



Snoqualmie Tribe Health Services

Contract Health Services: Physician and Nursing Responsibilities

Physicians must use the contract health service (CHS) referral form to obtain services for tribal members that we cannot provide at either clinic site. Typically, these would be initiated for:

- Diagnostic testing, such as radiology services
- Specialist consultation
- Procedures from specialists (e.g., endoscopy, lumbar injections)
- Supplies or equipment

Physicians are expected to know the 4 main categories of CHS health priorities as set by Indian Health Service regulations and the current priority level of the tribe, which may change as the fiscal year progresses. They are expected to follow these guidelines.

When referring a patient, physicians will check off the IHS medical priority level on the referral form and complete a concise summary of the reason for consultation or procedure needed. The consultant name, address, and contact phone numbers will also be noted by either nursing or medical staff.

Patients will be given a copy of the referral form at the end of their clinic visit for their reference. Remind the patient that this does NOT promise payment for services. Also remind patients to call CHS if they do not hear from the CHS clerk within 2 weeks.

All referral forms will go via interoffice envelope or secured fax 425 831-2112 to the CHS clerk.

The CHS committee will meet 3 times a month to review all referral forms. The CHS clerk is your primary contact to inquire about the status of any referral for your patient. Turnaround time for a decision is typically within 2 weeks of receipt of the referral.

For tribal members with 3rd party insurance who do NOT want to wait for CHS approval, you should inform them that their copayment and deductibles for that visit may NOT be covered. You should still complete a referral on their behalf. This process is needed to track the full extent of tribal CHS expenditures and unmet medical needs in the community.

For approved referrals:

1. The CHS clerk will assign a purchase order number
2. The CHS clerk will fax the completed referral form to the appropriate clinic
3. The nursing team and receptionist will assemble needed chart notes, labs, and other supporting documents to fax or mail to the consultant, under the direction of the primary care doctor
4. The CHS clerk will inform the patient their referral is approved and check to see that they retain a copy of the original referral with consultant contact information



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5. The patient or his/her proxy is responsible for making their appointment

For denied referrals:

1. The CHS clerk will fax the CHS committee's denial to the appropriate clinic
2. If a referral can be completed at another tribal, urban, or Indian Health Service (I/T/U) facility, the referring doctor will be informed of this option
3. The CHS clerk will inform the patient their referral is denied or that it is available at an I/T/U site
4. Appointments at I/T/U sites are the responsibility of the patient
5. The CHS clerk will assist patients in obtaining alternate resources, if appropriate

For deferred referrals:

1. The CHS clerk will fax the CHS committee's deferral to the appropriate clinic
2. The CHS clerk will inform the patient their referral is deferred until funds are available
3. The CHS clerk will keep copies of all deferred referrals, and they will be routinely reviewed on a monthly basis. This is known as the medical "waiting list".
4. If the status of your patient changes that might change the priority level, you may resubmit an updated referral for committee review. Clearly note the priority level change in status.
5. As funds are available, a referral may be approved. If so, the CHS clerk will inform the patient. See section 4 and 5 under approved referrals above.

For any questions, please contact the CHS coordinator at 425 831-2100 ext. 231. Email is CHS@snoqualmiation.com.