8349 (TDD).

12.9 Additional Information

If you have any questions regarding the member grievance process, or if you would like a copy of the Membership Services Guide please call:

Member Services at (800) 263-0067, TTY/TDD 711.

Section 13: Health Education

As providers, you are in the best position to meet the many educational needs of PHC California members at the time of their medical visits. You are the most credible educator for your patients.

13.1 DHCS Health Education Contract Requirements for Managed Medi-Cal Members

- Member education - preventive and primary care, complementary and alternative care, health education services, and community resources
- Risk-reduction/health promotion - tobacco use and cessation, alcohol and drug use, injury prevention, dental health, Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD), Tuberculosis, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and family planning, nutrition, and physical activity
- Patient education - asthma, diabetes, hypertension, pregnancy, and obesity

All education must be documented in the member's medical record. This information should become part of the member's ongoing medical care as all team members can reinforce new behaviors. This documentation also becomes critical in the event of an audit by any regulatory organization.

Health Education supports all contracted Providers by offering the following:

- Written materials in many languages
- Health promotion campaigns
- Direct mailings to members
- Medical Care Management Department referrals for any identified health education needs for either the Provider or an individual member.
- HIV Medication Adherence Program (all ages)

13.2 Health Education Resources and Written Patient Education Materials

PHC California can assist you in obtaining available materials through your local Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program or other public health programs in your community. Additionally, PHC California develops and selects patient education materials that are culturally and linguistically appropriate for various target populations in key subject areas. The most appropriate setting for a member to receive written literature is from his or her primary care practitioner (PCP) with a brief discussion. To obtain education materials for your PHC California members, please advise our Health Education Department. All materials are written at the sixth (6th) grade reading level or below to meet literacy needs.

13.3 PCP Responsibilities for Health Education

DHCS and PHC California require that all Medi-Cal Managed Care contract requirements are met for Health Education.

13.3.1 Individual Health Education

All Providers of managed Medi-Cal members must administer an individual health education behavioral assessment. This must be done with new patients at their Initial Health Assessment within one hundred and twenty (120) calendar days of enrollment and with existing members at their next scheduled non-acute care visit (but no later than their next scheduled health screening visit). Primary Care Physicians must complete the Assessment annually except in years when the assessment is re-administered.

13.3.2 Individual Patient Education and Counseling

Providers, as the most credible educator for members, should provide education relative to individual needs at each patient visit. All education must be documented in the member's medical record.

13.4 Appropriate and Timely Health Education Referrals

Members requiring additional education support should be referred to PHC California's Care Management Department. All referrals for health education should be documented in the medical record. All documentation provided by Care Management following the interventions should be filed in the member's medical record. Providers should follow up with the member on educational referrals at the next scheduled visit and should reinforce key concepts.

13.5 Print Materials

All written material provided to PHC California members must be written at the sixth (6th) grade reading level or below. All materials should also be culturally sensitive and appropriate for the member. Call the Care Management Department if you need assistance in meeting this requirement.

13.6 Tobacco Cessation

PHC California offers a tobacco cessation program, *Quit for Life*, that will help members break both the physical and psychological addiction to cigarettes.

Primary care providers (PCPs) should screen and educate members regarding tobacco cessation by:

- Making members aware of and recognizing dangers of using tobacco products.

- Teaching members how to anticipate and avoid temptation.
- Provide basic information to the member about tobacco use and successful quitting.
- Encourage the member to quit.
- Encourage the patient to talk about the quitting process.

PCPs should direct members who smoke or desire to quit using tobacco to contact the *Quit for Life* Program:

Call: 1-866-784-8454 (1-866-QUIT-4-LIFE)

Join online: www.quitnow.net/ahf

Instruct the member to tell the operator they are a PHC California member. For more information, members can contact Member Services at (800) 263-0067, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., seven days a week. TTY users should call 711.

13.7 Five Wishes (Advance Care Planning) Workshop

PHC California provides an ongoing class, Five Wishes, to all members about advance care planning. The Five Wishes Workshops provide our clients with a safe and informative small group setting to ensure that the documents are completed correctly and completely. Please contact Provider Relations at (888) 726-5411, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for more information.

Section 14: Cultural & Linguistic Services

PHC California is committed to being respectful of and responsive to the cultural and linguistic needs of our members. The United States Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Minority Health, has issued national culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS) standards. PHC California is committed to a continuous effort to perform according to those standards.

PHC California uses Language Line for interpreter services as needed to communicate with members who have limited English proficiency. Providers are expected to have access to interpreter services to accommodate their non-English speaking patients. If you do not have access to interpreter services to accommodate a non-English speaking patient who is a member of the plan, PHC California will provide such access. Please contact Member Services at (800) 263-0067 to request assistance.

Providers may request a "Self-Assessment Checklist for Personnel Providing Primary Health Care Services," from PHC California to assess their cultural competency in the delivery of health care services. The checklist is also available online:

<http://nccc.georgetown.edu/documents/Checklist%20PHC.pdf>

Cultural competency training modules for clinical staff working with people living with HIV/AIDS are available on the website: www.phc-ca.org/providers/pubs. The health plan will arrange for follow-up assistance and/or training to providers who report a need for technical assistance.

If PHC California receives any member grievance related to the delivery of culturally or linguistically appropriate care by providers, it will immediately assess the provider's competency and require corrective action where necessary.

Contracted providers are expected to provide services in a culturally competent manner that includes, but is not limited to, removing all language barriers to service, and accommodating the special needs of the ethnic, cultural, and social circumstances of the patient. Providers must also meet the requirements of all applicable state and Federal laws and regulations as they pertain to provision of services and care including, but not limited to, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

PHC California operates the health plan pursuant to a Cultural and Linguistic Competency Plan. To obtain a copy of the plan at no charge, you may request one by calling Provider Relations at

(888) 726-5411, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The plan is also available at www.phc-ca.org/providers/pubs.

