

Any Practice, USA

Policy: Access and Communication with Patients

Purpose: To describe the practices policies and procedures relating to access to care, scheduling visits, same day access and triage

A. Scheduling each patient with a personal clinician for continuity of care

1. Appointment schedulers will identify each patient's primary care physician and offer an appointment with that physician.
2. Patients will be scheduled with another physician only upon patient request or when the urgent nature of the appointment requires that the patient be seen prior to the primary care physician's next available appointment.
3. Note the reason for scheduling a patient with a physician other than his or her primary care physician on the patient's chart.
4. Quarterly monitoring documents that patients are seen by the physician of their choice in 85% of visits.

B. Coordinating visits with multiple clinicians and/or diagnostic tests will be scheduled during one trip

1. Pre-visit planning will occur no later than the two days prior to the patient's scheduled appointment.
2. The record review, conducted by the RN assigned to the provider's team will determine that reports of all completed services are available for the visit and that any related services (preventive and/or for chronic disease management) which are indicated will be provided at the same time the visit is scheduled.
3. The schedule of the patient will be reviewed with the patient prior to accommodate the time required for the additional services.
4. Spot checks, conducted for a one week interval, will be performed twice a year and will document that coordination of care is provided 80% of the time.

C. Determining through triage how soon a patient needs to be seen and scheduling same-day appointments based on practice's triage of patients' conditions

1. Same-day appointments will be scheduled based on the following triage protocols.
 - i. Urgent and emergent appointments are given priority. **Urgent appointments** are those determined by the triage clinician to require

medical evaluation within 2 to 4 hours. **Emergent appointments** are those determined by the triage clinician to require medical evaluation immediately (within 1 to 2 hours.)

- ii. Requests for emergency appointments will be transferred to the triage RN who will determine each patient's need.
- iii. Spot checks, conducted for a one week interval, will be performed every six months will determine the practice's ability to meet the standard 80% of the time.

D. Maintaining the capacity to schedule patients the same day they call and scheduling same-day appointments based on patient's/ family's request

1. A schedule will be kept maintaining the availability of daily appointments to allow same-day appointments. One fifteen minute time slot will be kept open each hour for each provider between the hours of 8:30 and 10:30 AM and 1:00 and 2:30 PM. Two fifteen minute slots will be kept open for same day appointments for the remaining hours the practice is open on a daily basis.
2. The schedule will be updated as the appointments are filled.
3. The same criteria apply whether the call is from the patient, family member or other requestor.
4. Spot checks, conducted for a one week interval, will be performed quarterly document that requestors receive same-day appointments 90% of the time.

Approved:

Review Date: