



Origination 3/1/2006  
Last Approved 7/27/2023  
Effective 7/27/2023  
Last Revised 7/27/2023  
Next Review 7/26/2026

Owner Elizabeth Catton:  
VP Global Patient  
& OON Svcs  
Policy Area Administration  
Applicability SHP SRS  
References Policy, SHP,  
SRS

## Authorization and Denial of Reimbursement to Out of Network Providers for Post-Stabilization Care, 01971

### I. PURPOSE:

To clearly delineate the the authorization or denial process of post-stabilization care to Out of Network (OON) / non-contracted providers.

### II. POLICY:

It is the policy of Sharp Health Care (SHC) to assess Sharp Community Medical Group (SCMG), Sharp Rees-Stealy Medical Group (SRSMG), Sharp Health Plan, and Palomar Health (PH) Members to provide, arrange, or otherwise facilitate all needed emergency services, including appropriate coverage of cost.

Emergency services are covered in the following situations:

- To screen and stabilize the member without prior authorization, where the member reasonably believed that he or she had an emergency medical condition.
- An authorized representative acting on behalf of Sharp Health Care/associated partner, i.e., a participating Primary Care Physician or other network provider has authorized the provision of services at a non-contracted hospital.

It is also the policy to provide post-stabilization care for services within the designated service area. A response to requests for post-stabilization care should be provided within the time limits of the appropriate regulatory body. (Commercial members 30 minutes and Medicare members 60 minutes of receiving the notification call and verifying the member's eligibility.) Additionally, it is the policy of the Sharp Out of Network Department to respond to the first phone call made from a transferring hospital so that the hospital is not making more than one phone call for an initial response.

### III. DEFINITIONS:

- A. In-network - Health care facilities that are part of a health plan's network of providers.
- B. Member -Individual(s) covered by Sharp Health Plan (SHP) and other risk bearing insurance plans according to individual contracts with the medical groups, Arch Health Partners, Graybill Medical Group, Sharp Community Medical Group (SCMG) and Sharp Rees-Stealy Medical Group (SRSMG)
- C. Notification - Contact from an OON/noncontracted hospital of a Member that is present at an OON facility. Notifications from Non-contracted hospitals are not equivalent to requests for authorization.
- D. Out of Network (OON) – All facilities that are not in the contracted network
- E. Post Stabilization Care – Medically necessary care provided after an emergency medical condition has been stabilized.
- F. Repatriation - Transferring members from an OON hospital / non-contracted hospital to an in-network hospital
- G. Repatriation Physician-Contracted physician(s) that facilitate patient transfers to an in-network hospital. This physician may be the SHC or PH accepting hospitalist physician or other designated physician.
- H. Stabilization - Occurs when in the opinion of the treating provider, the Member's medical condition is such that, within reasonable probability, no material deterioration of the Member's condition is likely to result from, or occur during, the release or transfer of the patient/ Member.

### IV. TEXT:

- A. The SHC OON Department is the centralized notification center to receive phone calls for SHC and PH Members at noncontracted hospitals. The SHC OON Department phone notification and authorization line operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week including all holidays.
- B. The SHC OON Department and designees are responsible for determining if OON admissions will be authorized (approved for reimbursement) by the appropriate Medical Group or risk bearing in-network facility (i.e., SHP, Arch Health Partners, Graybill Medical Group, SCMG, or Sharp Rees-Stealy) based on Health Plan agreements except where a direct contract provides for other action.
- C. Authorization requests from non-contracted/OON hospital personnel are for medically necessary care in circumstances where the Member has received emergency services, care is stabilized, and the treating provider believes that the Member may not be discharged safely.
- D. The SHC OON Department will document the date and time that requests for authorization for post-stabilization care from an OON hospitals are received in the Out of Network Web Application (OONWA) database. All documentation entries in the OONWA database are date and time stamped and will suffice as the time authorization requests are received unless otherwise indicated in notes. Notation by OON Department Staff will include method of receipt of authorization request and name of the OON hospital representative making the request whenever possible.

- E. Services are deemed authorized if a response to the request for authorization is not provided by the SHC OON Department within 30 minutes of receiving necessary medical information to decide on the option to repatriate.
- F. Post-stabilization services cannot be denied for failure to obtain a prior authorization for admission when approval would be impossible or where a prior approval process could seriously jeopardize the life or health of the Member.
- G. Determination for issuance of a denial for the Member's post-stabilization care in an OON hospital must be reviewed with the SHC OON Medical Director or their designee in accordance with the respective Medical Groups' policies or guidelines.

## **V. REFERENCES:**

- A. California Health and Safety Code, sections 1317.1, 1371.4, 1262.8, and 1386 also known as Assembly Bill 1203 effective January 1, 2009.
- B. Title 28 of the California Code of Regulations, Department of Managed HealthCare, Regulations Applicable to California Licensed Health Care Service Plans.
- C. Medicare Managed Care Manual Chapter 4 - Benefits and Beneficiary Protections (Rev. 120, Issued: 01-16-15, Effective: 01-01-15, Implementation: 01-01-15)

## **VI. ORIGINATOR:**

Out-of-network Department Leadership

## **VII. LEGAL REFERENCES:**

None

## **VIII. ACCREDITATION:**

None

## **IX. CROSS REFERENCES:**

- A. Out of Network Repatriation Policy # 01970
- B. Transfer: Emergency Treatment and Transfer (COBRA/EMTALA) policy #35033

## **X. ATTACHMENTS:**

None

## **XI. APPROVALS:**

- A. System Policy & Procedure Steering Committee – 03/06
- B. SCMG Leadership – 02/06; 02/09; 1/12; 05/18; 07/21; 12/21
- C. SRS Leadership – 20/06, 02/09, 12/11; 05/18; 07/ 21; 12/21

D. SHP Leadership – 02/06; 02/09, 3/12; 11/14; 07/16; 05/18; 07/21; 12/21

E. System OON Leadership – 04/15; 04/18; 05/18; 07/21; 12/21

## XII. REPLACES:

None

## XIII. HISTORY:

System #01970; originally dated 03/06

Reviewed/Revised: 03/09; 03/12; 04/15; 04/18; 05/18; 07/21; 11/21; 12/21; 07/23

### Approval Signatures

| Step Description | Approver                                       | Date      |
|------------------|--|-----------|
| administrator    | Karen Whitten: Policy & Procedure Coord [TW]   | 7/27/2023 |
|                  | Elizabeth Catton: VP Global Patient & OON Svcs | 7/27/2023 |

### Applicability

HealthPlan, Sharp HealthCare, Sharp Rees Stealy