14.1 PCP Responsibilities for Cultural and Linguistic Services

The California Department of Health Services (DHCS) and PHC California expect providers to adhere to the following:

14.2 24-Hour Access to Interpreters

When the provider does not speak the member's language, he/she must ensure twenty-four (24)-hour access to interpreters for members whose primary language is not English. To access interpreters for PHC California members at no cost to you or the patient, call Member Services at:

(800) 263-0067, TTY/TDD 711
during normal business hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday

14.3 After Hours and Nurse Advice Line

After hours, weekends and holidays, you can contact the **PHC California Urgent Care/Nursing Advice Line** at:

(800) 797-1717/TDD 711

State and Federal laws state that it is never permissible to turn a member away or limit the services provided to them because of language barriers. It is also never permitted to subject a member to unreasonable delays due to language barriers or provide services that are lower in quality than those offered in English. Linguistic services must be provided at no cost to the member.

14.4 Documentation

If a patient insists on using a family member as an interpreter after being notified of his or her right to have a qualified interpreter at no cost, document this in the member's medical record. PHC California is available to assist you in notifying members of their right to an interpreter.

All counseling and treatment done via an interpreter should be noted in the medical record by stating that such counseling and treatment was done via interpreter services. Practitioners should document who provided the interpretation service. That information could be the name of their internal staff or someone from a commercial vendor such as Language Line. Information should include the interpreter's name, operator code number and vendor.

14.5 Facility Signage

DHCS requires that practitioner offices post important signs in the threshold languages for the area. For assistance with any signage, please contact **PHC California at (800) 263-0067, TTY/TDD 711.**

Section 15: Medication Management

15.1 Drug Formularies

PHC California maintains its own drug formulary. The Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee meets quarterly to review and recommend medications for formulary consideration. Each update of the plan's formulary, is available on the plan's website at www.phc-ca.org/providers/pubs.

15.2 Over-the-Counter (OTC) Drugs

PHC California covers a wide selection of over-the-counter products. Although specific products may at times differ from the State's Medi-Cal Formulary, all appropriate therapeutic categories are represented with a wide selection of alternatives.

15.3 Generic Substitution

Generic drugs should be dispensed whenever available, excluding those with a narrow therapeutic index. If the use of a particular brand name becomes medically necessary, as determined by the practitioner, prior authorization must be obtained from PHC California.

15.4 Non-Formulary Drugs - Drug Prior Authorization

The practitioner should call PHC California to request approval for drugs not included in the Plan's respective Formulary.

15.5 Drug Prior Authorizations & Non-Formulary Drugs

Prescriptions for medications requiring prior approval or for medications not included on the PHC California Drug Formulary may be approved when medically necessary and when Formulary alternatives have demonstrated ineffectiveness. When these exceptional needs arise, the Practitioner or Pharmacy may fax a completed Prior Authorization Request form to PHC California.

Requesting Practitioners may expect a response within twenty-four (24) hours or sooner depending upon the urgency of the request. This form may be requested by calling the PHC California Pharmacy Services Department at (888) 554-1334.

15.6 Furnishing of Medication by Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioner

Furnishing (including transmittal orders) of medication by Physician Assistants (PAs) and Nurse Practitioners (NPs) should be done pursuant to Chapters 3502.1 and 2836.1 of the

California Business and Professions Code. PAs hold a valid California physician-assistant license issued by the Physician Assistant Examining Committee, and their supervising physicians hold a valid California physician license to supervise PAs. NPs must have obtained a furnishing number from the Board of Registered Nursing. Mid-level Practitioners should prescribe medication within the scope of standardized procedures developed and approved by a supervising physician, surgeon, facility administrator, or designee.

15.7 Management and Documentation of Controlled Substances (Storage of Controlled Substances)

All controlled substances should be stored in a double-locked cabinet. Only licensed personnel may assume responsibility for handling or carrying keys to the controlled medication cabinet. All missing or lost keys should be reported to the practitioner in charge immediately.

15.7.1 Inventory of Controlled Substances

There should be a current inventory maintained on each controlled substance. A printed log should be produced which lists only those controlled substances stocked by the office/clinic. Controlled substances added to the inventory should be recorded in the log and verified by two (2) licensed personnel.

15.7.2 Security of Controlled Substances

Obvious signs of tampering with controlled substances and/or the locked cabinet should be reported to the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) if significant or chronic loss occurs. DEA notification is not needed for a rare loss of a small quantity or if a small discrepancy in the inventory log is noted. However, documentation must be maintained regarding any discrepancies.

15.7.3 Controlled Substance Administration Documentation

Documentation should be maintained regarding the administration of all controlled substances.

15.7.4 Controlled Substance Discrepancy

If at any time a discrepancy in the controlled substances inventory is found, it should be reported to the Practitioner in charge. The practitioner in charge should report the discrepancy to the DEA if a significant or chronic loss of controlled substances occurs. The discrepancy should be documented and kept on file with the inventory log. All licensed personnel who have had access to the controlled medication cabinet keys should remain on duty until the practitioner in charge has finished investigating the discrepancy.

15.7.5 Disposal of Controlled Substances

All wasted, contaminated, deteriorated or expired controlled substances should be destroyed in the presence of two (2) licensed personnel (i.e. Practitioner in Charge, Registered Nurse (RN), or Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)).

The following information should be documented:

- Medication name and strength
- Amount destroyed
- Lot number and expiration date
- Signatures of both licensed personnel
- Patient for whom medication was intended, if applicable

15.8 General Medicine Policy Medication Storage

All medications, needles, syringes, and dangerous medical supplies should be stored in an area accessible only to authorized personnel. Medications must be stored separately, according to their route of administration, e.g. oral, injectable, or topical. Germicides, disinfectants, test/reagents, household cleaning supplies, and other products for external use must be stored separately. All medications should be stored in their original containers.

Medications must be stored at temperature levels specified by the manufacturer (e.g. room temperature; refrigerated at 35-46°F; frozen at -4-14°F). PHC California policies require that a system is in place to ensure that temperature levels are maintained (e.g. thermometers, temperature logs). Polio vaccine must be stored in the freezer or freezer compartment of the refrigerator in the original packaging.

