



Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center PHYSICAL THERAPY DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PROCEDURE FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY CONSULTATION FOR OUTPATIENT SERVICES

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PURPOSE: Physical therapy evaluations and treatments are provided for patients referred from inpatient services, outpatient clinics, and from the community. In addition, Physical therapy services are available to patients in specified outpatient clinics.

POLICY: To define the provision of physical therapy outpatient services.

I. OUTPATIENT CLINICS

A. Staffing

1. Clinic coverage may be through either regular staff assignment to individual clinics or on a consultative basis. The type of coverage for a given clinic is determined on the basis of the needs of the patients, needs of the clinic and staffing resources.
2. Outpatient clinic staffing is provided primarily by the outpatient staff assigned to the individual patient categorical disease services.
3. Coverage of clinic consultations will be dependent on availability of outpatient clinic staff.

B. Physical Therapy Services Provided to Outpatient Clinics with Assigned Coverage

1. Patients that require physical therapy services during a given clinic visit are identified by the physician or nurse practitioner in that clinic.
2. Financial authorization for the Physical Therapy evaluation must be obtained prior to initiating billable services
3. Based on findings of the physical therapy evaluation screening and/or problems identified by the patient or others, services may include:
 - a. Instruction or re-instruction in home program, functional skills and equipment use.

- b. Recommendations for equipment changes and/or repairs.
 - c. Referral to or follow up with other disciplines or community agencies.
 - d. Physical therapy services will not be provided if there are no goals to be attained or if there are medical contraindications.
- 4. Patients requiring further physical therapy are referred by the physician for specific evaluation and/or treatment in the Outpatient Physical Therapy treatment area (refer to Physical Therapy Departmental Policy and Procedure No. 130, "Procedure for Physical Therapy Consultation").
 - 5. Findings of evaluation, recommendations and services rendered are communicated to the physicians and other appropriate relevant personnel at time of the clinic.
 - 6. All patients seen by physical therapy in the Outpatient Clinic have documentation for the visit entered into the patient's medical record at the time of the clinic visit (refer to Physical Therapy Departmental Policy and Procedure No. 403, "Documentation: Evaluation, Progress and Treatment Records").
- C. Clinic personnel with "on-call" coverage
- 1. Clinic personnel contact the therapist in the designated treatment area by phone if specific physical therapy needs are identified.
 - 2. When physical therapy personnel are unable to respond to "on-call" coverage needs, clinic personnel will complete a referral to Outpatient Therapy (refer to Physical Therapy Departmental Policy and Procedure No. 130, "Procedure for Physical Therapy Consultation").
- II. OUTPATIENT THERAPY IN THE PHYSICAL THERAPY TREATMENT AREA
- A. The Outpatient Physical Therapy receives referrals from inpatient physicians to continue treatment after discharge from the hospital, from the Outpatient Clinics, and from community referrals.
 - B. Assigning a consult for outpatient services after discharge from inpatient program:

1. When a patient is discharged from inpatient program, the referring therapist, the physician and the patient will determine the need for continued therapy and the anticipated outcome.
 2. The physical therapist or physician will indicate the recommendations for continued therapy in the medical record. The provider may place an order for the referral and the physical therapist may place a proposed order in the medical record for the provider to review and sign.
 3. Referrals to the Seating Center are submitted through the electronic medical record as an order specifically to the Seating Center.
 4. The Outpatient Therapy clerk records the receipt of outpatient therapy and seating center referrals and the assigned physical therapist.
 5. The designated physical therapist evaluates the patient and makes recommendations as appropriate and completes all necessary documentation in the patient's medical record.
- C. The physical therapist performs an appropriately selective evaluation and identifies problems, goals, recommended interventions, and program frequency and duration. Initial treatment plan, recommendations for continued therapy and subsequent changes in program require physician approval which is indicated by the physician's countersignature on the appropriate physical therapy note.
- D. Frequency and duration of treatment varies depending upon the needs as identified by the physical therapy evaluation.
- E. Outpatient therapy treatments are scheduled with the patient and/or his/her family by the outpatient physical therapy clerks.
- F. Documentation is completed for each patient visit (refer to Physical Therapy Departmental Policy and Procedure No. 403, Documentation: Evaluation, Progress and Treatment Records”).
- G. Patients requiring other allied health or community services, as identified by the therapist, are referred to the appropriate source.
- H. Attendance polices are determined by the Outpatient service.
- I. Home visits are performed at the discretion of the therapist.

III. EMERGENCY CARE

- A. If an urgent medical need arises during the outpatient visit, a CODE ASSIST or other appropriate code (e.g. CODE BLUE) should be called to ensure rapid response to an urgent medical need. If therapist suspects a patient needs triage for potential infectious disease – follow the guidelines outlined for management of a Person Under Investigation (PUI). If a therapist needs consultation on an issue, the outpatient clinic for the patient or the physician on-call should be notified. (Refer to Physical Therapy Departmental Policy and Procedure No. 703, “Management of Therapy Outpatients with Urgent Medical Needs”).
- B. Refer to the Physical Therapy Departmental Policy and Procedure #507 on "Management of Patients in Distress Needing Physician Services When No Physician is in Attendance."

IV. ADDITIONAL POLICIES/REFERENCES

- A. For other policies and procedures related to outpatient services, please see the Physical Therapy Departmental Policy and Procedure Manual as follows:
 - 1. Personnel – Section 100
 - 2. Staff Orientation and Training - Section 200
 - 3. Patient Care - Section 400
 - 4. Safety Procedure - Section 500
 - 5. Infection Control - Section 600
- B. For specific procedures, tests/examinations and documentation forms, please refer to treatment guides and directives in each outpatient service area.



Director, Physical Therapy Department