

POLICY MANUAL

Subject: Referral for Other Services

Effective Date: 1/16/2000

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PI Coordinator

Approved By: James B. Moore
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POLICY

When a patient requires services that are beyond the scope of the organization, the responsible department shall make a referral to an appropriate organization or provider that meets the needs of the patient. Patients, and their families as appropriate, are actively involved in this process.

PROCEDURE

1. When an individual inquires about treatment services either by telephone or in person and it is determined (after screening and initial chemical dependency assessment) that the individual needs services other than those provided by Cumberland Heights, the employee communicates this to the person and family as appropriate.
2. The specific reasons are given in language that is understandable to the patient and family, avoiding the use of complex industry jargon.
3. The employee shall provide referral information after consulting with medical staff (physician and/or nursing), utilization review staff, counseling staff, the financial advisor, EAP or other specific referral sources as needed.
4. The final referral is based upon the person's assessed needs and strengths, as well as the person's willingness to accept the referral.
5. Examples of referrals of this type include referral to a hospital based chemical dependency treatment program for a person who requires a higher level of medical care than that offered or referral to a psychiatric or co-occurring disorders program for a person who is experiencing psychotic symptoms or acute suicidal thoughts or plans.
6. When a current patient of a Cumberland Heights program requires services that are beyond the scope of the organization, a similar referral process occurs.
7. For medical services, the physician and the medical staff work with the patient and his/her counselor to coordinate a referral that will allow the continuation of the treatment experience, if indicated. These may include diagnostic services, as well as specialty medical services such as orthopedics or obstetrics. Appointments are worked around the counseling schedule and a Cumberland Heights driver will assist with transportation as needed. Records are exchanged with the organization or professional as releases of information allow.

8. For more serious medical conditions or acute psychiatric conditions in which transfer to a higher level of medical or psychiatric care is required, the physician will coordinate with the patient, family, and the primary care physician (if indicated) to ensure appropriate admission. To better facilitate the referral, the patient shall be asked to sign consent to release information so that medical staff may communicate with the receiving organization. If appropriate, the patient is encouraged to return to complete treatment as the stabilization of the medical and/or psychiatric condition allows.
9. In the case of an emergency medical or psychiatric situation, staff will attempt to involve the patient and family as much as is possible without jeopardizing the timeliness of and need for emergency care. Cumberland Heights maintains agreements with acute care hospitals as well as urgent care centers for services of this nature.