15.9 Expiration Dates

All medications and related items should be routinely checked for expiration. Drugs should not be kept in stock after the expiration date on the label, and no contaminated or deteriorated drugs should be used. All unopened expired medications should be returned to the manufacturer if possible or discarded in a manner safe to the environment. Documentation of the destruction of all scheduled medications should be in accordance with DEA policies.

For injectable products designed for multiple use, the expiration date should be the manufacturer's printed expiration date. If, upon inspection, the product does not show signs of contamination, such as discoloration or particulate matter, and the expiration date has not passed, the medication is deemed appropriate for use. All single dose containers should be discarded immediately after use.

For diagnostic products or test strips which are acceptable for multiple use, the manufacturer's printed expiration date should be considered the expiration date.

15.10 Labeling Requirements

All medications should be properly labeled with the name and strength of medication, the manufacturer's name and lot number (#) and expiration date. All medications that are transferred from their original container into another (repackaged) or those that are extemporaneously prepared (compounded) should be labeled with the following information:

- Name, strength, and quantity of medication
- Expiration date (of original container if re-packaged or of ingredients if compounded)
- Manufacturer's name and original lot number (#)
- Date of re-packaging (or compounding) and initials of re-packager

15.11 Pharmaceutical Samples

Provider offices should keep the following in mind:

- The practitioner is ultimately responsible for the storage, inventory, and dispensing of all samples.
- Samples should be dispensed only by the practitioner. This responsibility should not be delegated to other office staff.
- Samples should be dispensed only to the provider's own patient and should not be sold.
- Samples should be stored in the secured manner described previously.
- If samples are dispensed, they must meet all labeling requirements as described previously.
- A sample log should be maintained and used whenever samples are received or dispensed.
- An appropriate notation should be entered in the patient's record, in a similar manner as if a prescription had been written.

Section 16: Medical Record Documentation

16.1 Requirements of Medical Records Documentation

By contract, the Health Plan requires contracted Provider Sites to do the following:

- a. Maintain an electronic, typewritten or legibly written in ink paper permanent and/or paper medical record system from which clinical information can be retrieved promptly by authorized personnel/health care providers.
- b. Maintain one medical record for each member.
- c. Implement measures to protect the medical records from loss, tampering, alteration, and destruction electronically and/or physically.
- d. Comply with all Federal and State regulations, relevant accreditation standards, AHF policies related to patient confidentiality and release of member's record.
- e. Use a consistent organized format of its medical records.
- f. Update and sign member medical records in a timely manner. Discharged patient records are to be completed and filed within thirty (30) days after termination.
- g. All medical records shall be legible and readily available to authorized personnel as stipulated by law.
- h. Designate a staff member delegated the responsibility of securing and maintaining medical records to ensure that the medical records are handled in accordance with all applicable Federal and State regulations and the Health Plan policies and procedures.
- i. Keep medical record for a minimum of ten (10) years regardless of contract status including exposed X-ray film.
- j. Make medical records available to the Health Plan or new providers if needed, such as for quality improvement activity and reporting, and utilization management etc.
- k. Store medical records so as to protect against loss, destruction or unauthorized use.
- l. File medical records in an easily accessible manner in the clinic. Storage of records shall provide for prompt retrieval when needed for continuity of care. Prior approval of the Department is required for storage of inactive medical records away from the facility.
- m. Medical records shall be the property of the facility and shall be maintained for the benefit of the patient, health care team and clinic and shall not be removed from the clinic except for storage purposes after termination of services.
- n. If a clinic ceases operation, arrangements shall be made for the safe preservation of the patients' health records. The Department shall be informed by the clinic of the arrangements within forty-eight (48) hours before cessation of operation.
- o. The Department shall be informed within forty-eight (48) hours, in writing, by the licensee whenever patient health records are defaced or destroyed before termination of the required retention period.

- p. If the ownership of a clinic changes, both the licensee and the applicant for the new license shall, prior to change of ownership, provide the Department with written documentation stating:
- q. The new licensee shall have custody of the patients' health records and these records shall be available to the former licensee, the new licensee and other authorized persons; or that other arrangements have been made by the current licensee for the safe preservation and location of the patients' health records, and that they are available to both the new and former licensees and other authorized persons.

The following information is required in each member's medical record:

- a. A unique medical record number. Member identification on each page; personal/biographical data in the record.
- b. Demographic information: name, identification number, date of birth, gender, primary language, communication needs (vision, hearing etc.), emergency contact and preferred language (if other than English) prominently noted in the record, as well as the request or refusal of language/interpretation services.
- c. Primary care provider (if applicable)
- d. Allergies or absence of allergies and untoward reaction to drugs and materials in a prominent location
- e. Histories and physicals that are updated annually or as needed
- f. A problem list, a complete record of immunizations and health maintenance or preventive services rendered.
- g. Advance directive information and/or executed.
- h. Age appropriate "Individual Health Education Behavioral Assessment must be documented by having the patient or legal guardian complete the age-appropriate Staying Healthy Assessment Tool and the clinician documenting review and counseling on the form." Referrals to health education services, as applicable, should be documented.
- i. Consent forms where applicable including the human sterilization consent procedures required by Title 22 CCR Sections 51305.1 through 51305.6.
- j. Significant medical advice given to a member by phone, including after-hours telephone information
- k. Members involved in any research activity is identified
- l. Reports of emergency care provided (directly by the contracted Provider or through an emergency room) and the hospital discharge summaries for all hospital admissions with inpatient and outpatient medication lists reconciled.
- m. Consultations, referrals, Specialists', pathology, and laboratory reports. Any abnormal results shall have an explicit notation in the record.
- n. Records shall be kept current in detail consistent with good medical and professional practice and shall describe subjective complaints, objective findings, the plan for diagnosis and treatment and the services provided to each patient.
- o. All entries shall be dated and be authenticated with name, professional title and classification of the person making the entry.

