



June 22, 2018

Dear Kern Family Health Care Provider:

I want to update you on some new activities occurring at Kern Health Systems (KHS). Before I start, I want to personally thank all of you for your support and partnership with KHS in the quest to provide the best quality health care to our members and your patients. This partnership is critical to ensure that the less fortunate in our community have access to the same quality health care that we expect for our families and friends.

Regarding these activities, please note the following:

1. In January 2018, KHS implemented a **Palliative Care Program** for our Kern Family Health Care members who could benefit from these services. KHS contracts with 3 palliative care vendors in our community. Patients in palliative care will continue to see their Primary Care doctors and receive treatment as directed by their Primary Care doctor. The palliative care team provides support services to augment the Primary Care doctor's treatment plan. If you have Kern Family Health Care members in your practice that you think could benefit from palliative care please submit a referral through the KHS portal to request these services.
2. Following the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) adding a cardiac rehabilitation benefit to Medi-Cal, KHS implemented a **Cardiac Rehabilitation Program** using local cardiac rehabilitation centers to provide these services to our members. If you have Kern Family Health Care patients that you think could benefit from cardiac rehabilitation, please submit a request for cardiac rehabilitation services through KHS portal.
3. Another program I would like to highlight is our **Transition of Care Clinic** for members who could benefit from being seen within 72 hours of their hospital discharge. This program has shown to reduce recidivism resulting in fewer hospital readmissions. . The purpose is to ensure member's remains stable, continue to take their medication as prescribed and identify any medical or psychosocial concerns which, if not addressed, could result in relapse. Records of their Transition of Care visit are sent to the member's PCP who will continue their care after their transition period. Please note, this is a short term program designed to stabilize the member's condition. This program **does not** remove members from your panel. Its goal is to stabilize patients after discharge and transfer them back you. When appropriate, please encourage your patient's to participate in our Transition of Care Clinic following discharge if you feel they may benefit from this service.

4. To comply with KHS's contract with California's Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) governing External Quality Review Requirements, KHS is obligated to monitor KFHC member's patient care utilization patterns to assure medically appropriate treatment. After completing an extensive review of member's utilization patterns over a two year period, trends appeared in certain specialty care services and among certain procedures more than could be accounted for from changes in population acuity. Consequently, it has become necessary to modify our current Prior Authorization list to include a selected number of new procedures currently not on the list. Before implementing any changes, KHS conducted a physician's forum to receive comments from physicians on the proposed changes to our prior authorization policy and list of procedures impacted. Based on feedback from forum attendees, KHS refined its prior authorization list which will become effective July 1st, 2018. As with all procedures requiring prior authorization, approval requests for new items to the list will follow predetermine evidence based practice standards for that particular area of medicine.

I am available to discuss any of the above new programs or changes. The best way to contact me directly is by email at martha.tasinga@khs-net.com. When you send me an email, please include the best number and time to call in order to clarify your request or concern. You can also call our UM department at (661)664-5083). Staff will be able to help you but if they are not able to answer your questions immediately, they will contact me to address your concerns.

Thank you for the great partnership!

Sincerely,



Martha Tasinga, MD, MPH, MBA
Chief Medical Officer
KERN HEALTH SYSTEMS