

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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Subject: CONTINUITY OF CARE POST HOSPITAL DISCHARGE

Policy No.: B826.5

Supersedes: March 10, 2020

Review Date: May 15, 2023

Origin Date: April 26, 2006

Revision Date:

PURPOSE:

To describe how Rancho provides continuity of care and safe transition of patients to outpatient clinic teams following discharge from inpatient hospitalization. Adherence to this policy ensures that patients' medical needs are met during the period between the inpatient hospital stay and the subsequent visit in the outpatient setting.

POLICY:

This policy delineates which providers are responsible for directing the care of patients during the period of transition from inpatient to outpatient.

PROCEDURE:

I. Established Rancho-Empaneled Patients

- a. An *established* Rancho-empaneled patient is an individual empaneled to a DHS-Rancho Los Amigos Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) who has been seen by his or her Primary Care Provider (PCP) or designee within the last 12 months.
- b. Immediately following discharge from inpatient hospitalization, the care for the established Rancho-empaneled patient is transitioned to, and directed by, the patient's PCP with support from the outpatient PCMH Team.
- c. If a patient has an urgent medical need that requires attention prior to the first scheduled clinic visit following discharge from inpatient, the established Rancho-empaneled patient should contact his or her PCMH team.
- d. To contact the PCMH team, the established Rancho-empaneled patient can call the Nurse Message Center at (562) 385-6367 or send an electronic message to the provider.

II. Inactive Rancho-Empaneled Patients

- a. An *inactive* Rancho-empaneled patient is an individual who is *Empaneled* to Rancho PCMH and has not been seen in PCMH within the last 12 months.
- b. Upon discharge from the inpatient, the inpatient attending physician retains the responsibility for directing the care of the inactive Rancho-empaneled patient until the patient's first outpatient clinic appointment, or 30 days after hospital discharge, whichever comes first.
- c. Care for the patient includes, but is not limited to, answering medical questions from the patient and caregivers, responding to requests for refills of medications, reviewing and approving therapy orders, plans of care, and other necessary paperwork.
- d. If the first outpatient visit is scheduled with *Primary Care*, the responsibility for directing the care of the inactive Rancho-empaneled patient (including the items listed in item c. above), is transferred to his or her outpatient PCMH team on the date of that appointment.

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- e. If the first outpatient visit is scheduled with either *Transition* or *Specialty* clinic, the responsibility for directing the care of the inactive Rancho-empaneled patient is transferred to the transition or specialty clinic provider and outpatient team on the date of that appointment.
- f. The transfer of the responsibility for the care of the inactive Rancho-empaneled patient from the inpatient attending physician to either the PCP, transition, or specialty provider should occur on the date of the first scheduled outpatient visit, even if the patient fails to attend the appointment, or 30 days following hospital discharge, whichever comes first.
- g. If the patient did not show up on the first outpatient visit, the patient will be contacted either by the telephone or letter sent to the address on record to reschedule an appointment.

III. Post-Surgery Patients:

- a. Following hospitalization for surgery or a surgical procedure, the responsibility for the care of the *post-surgery* patient (regardless of empanelment status) is retained by the performing surgeon's team during the transition to outpatient.
- b. Care for the patient includes, but is not limited to, answering medical questions from the patient and caregivers, responding to requests for refills of medications, reviewing and approving therapy orders, plans of care, and other necessary paperwork.
- c. Patients *not-empaneled* to Rancho may only have **one post-operative visit per specialty**.

IV. Patients *not-empaneled* to Rancho should seek care with their in-network PCPs immediately upon discharge from inpatient hospitalization to address any medical needs.