Progress notes are required to be updated in each patient encounter and include the following where applicable:

- a. Date of the encounter and department
- b. Member's chief complaint or purpose of visit
- c. Medication reconciliation including over-the-counter products and dietary supplements
- d. Physical, mental exams and clinical findings
- e. Studies ordered, such as laboratory or diagnostic imaging and the results. The provider will have a specific process in place to advise a patient of any abnormal health finding or test result, with evidence of process compliance available in the medical record. Notation of the method of communication, date & time of the notification should be noted. If a follow-up appointment or referral is required evidence of the ordering and/or scheduling should also be noted.
- f. Referrals/consultation ordered and the results. Any information regarding results of the specialist visit will be recorded by the Provider including reports and the specialists' consultation record with readings, findings, and treatment recommendations. Notation should be made if a follow-up appointment is required.
- g. Objective Findings/Diagnosis
- h. Plan for Findings/Diagnosis
- i. Treatment Plan including all medications prescribed or ordered need to be noted in the chart. Likewise, prescription refills must be documented and dated. Documentation on medications should include drug name, strength, quantity, and instruction for use. Medication education needs to be documented whenever a new medication is prescribed to insure that the patient understands what the medication is for, how to safely take it and the frequency of dosing.
- j. All injections, immunizations and medications of any type administered in the facility must be documented, indicating drug name, dosage, route, site, date, time, drug manufacturer, lot number, and signature of administering staff.
- k. Care rendered and therapies administered including preventive care provided or refusal of care or therapies.
- l. Documentation of follow-up instructions and a definite time for return visit or other follow-up care. Time period for return visits or other follow-up care is definitely stated in number of days, weeks, months or PRN (as needed).
- m. Previous complaints and unresolved or chronic problems are addressed in subsequent notes until problems are resolved or a diagnosis is made. Each problem need not be addressed at every visit but all problems must be addressed within the calendar year. Documentation must demonstrate that provider follows up with member about treatment regimens, recommendations and counseling.
- n. Care plan or discharge plan including prescriptions, recommendations, education, instructions, necessity of surgery or other procedures etc.
- o. Provider signature

Provider sites are required to contact the Plan member and document in medical records when there is:

- a. missed appointment
- b. abnormal laboratory or imaging results with notation that Member was notified of result
- c. referral results that require attention with notation that Member was notified of result
- d. discharge from an institution such as hospital, emergency room, or skilled nursing facility
- e. inquiry that occurred out of regular business hour

PHC California will audit medical records kept by contracted providers during the Full Scope Facility Site Review at a minimum. Additional monitoring may occur during HEDIS record review and other audits conducted by the Health Plan or required by individual State or Federal requirements.

16.2 Practitioner Responsibilities for Documenting Life-Sustaining Procedures

In accordance with Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations, adult medical records must include documentation of whether the patient has been informed of and has executed an advance directive such as a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care (DPAHC).

Complete documentation is essential whenever life-sustaining procedures are withheld or withdrawn and should include:

- Patient diagnosis and prognosis, including test results or other evidence that the attending Practitioner and the second confirming Practitioner used in forming their conclusion.
- Declaration of whether the patient is likely to regain mental function and the factors upon which the determination of the patient's mental incapacity was based, when applicable.
- A statement that the patient or surrogate has been fully informed of the facts and the consequences of withholding or withdrawing life-sustaining procedures and that the surrogate decision-maker has consented to the withholding or withdrawing of such procedures.
- A copy of any DPAHC Declaration or non-statutory Living Will signed by the patient.
- A description of any desires orally expressed by the patient and of any discussion with family members or other surrogate.
- A copy of a certified letter of guardianship or conservatorship, when applicable. Clear written orders to withhold or withdraw specific medical procedures.

16.3 PHC California Access to Member Medical Records

Be advised that PHC California, via AHF, requires access to Plan member medical records for a variety of reasons. The following section is copied from your provider agreement to remind you of the requirements for this activity. In an effort of mutual cooperation, and in the best interest of patients, PHC California will expect compliance with this requirement by you and your staff. Should you ever have questions or concerns about access to medical records by the Plan you are encouraged to call Provider Relations.

Provider Agreement Excerpt:

8.3 AHF Access to Medical and Administrative Records and Facilities: Provider will maintain and ensure ready availability of medical records to AHF of all pertinent information relating to the health care of each Enrollee records and papers, risk adjustment validation data, computer or other electronic systems relating to the Covered Services provided to the Enrollees, the quality, appropriateness, timeliness, and cost of those services, and any payments received by Provider from Enrollees (or from others on their behalf), and unless the Provider is compensated on a fee-for-service basis, to the financial condition of the provider. (Cal. Health & Safety Code, § 1300.67.8(c).)

Specifically, and without limiting the foregoing, AHF shall have the right to access/inspect Provider facilities and records for purposes of paying Provider, as well, as to perform quality management utilization monitoring and peer review activities. Provider shall require any and all Subcontractors to be bound by this paragraph.

16.4 Chart Review Requirements

Upon receipt of medical records for case review, clinical record audits, or other considerations, details of the clinical documentation will be considered. If a record is found to be lacking in any of the required elements or procedural follow-ups required, where indicated, the provider will be contacted to discuss findings. In the event clinical documentation discrepancies are sufficient to warrant more than a verbal discussion, Provider Relations will be required to work with the provider, in conjunction with clinical management (i.e. Directors of UM, QM or Medical Director), to remediate the discrepancies. All providers who require this level of intervention are expected to comply with the training and/or education so the medical records can accurately and appropriately reflect the standards of care expected for Plan members.

16.5 Immunization Reporting Requirements

PHC California requires compliance with state laws mandating that all California healthcare providers who administer vaccines to report patient-specific immunization information to the California Immunization Registry (CAIR) within fourteen (14) calendar days.

Section 17: Infection Control Practices

The Medical Administration Policy and Procedure Committee adopted by PHC California Managed Care Utilization Management Committee (UMC) has approved the use of clinical practice guidelines for HIV/AIDS published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). This information is available at: <https://clinicalinfo.hiv.gov/guidelines>
Please refer to these guidelines for treatment de-escalation in HIV infected adults and adolescents and virological control.

17.1 Disease Reporting Statement

PHC California complies with disease reporting standards as cited by Section 2500 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations, which requires public health professionals, medical Providers, and others to report approximately 85 diseases or conditions to their local health department. The primary objective of disease reporting and surveillance is to protect the health of the public, determine the extent of morbidity within the community, evaluate risk of transmission, and intervene rapidly when appropriate. Forms to report the required diseases or conditions as well as additional information are available at:

<https://admin.publichealth.lacounty.gov/phcommon/complaints/phcomp.cfm>

17.2 Training

Per the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Medi-Cal Managed Care Division's (MMCD) Facility Site Review (FSR) Full Scope Survey, site personnel receive documented safety training/information in: (8 CCR §5193; CA H&S Code §117600; CA Penal Code §11164, §11168; 29 CFR §1910.1030)

- 1) Infection control/universal precautions (annually)
- 2) Blood Borne Pathogens Exposure Prevention (annually)
- 3) Biohazardous Waste handling (annually)
- 4) Child/Elder/Domestic Violence Abuse

17.3 Infection Control

Similarly, DHCS/MMCD FSR requires providers to adhere to the following criteria:

- A. Infection control procedures for Standard/Universal precautions are followed. (8 CCR §5193; 22 CCR §53230; 29 CFR §1910.1030; Federal Register 1989, §54:23042)

- 1) Antiseptic hand cleaner and running water are available in exam and/or treatment areas for hand washing.
- 2) A waste disposal container is available in exam rooms, procedure/treatment rooms and restrooms.
- 3) Site has procedure for effectively isolating infectious patients with potential communicable conditions.

B. Site is compliant with OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard and Waste Management Act. (8 CCR §5193 (Cal OSHA Health Care Worker Needle stick Prevention Act, 1999); H& S Code, §117600-118360 (CA Medical Waste Management Act, 1997); 29 CFR §1910.1030.)

- 1) Personal Protective Equipment is readily available for staff use.
- 2) Needle stick safety precautions are practiced on site.
- 3) All sharp injury incidents are documented.
- 4) Blood, other potentially infectious materials and Regulated Wastes are placed in appropriate *leak proof, labeled* containers for collection, handling, processing, storage, transport or shipping.
- 5) Biohazardous (non-sharp) wastes are contained separate from other trash/waste.
- 6) Contaminated laundry is laundered at the workplace or by a commercial laundry service.
- 7) Storage areas for regulated medical wastes are maintained secure and inaccessible to unauthorized persons.
- 8) Transportation of regulated medical wastes is only by a registered hazardous waste hauler or by a person with an approved limited-quantity exemption.

C. Contaminated surfaces are decontaminated according to Cal-OSHA Standards. (8 CCR §5193; CA H&S Code §118275)

- 1) Equipment and work surfaces are appropriately cleaned and decontaminated after contact with blood or other potentially infectious material.
- 2) Routine cleaning and decontamination of equipment/work surfaces is completed according to site-specific written schedule.
- 3) Disinfectant solutions used on site are:
 - approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
 - effective in killing HIV/HBV/TB.
 - used according to product label for desired effect.

D. Reusable medical instruments are properly sterilized after each use. (22 CCR

§53230, §53856)

- 1) Written site-specific policy/procedures or Manufacturer's Instructions for instrument/equipment sterilization are available to staff.
- 2) Staff adheres to site-specific policy and/or manufacturer/product label directions for the following procedures:
 - Cleaning reusable instruments/equipment prior to sterilization
 - Cold chemical sterilization
 - Autoclave/steam sterilization
 - Autoclave maintenance
- 3) Spore testing of autoclave/steam sterilizer with documented results (at least monthly)
- 4) Sterilized packages are labeled with sterilization date and load identification information.

Please note these are minimum standards. As information becomes available and/or new policies and procedures are written, the Provider Relations Department will inform you via fax, the Provider Newsletters and/ or presentations by the Physician Chair or designee of the Infection Prevention and Control Committee at Provider Meetings.

Section 18: Environmental Safety

18.1 Safety Program

Any facilities providing healthcare services need to adhere to all Federal, State, local and regulatory agency laws, rules and regulations regarding fire and safety. The Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) states that people have the right to a safe work environment, and employers must take the proper precautions to maintain safety in the workplace. Equally important is the right that patients have to receive their care & treatment in a safe environment.

18.2 Training

Per the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Medi-Cal Managed Care Division's (MMCD) Facility Site Review (FSR) Full Scope Survey, site personnel receive documented safety training/information in: (8 CCR §5193; CA H&S Code §117600; CA Penal Code §11164, §11168; 29 CFR §1910.1030)

A. Site personnel are qualified and trained for assigned responsibilities. CA B&P Code §2069; 16 CCR §1366; 22 CCR §75034, §75035)

- 1) Only qualified/trained personnel retrieve, prepare or administer medications.
- 2) Only qualified/trained personnel operate medical equipment.
- 3) Documentation of education/training for non-licensed medical personnel is maintained on site.
- 4) There is evidence that staff has received safety training and/or has safety information available in the following:
 - Fire safety and prevention
 - Emergency non-medical procedures (e.g. site evacuation, workplace violence)

B. Site environment is maintained in a safe, clean and sanitary condition for all patients, visitors and personnel. (8 CCR §5193; §3220; 22 CCR §53230; 24 CCR, §2, §3, §9; 28 CCR §1300.80; 29 CFR §1910.301, §1926.34)

- 1) All patient areas including floor/carpet, walls, and furniture are neat, clean and well maintained.
- 2) Restrooms are clean and contain appropriate sanitary supplies.
- 3) The following fire and safety precautions are evidenced on site:
 - Lighting is adequate in all areas to ensure safety.
 - Exit doors and aisles are unobstructed and egress (escape) accessible.

- Exit doors are clearly marked with “Exit” signs.
- Clearly diagramed “Evacuation Routes” for emergencies are posted in a visible location.
- Electrical cords and outlets are in good working condition.
- At least one type of firefighting/protection equipment is accessible at all times.
 - Fire extinguishers shall be maintained in a fully charged and operable condition and kept in their designated places at all times except during use.
 - Smoke detectors with intact batteries
 - Automatic sprinkler system with a 10 inch clearance between sprinkler heads and stored materials

<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.157>

Employee Alarm System:

Employers must install and maintain an operable employee alarm system that has a distinctive signal to warn employees of fire or other emergencies, unless employees can promptly see or smell a fire or other hazard in time to provide adequate warning to them. (29 CFR 1910.37) OSHA: For those employers with 10 or fewer employees in a particular workplace, direct voice communication is an acceptable procedure for sounding the alarm provided all employees can hear the alarm. Such workplaces do not need a back-up system.

