

SUMMARY OF REFERRAL PHYSICIANS DUTIES

Primary Care Physicians act as case managers by coordinating Medically Necessary Covered Services and controlling, through authorization, referral to all services, unless specifically excepted, for their assigned Members. When it appears to the PCP that a consultation and/or services of a Referral Physician is/are required, the PCP will discuss the need for the referral with the Member. Prior to the Member's visit the PCP may contact the Referral Physician to discuss the upcoming referral.

The PCP will initiate the referral by preparing a Referral Authorization Form (RAF) that the Member will carry or that will be mailed, or transmitted electronically and which will validate authorization by the PCP to the Referral Physician. Upon receipt of proper authorization and verification of Member eligibility and confirmation of the current PCP, the Referral Physician will treat as requested, and serve as a consultant to the PCP. This authorization process ensures that the PCP is in control of the referral situation, that the Member's care is coordinated, and that the PCP is aware of outside treatment received by the Member.

Prior to treating the Member, the Referral Physician should verify that the Member is eligible for service, ensure the RAF is from the Member's current and correct PCP, complete the RAF, and distribute copies as appropriate. If the Member is eligible but no RAF has been received, the Referral Physician should contact the PCP for proper authorization prior to rendering any service, unless the service is considered to be an Emergency Service and concern for the Member's well being precludes contacting the PCP. CenCal Health will not reimburse the Referral Physician if he/she renders service to a non-eligible Member.

After the initial authorized treatment, if the Referral Physician recommends additional treatment, the PCP may authorize continued care. If the treatment is beyond the timeframe or level of care indicated on the current RAF, the PCP will need to send another RAF to the Referral Physician authorizing additional treatment or observation. The RAF may be issued over an extended period, depending on the circumstances. Each month the Referral Physician should verify eligibility and the member's continued assignment to the PCP who issued the RAF.

Throughout the consultation the Referral Physician is expected to keep the PCP advised of the course, likely duration, and prognosis of the condition. The Referral Physician may provide this information on the RAF (Section 3) or on a separate written report documenting the findings, treatment, etc.

PS 5/06, reviewed 12/2007