



Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center

OUTPATIENT SERVICES

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: Triage Guidelines for Outpatient Services

Policy No.: 4.01.01

Revision: 07/2022

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I. PURPOSE:

To instruct outpatient staff in managing both walk-in patients and messages from the Nurse Message Center (NMC), or electronic messaging systems. It identifies the responsibilities of the medical home team in responding to patients' needs outside of the normal clinic schedule and flow.

II. POLICY:

Patients may walk-in to clinic without an appointment. They may also leave phone messages with the NMC or send electronic messages through the patient portal. The needs of these patients are assessed by the clinic team, prioritized, and addressed based on their clinical urgency.

III. PROCEDURES:

This set of procedures is performed by the medical home team to assist the PCMH in accommodating patients' needs while managing the flow of scheduled appointments. This ensures that patients' needs are addressed in a timely manner, sometimes through same-day appointments with their established primary care providers or designated medical homes.

a. Outpatient Walk-In Triage

- i. Front desk staff notifies the RN of the walk-in patient waiting for triage.
- ii. RN identifies the need(s) of the patient and provides plan of care including a sooner appointment, if warranted.
- iii. If a same-day appointment is needed, the scheduled, same-day provider is identified.
- iv. If needed, a same-day appointment is scheduled, based on clinical urgency.
- v. For medication refills, the medical record is checked to confirm that additional refills are available before making an appointment or submitting a refill request.
- vi. The medical record documentation is consulted as needed for clarification or a better history of the patient's condition.
- vii. The patient's disposition is documented in the medical record.
- viii. The patient is provided a visit summary.
- ix. The LVN may assist in completing the intake note and collaborate with the RN for the nursing plan of care.
- x. At any time, the team may activate a CODE Assist or other emergency medical response if an emergent medical need is determined by team.

b. Phone messages from Nurse Message Center (NMC), or electronic messages.

- i. Messages from patients are retrieved from NMC or electronic message system.
- ii. Messages are read to determine the urgency of need.

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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES • DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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- iii. Contact the patient.
- iv. Refer to the medical record for clarification or to review the patient's history.
 - v. Document in medical record the disposition of the patient.
 - vi. Consult the provider and complete the plan of care.
 - vii. Work together with the clerk and other nurses as needed.
- viii. The LVN may review the note and collaborate with RN for the nursing plan of care.