<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.37>

C. Emergency health care services are available and accessible twenty- four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. (22 CCR §51056, §53216; 28 CCR §1300.67)

- 1) Personnel are trained in procedures/action plan to be carried out in case of medical emergency on site.
- 2) Emergency equipment is stored together in easily accessible location.
- 3) Emergency phone number contacts are posted.
- 4) Emergency medical equipment appropriate to practice/patient population is available on site:
 - Airway management: oxygen delivery system, oral airways, nasal cannula mask, and Ambu bag.
 - Emergency equipment and medication are available and in an accessible location, ready for use. An accessible location is one that is reachable by

personnel standing on the floor, or other permanent working area, without locating/retrieving step stool, ladder or other assistive device.

- Minimum equipment includes Epinephrine 1:1000 (injectable), and Benadryl 25 mg. (oral) or Benadryl 50 mg/ml (injectable), appropriate sizes of ESIP needles/syringes*and alcohol wipes, Naloxone, chewable aspirin, nitroglycerin spray/tablet, nebulizer or metered dose inhaler, and glucose. Asthma exacerbation, chest pain, hypoglycemia management per American Academy of Family Practice (AAFP) recommendations. Medication dosage chart (or other method for determining dosage) is kept with emergency medications, in the emergency kit.

5) There is a process in place on site to:

- Document checking of emergency equipment/supplies for expiration and operating status at least monthly.
- Replace/re-stock emergency equipment immediately after use.

D. Medical and lab equipment used for patient care is properly maintained. (CA Health & Safety Code §111255; 28 CCR §1300.80; 21 CFR §800-1299) 1) Medical equipment is clean.

2) Written documentation demonstrates the appropriate maintenance of all medical equipment according to equipment manufacturer's guidelines.

There is documented evidence that standard operating procedures have been followed for routine inspection/ maintenance, calibration, repair of failure or malfunction, and testing and cleaning of all specialized equipment. Appropriate written records include calibration or other written logs, work orders, service receipts, dated inspection sticker, etc.

Please note these are minimum standards. As information becomes available and/or new policies and procedures are written, the Provider Relations Department will inform you via fax, Provider Newsletters and/or presentations by the Director of Safety and Security of designee at Provider Meetings.

Section 19: Oversight Monitoring

19.1 Compliance and Oversight Monitoring

The Medi-Cal Contract between DHCS and PHC California defines a number of performance requirements that must be satisfied by both PHC California and those Providers agreeing, through descending contracting relationships (or subcontracts), to provide services to eligible and enrolled PHC California members. Among these are:

- The Provider's agreement to maintain books and records for a period of five (5) years and make such documents available to regulatory agencies. Medical records must be maintained for ten (10) years.
- The Provider's agreement to furnish PHC California with encounter data. Providers are encouraged to review their contracts with PHC California to become thoroughly familiar with these and additional performance requirements.
- The Provider's agreement to participate in medical and other audits (e.g. Health Employer Data Information Set (HEDIS) and/or mandated) conducted by DHCS and other regulatory agencies. This means sending medical records free of charge when requested.

19.2 Provider Relations Oversight Monitoring

Under the terms of the Plans contract with DHCS, PHC California conducts ongoing reviews of provider performance. The elements to be reviewed include but are not limited to the following:

- Provider-to-Patient Ratios.
- Geographic Access Standards
- Appointment Availability Survey Results.
- Member Access and Availability Grievance Trend Analysis

19.3 Monitoring Access to Care

PHC California's Provider Relations Department will use various methods for studying and monitoring access to care at the provider level. The access standards listed above will be used for studying compliance. These methods may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Telephone, mail or email surveys
- Review of appointment availability
- Reports such as the Geo-Access Report
- Review of member waiting time in provider office

Access and Availability of care is reported out and monitored at the Member Provider Committee Meetings. Any issues are referred to appropriate department or committee for action if MPC cannot resolve such as Credentialing Committee, Provider Relation, QI, particularly the Facility Site Review Program, Compliance, etc.

Section 20: Compliance Program

PHC California is committed to protecting and preserving the integrity and availability of health care resources by maintaining a Compliance Program. PHC California recognizes the importance of preventing, detecting, and investigating Fraud, Waste, and Abuse (FWA). PHC California's Special Investigations Unit (SIU) that is tasked with maintaining adherence to the Health Plan's Compliance and Anti-Fraud Plan.

20.1 Fraud Waste and Abuse (FWA)

Fraud is knowingly and willfully executing, or attempting to execute, a scheme or artifice to defraud any health care benefit program or to obtain (by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises) any of the money or property owned by, or under the custody or control of, any health care benefit program.

Waste is the overutilization of services, or other practices that, directly or indirectly, result in unnecessary costs to the Medicare program. Waste is generally not considered to be caused by criminally negligent actions but rather the misuse of resources.

Abuse includes actions that may, directly or indirectly, result in unnecessary costs to the Medicare Program, improper payment, payment for services that fail to meet professionally recognized standards of care, or services that are medically unnecessary. Abuse involves payment for items or services when there is no legal entitlement to that payment and the provider has not knowingly and/or intentionally misrepresented facts to obtain payment. Abuse cannot be differentiated categorically from fraud, because the distinction between "fraud" and "abuse" depends on specific facts and circumstances, intent and prior knowledge, and available evidence, among other factors

20.2 Special Investigations Unit (SIU)

The SIU conducts Investigations of Providers, suppliers, members, or other healthcare entities to determine if services are supported by documentation. These investigations typically involve requesting medical records or site visits. In the event that PHC California identifies an overpayment, the Health Plan will notify the Provider in writing.

