

HEALTH PLAN OF SAN JOAQUIN			
Subject: Advice Nurse Program			
Department: Medical Management			Policy #: MM 01
Applies to: All Business Lines			Scope: Medical Management
Effective Date: 9/1/96	Revised Date: 11/06, 6/08	Approved by: Medical Director	

POLICY

- A The Health Plan has a contract with the St. Joseph’s Regional Health System to provide a service in which the Health Plan of San Joaquin members can receive advice during and after normal business hours. This service is not intended to replace or substitute for the services and duties of their Primary Care Physician (PCP), but to respond to calls from members needing to talk with a qualified medical professional when they get the provider’s answering machine. This Advice Nurse is intended to provide a necessary service and to enhance and optimize quality of care, reducing unnecessary emergency department usage.
- B Health Plan of San Joaquin contracted Primary care physicians may place a message on their answering machine, or instruct their answering service vendor to inform their patient to contact the Advice Nurse if needing medical advice during after hours.
- C All physicians participating in the Advice Nurse program must be willing to accept the protocols established by the St. Joseph’s Regional Health System program and approved by the Health Plan’s Quality Improvement/Utilization Management (QI/UM) Committee.
- D The St. Joseph’s Regional Health System must have a physician available to Health Plan members 24 hours, 7 days per week to authorize any medically necessary services, including post stabilization services.
- E The Advice Nurse will serve as the contact for the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) after working hours, weekends and holidays on behalf of HPSJ (see UM22 – On-Call Designee and Response Time for Urgent Grievances Filed with the DMHC).
- F The Advice Nurse functions under medical protocols established by the St. Joseph’s Regional Health System and approved by the Health Plan of San Joaquin’s QI/UM Committee. The Health Plan’s QIUM Committee must, also review all revisions, and/or additions to the policies. (This is a policy)

PROCEDURE:

- A. The Advice Nurse will notify the primary care physician by fax the following day regarding the nature and disposition of calls received for their members. (B. are procedures/guidelines)
 - 1. Emergency Disposition:
 - a) The Advice Nurse will advise the member to go to the nearest emergency department, or to call 9-1-1 if appropriate.
 - The Advice Nurse will contact the emergency department regarding the referral.

- The Advice Nurse will fax a copy of the medical screening form to the PCP and the Health Plan of San Joaquin for notification.
- The PCP is expected to contact the patient the next day for follow-up.

b) Urgent Disposition:

- The Advice Nurse will assess the problem and triage the patient against the protocol and triage the patient to the appropriate facility.
- The Advice Nurse will fax a copy of the medical screening form to the PCP and HPSJ for notification.
- The PCP is expected to contact the patient the next day for follow-up.

c) Non-Urgent Problems

- The Advice Nurse will give advice per the appropriate, approved protocols.
- The Advice Nurse will advise the member to follow up with their PCP per protocols.
- The Advice Nurse will fax a copy of the medical screening form to the PCP.
- The PCP is expected to review the medical screening form and contact the member for follow-up as clinically indicated.

d) DMHC Urgent Grievances

- The Advice Nurse will notify the Medical Director on the next business day of any urgent grievances received by the DMHC after hours, weekends or holidays.

C. Authorization

1. The Advice Nurse and/or physician on call may provide authorization for those services requested by a provider during the hours that HPSJ is closed that are medically necessary and cannot wait until HPSJ opens. (This a policy)
 - a) Notification of the authorization must be faxed to HPSJ's UM department with all pertinent documentation within 24 hours.

D. Education Only

- a) Members may access the Advice Nurse with general health education questions and will be assisted as per approved protocol.

E. Quality Oversight

1. The Health Plan's UM/QI Committee will assist the Medical Management Department in reviewing the Advice Nurse policies and medical protocols.
2. The Health Plan will request a quality assessment report, including member complaints semi-annually to be reviewed by the UM/QI Committee to evaluate that the advice provided is consistent with good professional practice and in compliance with the approved protocols. HPSJ receives monthly reports summarizing the number and nature of calls by the members to the Advice Nurse line. This list will be given to one of the Medical Management Nurses who will follow up with the member and provide the appropriate intervention such as:
 - Providing education material
 - Validating or assisting the member with an appointment with their PCP
 - Case Management or Disease Management Programs

F. Record-Keeping Procedures

1. HPSJ's UM department will track and trend the calls by type, provider and distribution to evaluate areas needed to develop a corrective action plan. (This is a policy)
2. HPSJ's Health Educator will use the monthly report to initiate health education interventions and prevention messages that address the topics most frequently accessed through the Advice Nurse; i.e. fever, earaches, vomiting, etc.

REFERENCE

- A. California Health and Safety Code Section, 1348.8

Review Date:	7/05 M. Jordan RN	10/05 M. Jordan RN	11/06 N. Raymond	06/08 R. Morrow		
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