

	POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Policy #: HS 3.32	Lead Department: Health Services
Title: Referral Authorization Form (RAF) Process	
Original Date: February 1996	Last Revision Date: March 2006
Approved by: Barbara Flynn, RN, Health Services Director	
Applies to: All Lines of Business	

Policy Objective:

To describe the process for utilization of the Referral Authorization Form (RAF) to request authorization for covered health services.

I. REFERRALS TO SPECIALIST PROVIDERS

- A. The Primary Care Physician initiates the referral process to Specialist.
- B. The authorizing Primary Care Physician completes the original and copies of the RAF. The eligibility of the member and number of visits, services and/or period of service to be rendered must appear in the proper location on the RAF.
- C. The Primary Care Physician (PCP) sends the original of the RAF to the Alliance. Copies as specified are sent to the Referral Physician or other provider with a request for a report of the service rendered by the other party.
- D. The PCP files his/her copy and the respective reports in the patient's medical record.
- E. Upon completion of the initial examination of the member and subsequent authorized treatment, the Referral Provider shall:
 - 1. Advise the PCP of the patient's condition, proposed procedures and prognosis throughout the period of treatment; and
 - 2. Provide to the PCP a written report, and other oral reports as appropriate, regarding the diagnosis, other findings and prognosis within ten days following the patient contact.
- F. If the service requires pre-authorization, the provider must contact the Service Authorization Coordinator with the request. The request will be handled according to the Alliance policy/procedure for treatment authorizations.
- G. The referral physician or other provider retains the specified copy for his/her files. The six digit RAF number should be indicated on the medical claim form submitted to the Alliance or a photocopy of the RAF may be attached.
- H. Out-of Alliance network referrals are authorized when there is a compelling medical reason that the services cannot be performed in-plan. The health plan encourages specialty referrals and consultations. *Compelling medical reason* means only that the plan encourages referrals when possible within the network. However, when services are not readily available within the network, there is no hesitation in referring outside of the network.



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policy #: HS 3.32	Lead Department: Health Services
Title: Referral Authorization Form (RAF) Process	
Original Date: February 1996	Last Revision Date: March 2006
Approved by: Barbara Flynn, RN, Health Services Director	
Applies to: All Lines of Business	

- I. The health plan neither approves nor denies referrals from Primary Care Providers, but reviews referrals to monitor Primary Care Provider case management activities.
- J. RAF's are time sensitive and if so indicated will remain valid for periods of up to one year, at which time a new referral is required. Unless otherwise indicated, referrals expire in 180 days.
- K. Payment of claims for authorized services is subject to verification of the member's eligibility at the time services were rendered.

II. EMERGENCY SERVICE REFERRALS

- A. All members may self refer to the ER for emergency services without authorization, based on the member's belief that they have an emergency.
- B. All members presenting at the ER will receive Medical Screening Exam (MSE) by the ER.
- C. The Alliance pays for all MSEs. No authorization is required.
- D. The ER physician(s) uses the MSE as the process to determine whether an emergency medical condition exists.
- E. The MSE will be performed in a non-discriminatory manner and regardless of the individual's ability to pay for medical care.

Revision History:

Review Date	Revised Date	Approved By
December 1998		Barbara Flynn, RN, Health Services Director
January 2000		Barbara Flynn, RN, Health Services Director
February 2003		Barbara Flynn, RN, Health Services Director
February 2004		Barbara Flynn, RN, Health Services Director
March 2005		Barbara Flynn, RN, Health Services Director
March 2006		Barbara Flynn, RN, Health Services Director