20.2.1 Reporting and Investigations

Federal and state regulations require PHC California to work with its providers to identify and report potential cases of health care fraud, waste or abuse to law enforcement agencies. Common fraudulent acts include, but are not limited to:

- A member getting a bill for services covered by PHC California
- A member getting a bill for services not performed
- A provider submitting claims for duplicates, unbundled or upcoded services
- A supply or equipment company sending a bill for something that was not ordered by a physician or not provided to the member
- A person using someone else's PHC California's card

Suspected fraud or abuse should be reported to PHC California immediately. Potential fraud, waste or abuse cases can be referred to Health Plan's Compliance Department through the following means:

- **Compliance Hotline** (anonymous reporting) at 1 (800) 243-7448. The Compliance Hotline is available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
- **Email at PHC-Compliance@ahf.org**
- **In writing.** Information submitted anonymously via mail to:

PHC California
Attn: Compliance Officer
1710 N. La Brea Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90046

Providers, First Tier, Downstream or Related Entity or any other delegated entity with a contractual obligation to report suspected fraud, waste or abuse must notify PHC California in accordance with the terms and conditions of its contract and Plan policies and procedures.

PHC California will report, as appropriate, to all local, state, and federal entities.

20.3 Non-Retaliation

Neither PHC California nor any of its contracted entities shall retaliate against any employee, temporary employee, contractor or agent who, in good faith, reports suspected Fraud, Waste or Abuse or Code of Conduct violations to PHC California or a regulatory agency.

20.4 Annual Fraud Waste and Abuse and General Compliance Training

All PHC California Providers must ensure that all employees and contracted downstream entities complete Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Training within ninety (90) days of hire/contracting and annually thereafter.

Section 21: Quality Improvement Program

PHC California Quality Improvement Program (QIP) is written to assure that the quality of health care provided to members meets or exceeds community, professional, regulatory and accreditation standards and that health care and its delivery are continuously monitored and improved based on data driven decisions. Many previous sections already cover topics required in our QIP and administered by other departments. PHC California's Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) of Board of Directors oversees the QIP.

PHC California's QIP is designed to ensure that quality of care and quality of service issues are tracked and trended to review, identify and analyze opportunities for improvement and that appropriate corrective actions are taken to address problems. The vehicle used to monitor quality activities is the Quality Management Committee (QMC). All Providers are invited via fax and requested to RSVP to Provider Relations Department. Quality Improvement activities will not be delegated directly to contracted providers.

In brief, the QIP features review of outcomes data (such as HEDIS) complaints/grievances (see Section 11 on Grievances), potential quality investigations, access and availability, member experience of care surveys (CAHPS), member health outcomes survey (HOS-Medicare only), provider satisfaction surveys, accreditations, population health and disease management programs, medical record reviews, facility site reviews, education of providers on practice guidelines, health education aligned with approved practice guidelines for members (see Section 12 on Health Education), the model of care: chronic disease management, pharmacy and adherence to medication, and performance improvement projects. This comprehensive program is completed through the efforts of committees that report to the Quality Improvement and Health Equity Committee (QIHEC).

21.1 Highlights of Selected Quality Activities

Adherence to Medication

PHC California's key indicator is "Viral Load Suppression". This requires adherence to medication. This indicator is monitored at each QIHEC Meeting.

HEDIS (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set)

The Providers are required to participate in HEDIS measures as part of CMS regulation for receiving payment from government programs such as Medi-Cal and Medicare. Providers contractually agree to send plan medical records upon request for HEDIS or any other review required by regulatory or accreditation agencies.

PQI (Potential Quality Investigation)

A PQI is a process to request an investigation on a quality of care or quality of service issue that appears to be trending. The submitter will complete the PQI form with the concern and send it to the Quality Department.

Please note: this is not the mechanism for a complaint or grievance. Information on complaints and grievances can be found in the section with the same name. Results of the Investigation are reviewed at the RN Risk Manager and Plan Medical Director and the tracking and trending of these investigations report up to Quality Management Committee.

CAHPS (Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers & Systems)

PHC California participates in CAHPS annually. These surveys ask patients (or in some cases their families) about their experiences with, and ratings of, their health care providers and plans, including hospitals, home health care agencies, doctors, and health and drug plans, among others. The surveys focus on matters that patients themselves say are important to them and for which patients are the best and/or only source of information. CMS publicly reports the results of its patient experience surveys, and some surveys affect payments to CMS providers

CAHPS is a patient experience survey. Patient experience surveys sometimes are mistaken for customer satisfaction surveys. Patient experience surveys focus on how patients experienced or perceived key aspects of their care, not how satisfied they were with their care. Patient experience surveys focus on asking patients whether or how often they experienced critical aspects of health care, including communication with their doctors, understanding their medication instructions, experience with front office staff and the coordination of their healthcare needs. They do not focus on amenities.

CAHPS surveys follow scientific principles in survey design and development. The surveys are designed to reliably assess the experiences of a large sample of patients. They use standardized questions and data collection protocols to ensure that information can be compared across healthcare settings. Finally, many CAHPS measures are statistically adjusted to correct for differences in the mix of patients across providers and the use of different survey modes.

CAHPS surveys are an integral part of CMS' efforts to improve healthcare in the U.S. Some CAHPS surveys are used in Value-Based Purchasing (Pay for Performance) initiatives. These initiatives represent a change in the way CMS pays for services. Instead of only paying for the number of services provided, CMS also pays for providing high quality services. The quality of services is measured clinically, administratively, and through the use of patient experience of care surveys. For more information please view the CAHPS website at:

<https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Research/CAHPS/>

21.2 Model of Care

As an added benefit to our members, AHF Plans use a CMS approved "Model of Care" (MOC) as the framework for chronic disease management. The MOC establishes that the Plan will deliver health service based on Chronic Care Disease Management Program. The program is based on a strong working relationship with the Plan's RN Care Team Manager (RNCTM), the Primary Care Provider and the Member. Other's may be included on the team as needed or as requested such as a family member, significant other or other health care professional such as a social worker.

