

	POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Policy #: HS 3.52	Lead Department: Health Services
Title: In-Office Telephone Triage	
Original Date: January 1996	Last Revision Date: August 2005
Approved by: Barbara Flynn, RN	
Applies to: All Lines of Business	

Policy Objective:

To identify who may conduct telephone triage in a provider's office when a member calls in with a medical illness or problem, and to provide guidelines by which the triage will be performed.

1. Telephone triage is to be conducted by the RN, Mid-level practitioner or the physician. The LVN or Medical Assistants cannot conduct telephone triage.
 - a. The RN or mid-level practitioner must assess the situation and consult with the physician when necessary.
 - b. Protocols will be used to assure a consistent triage process by RNs and Mid-level practitioners. The primary care physician and/or the Medical Director will approve these protocols.

All PCP sites and the Alliance should maintain procedures for all personnel answering telephones which detail triage instructions for specific presenting signs and symptoms including medical emergencies.
 - c. When telephone triage for a member is performed, it is highly recommended that a short summary of the problem and the advice or information given to the member be documented in the patient's medical record and signed by the individual performing the triage.
 - d. True medical emergencies will be referred to the emergency room for care or given instructions to call 911, depending on the nature with this policy will be monitored through on-site medical records audits.
2. Compliance with this policy will be monitored through on-site medical records audits.

Review Date	Revised Date	Approved By
December 1998		Barbara Flynn, RN
July 2000		Barbara Flynn, RN
July 2002		Barbara Flynn, RN
July 2003		Barbara Flynn, RN
August 2004		Barbara Flynn, RN
August 2005		Barbara Flynn, RN