



Sharing is Caring

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Quarter 1

Sophia Meyer Family
Medicine

Keeping You Safe and Informed...

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As you may or may not be aware, there is an opioid crisis in the United States with drug overdose now being the leading cause of accidental death. Per the CDC website, 300,000 Americans have lost their lives to opioid overdose since 2000. How does this affect me, you may ask? A report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), shows that all but nine of the 75 counties in Arkansas had higher than the national average prescribing rates of opiates. This has caused the Arkansas state legislature to take notice, enacting a law (Act 820 of the 2017 session) putting requirements in place for prescribers and

pharmacies to reduce the number of opioids prescribed, help prevent new addiction and treat opiate abuse. This law requires pharmacies to enter EVERY narcotic prescription into a database called the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PMP) and as of August 1, 2017 requires every prescriber (MD/DO/PA/APRN) to review prescription history on each patient prior to prescribing narcotics, specifically opiates and benzodiazepines. This program is supervised by the Arkansas Department of Health. The PMP database allows prescribers to review your prescription drug history in order to prevent overpre-



scribing of narcotic medications.

In keeping with these new requirements, our number one priority is keeping you safe and healthy. To be able to comply with these requirements we have had to change our office policy on medication refills. We are now asking that you call 24-48 hours in advance of needing refills and that any paper prescriptions will be ready after 1:30 pm on the day that they are due.

Deductible vs Co-Insurance vs Copay

Most insurance plans have a deductible, co-insurance and/or copay. A deductible is a specified amount of money that you must pay before the insurance will pay on a claim. Once the deductible is met you then have co-insurance.

Co-insurance is when the

insurance company pays a portion of the claim and you pay a portion of the claim. Example: If you have 80/20 co-insurance and the allowable is \$100 the insurance will pay \$80 and you will pay \$20. Co-insurance might be 90/10, 80/20, 70/30 or even 50/50.

A copay is what the insurance requires you to pay at the time of service. It's not included in your co-insurance. It can be different for a PCP vs specialist vs emergency room. Patients should always contact their insurance for their specific plan benefits.

Medicaid Facts

Per Medicaid guidelines we as the PCP do not send referrals to walk-in clinics or Urgent cares if we have open appointments in our office for any of our providers. You must call here first and schedule with one of our providers.

Referrals are not sent to ERs for non-urgent ER visits.



Your PCP if required, should be assigned prior to coming to your visit. If a PCP is not assigned and a claim ages over 12 months, it is patient responsibility and we can NOT rebill the claim. Medicaid has a 365 day timely filing limit. Once a claim is older than that we can not file it.

Medicaid pays for wellchild check ups at ages 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15 & 18 months and then every year annually to age 18 excluding ages 7 and 9.

If your child has had their EPSDT visit (wellness) for the year and then needs a sports physical completed at a different time we do offer these at a discounted self-pay rate of \$35. We can not fill these out from the information obtained during the EPSDT visit (wellness) as their health could have changed during this time.

The Referral Process—What to Expect

Your provider has said you need to see a specialist. What is the next step? Is there anything expected from you? How long will it take? What do you need to do?

Depending on the type of specialist you've been referred to and the reason, the answer will vary. If you are being referred for a screening, or a non-urgent office visit this referral will go into a work queue and the person assigned to that specific specialty will send it out within a week. Each Specialist's office has their own requirements we have to follow when sending over a referral, some are

faxed with records, and some are a phone call. They will contact us back for any additional information they may need. Some offices will contact you directly with appointment information while others will contact us to relay that information to you. Some specialists review your medical records personally before deciding whether to accept you as a patient. These reviews can take a while. Some require you to come pick up a packet from their office.

If you have an acute, life threatening situation these referrals are sent as ASAP orders and are usually handled

by a nurse unless they need a pre-cert. They contact the specialist's office directly and work with their nurse to get you in as quickly as possible. We can't work everyone in as an ASAP order or the ones who truly need these slots would not have openings available. It's like the boy who cried wolf, if we treat everyone as an ASAP other offices will quit working with us and we won't have the resources when we need them the most.

So referrals can take anywhere from a same day appt to some specialties may take 6 months or more. The faster you respond to requests for information, the faster the process will go.

Employee Spotlight—Tamme Wells LPN

Tamme Wells has been with Sophia Meyer since before they moved to their current location. She has been with Dr Frisbie and Dr Floyd the longest of all the employees. She just passed her 11 year anniversary.

She is a wife, mother of 4 and grandmother of 10 and very active in her

community. When she's not working you can find her at one of her grandkids sporting events.

Some of her favorite hobbies include attending Cherokee Native events, sports (excluding golf) cooking, taking care of her cows, gardening and anything to do with their farm.

She is a vital member of our team and coordinates all our clinical team members to ensure our patient flow remains steady. When you're in the office next pass a message along to tell her how much you appreciate what she does.