



STATE OF OKLAHOMA
OKLAHOMA HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

OHCA 2008-12

March 10, 2008

RE: Intervention initiative for frequent ER users

Dear Providers:

The Oklahoma Health Care Authority (OHCA) has made efforts to reduce inappropriate use of emergency department services to improve the continuity of care we provide to our SoonerCare members.

OHCA staff has worked to encourage timely and appropriate use of primary care services in lieu of ER visits. Through a special initiative, OHCA staff provides intervention services to SoonerCare members with a history of repeated emergency room (ER) use. SoonerCare members with four or more ER visits in a quarter automatically receive this intervention.

During calendar years 2006 and 2007, the OHCA identified 13,447 SoonerCare members for this intervention. It is estimated that the intervention efforts with these members resulted in 19,260 fewer ER visits. For state fiscal year 2007, that equates to about \$5.8 million in avoided ER costs.

Members who meet the intervention criteria receive a letter reminding them about their primary care provider (PCP); they also receive a phone call from the OHCA member services staff. Based on the information gathered during these calls, some members are referred for further intervention from OHCA nurse care managers and behavioral health specialists. Topics for discussion range from the chronic disease process to the importance of the member's relationship with their PCP.

OHCA also contacts primary care providers, who have members in the targeted intervention group, to exchange information such as ER dates of service, facilities visited and first three listed diagnoses. Care management and intervention services are offered to the PCPs for these members.

Any physician, particularly primary care and emergency physicians, who believes their SoonerCare patient would benefit from this targeted intervention can submit the care management referral form (HCA-24). This form is available on the OHCA's web site: www.okhca.org/providers. Once the provider completes a downloaded form and faxes it to OHCA, care managers can provide intervention services.

Please remember that the Patient Advice Line, 1-800-530-3002, is a resource for SoonerCare members after normal business hours.

If you have questions about this initiative, please call 1-877-823-4529, option 2.

We thank you for helping the OHCA make this initiative a success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Fogarty".

Mike Fogarty