The high level steps of the program include:

Identifying chronic disease status by using the Health Risk Assessment (HRA) by RN Care Manager (RNCM). Every member in our Plans has at least one chronic condition HIV/AIDS. Primary Care Providers are required to sign off receipt of the HRA which will be sent on behalf of the members Care Manager.

- Severity Level (SL) are calculated from HRA results (SL 1, 2 or 3 – 3 being most severe)
- Members assigned SL 3 are place under complex care management – the rest are placed in the chronic disease management program or a population health program.
- A Care Plan is established with at least the member and Primary Care Provider including establishing goals with the final version shared with the member's care team. Primary Care Providers are required to sign off receipt of the Care Plan which will be sent on behalf of the members Care Manager.
- Interdisciplinary Care Team Meetings are held to coordinate care & discuss best options for care and its delivery
- Ongoing support continues by RNCTM – working the care plan – teaching self-management to member
- Annual re-evaluation of member is completed by RNCTM and shared with care team.

QI produces an annual MOC Dashboard to measure our success with implementing the MOC for every member. Results are presented at QMC Meeting and EOC with this information sent to providers and members, usually via the newsletters (or blast fax to providers).

21.3 Accreditations

PHC California has full three (3) year accreditation from Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC). AAAHC accreditation means that the organization participates in on-going self-evaluation, peer review and education to continuously improve its care and services. The organization also commits to a thorough, on-site survey by AAAHC surveyors, who are themselves health care professionals, at least every three years.

21.3.1 Facility Site Review and Medical Record Review

- PHC California's responsibility to its members is to contract with providers of health care who provide safe, comfortable offices and deliver high quality medical care.
- The Provider/Clinic to be reviewed will be advised in advance, by telephone and in writing, of the selected date(s) for the audit of his/her office/facility. Using the approved DHCS Facility Site Reviews Checklist, PHC California's assigned/credentialed Facility Site Review Nurse will visit the Provider's site on the previously arranged date (see DHCS Facility Review Checklist).
- Results of each audit will be reviewed by the Facility Site Review Nurse for compliance with and maintenance of standards. Results of the completed site audit will be conveyed to the Provider, where applicable. Quality Improvement Corrective Actions will be implemented as necessary following the review. Facility Site Review scores are shared with the Credentialing and Peer Review Office and filed in the appropriate providers file for re-privileging and re-contracting purposes. For more details on Facility Site Review and review forms, please refer to the chapter on Physician Facility Licensure, section 21

21.3.2 Medical Record Review

- PHC California has a responsibility to ensure that ambulatory medical records are maintained to document that care has been provided appropriately. This includes pediatric, if applicable, and adult health care.
- The provider to be reviewed will be advised in advance, either by telephone or in writing, of the selected dates for the audit of their ambulatory medical records. Using the Medical Record Audit Tool, the Facility Site Review Nurse will review the selected charts for appropriate medical records management and documentation. Whenever possible, the facility audit and medical record review will be conducted concurrently. Quality Improvement corrective actions will be implemented as necessary following the review. For more details, refer to the Chapter 15 Medical Record Documentation.

21.3.3 Corrective Action Plans

When it is found that Providers do not meet the terms of their contracts, applicable policies and procedures, licensing and related requirements, and the provisions of this Manual, they will be notified in writing of deficiencies. Quality Improvement Corrective Action Plans (CAP) will be forwarded to providers and will include corrective actions and dates by which corrective actions are to be achieved.

PHC California representatives will work with and offer support to providers to ensure the timely resolution of CAP requirements. Providers who fail to respond to an initial corrective action plan by the date specified will be provided with a second iteration of CAP requirements and may be assigned an extended action plan due date. Ongoing monitoring of compliance with any corrective action will be a joint effort, with Quality Management leading the effort, in cooperation with Provider Relations.

21.3.4 Non-Compliance with Quality Improvement Corrective Actions

PHC California Quality Management Department may assist the Provider with the development and implementation of the corrective action plan. Non-compliance with Quality Improvement corrective actions may result in any of the following:

- Contact by the PHC California's Quality Management Department
- Possible referral to Credentialing and Peer Review Committee and/or Compliance Committee, as appropriate.
- Conduct in service/education
- Implementation of Provider Compliance Department corrective action program which may result in the following sanctions:
 - The termination of new member enrollments
 - Moving current members to another provider
 - Formal contract termination

21.3.5 Re-Audits

Re-audits are conducted to ensure corrective actions have been effective in improving compliance with previously identified deficiencies.

21.3.6 Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Reviews

The CHDP, a part of the Children's Medical Services State Program, is a preventive health program serving California's children and youth under the age of 21. Currently, PHC California does not enroll members under 21 years of age. Through the CHDP program, regular preventive health assessments to identify and treat problems, or suspected problems, are available to eligible children and youth to prevent or reduce the severity of illnesses. Through this program,

PHC California provides preventive health care to eligible members together with the continuity that comes with care provided by the member's selected Primary Care Practitioner (PCP).

- Incorporated into the Medical Record Review Tool are CHDP specific questions. The provider to be reviewed will be advised in advance, either by telephone or in writing, of the date for the review. A specific number of records will be reviewed by a licensed PHC California staff member. The CHDP review may be done concurrently with the medical record review.
- Any provider not meeting CHDP standards will be advised in writing. Quality Improvement corrective actions will be implemented as necessary following the audit. Details pertaining to the CHDP Program are in section 11, titled Children's Services.

21.4 Perinatal/Postpartum Services Program

Should the need arise, the Plan will refer any pregnant member to an OB/GYN that specializes in HIV high risk pregnancies.

21.5 Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Workforce Quality Incentive Program (WQIP)

SNF WQIP is a Medi-Cal program that provides performance-based directed payments to SNF facilities to incentivize workforce and quality improvements. The program is currently in effect for services provided between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2026. Eligible facilities include freestanding SNF Level-B and adult freestanding subacute facilities Level-B.

PHC California makes incentive payments to its qualifying network providers at a per diem amount determined by Medi-Cal based on the state's quality metrics. To receive WQIP incentive payments from PHC California, facilities must have network provider agreements with the Health Plan.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE
PHC CALIFORNIA NETWORK.**