

**THE SALUDA COUNSELING SERVICES CENTER, INC.
ADMINISTRATIVE MEDICAL SUPPORT PROTOCOL POLICY**

The Saluda Counseling Services Center, Inc. (TSCC) requires administrative staff to observe certain standards of conduct regarding their duties and responsibilities pertaining to providing administrative support to the medical providers. As employees of TSCC, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations in addition to the procedures below.

There is a 24 – 48 business- hour turnaround time-frame for addressing all medication requests, medication issues, clinical concerns, or other requests for the medical provider. There will be a follow- up call made by administrative staff to the patient to advise the patient about the issue being resolved. If the patient cannot wait after being informed of this processing time-frame, the patient should be advised to seek urgent care when appropriate.

SECTION 1. Routine Requests

TSCC receives requests for medication refills from 8:00AM – 5:00PM Monday through Thursday. We must receive your refill request for medication by 2:00PM in order to begin processing the request the same day. Any requests received after 2:00PM will be considered received the next business day.

Requests that are routine in nature are not considered an emergency. These routine requests are the responsibility of the patient, and the patient must request medication refills during regular business hours to ensure they do not run out of medications.

Please note: All medication refill requests are dependent upon approval from the prescribing doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant.

Beginning on January 1, 2019, if a patient requires routine medication refills outside of the scheduled visit, we will charge a fee of \$10.00 per prescription that requires a refill that were not obtained at the time of the appointment. Routine refill requests will only be responded to during regular business hours.

It is recommended that the patient is mindful about the medications needed and that refills will last until the next scheduled visit. Patients must always discuss any refill needs with your provider at the time of your visit in order to avoid requests outside of your appointment

SECTION 2. Medication Refills

Medication changes may not be made over the phone. The patient must schedule and attend an appointment.

This includes requests related to side effects, ineffectiveness, and any other requests for a medication change. There is no need to have this reviewed further by the medical provider.

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- i. If there is a request to change a Class 2 medication that has already been filled, the patient is required to bring in the remaining prescription and turn it in to the administrative staff person in custody of these medications (in order for the medication change to be requested and completed as deemed appropriate by the medical provider).
 - ii. If the medication was stolen, a copy of a police report must be submitted in order to replace ANY controlled substance medication (Class 2 or Class 4). If this is not provided, the patient will not be provided with a replacement prescription and will need to wait until the next refill is due.
 - iii. If the medication is cost-prohibitive, administrative staff should review sample and coupon discount options.
 - iv. If the patient is requesting a generic drug option for a brand name drug, the administrative staff may complete this request without involving the medical provider.
- b) If a patient attends an appointment, but the provider did not send medications during the visit, the provider must review the medications in the event that changes have been made before administrative staff sends the refills (to ensure the patient has enough medications until the next scheduled visit).
- c) If an appointment is missed the patient is expected to reschedule and attend the new appointment in order to obtain refills; however, a 30-day supply of medications may be provided to cover the patient's needs until the patient is able to schedule a follow-up appointment. In such cases, the medical provider does not need to be notified. (NOTE: This protocol does not apply to Class 2 medications, which will not be provided unless the patient attends an appointment). Appropriate fees for routine refills must be charged to the patient (\$10.00 per prescription renewal) in addition to missed appointment fees when applicable.
- d) Early medication refill requests can be reviewed by administrative staff initially using the SC and NC PMP Aware (DHEC) system reports about controlled substance medications, and/or with the pharmacy. This information should be given (with the request details) to the provider in order for the provider to review and make a decision regarding the early refill request.
- e) If a patient has not attended a follow-up appointment in more than 6 months, the patient will not receive any additional refills until the patient is seen by the medical provider.
- f) Medical providers will send in prescriptions that are on "pending" status prior to the end of the business day, unless it is an emergency. Emergency submissions will often occur after lunch; or before the provider leaves for the day.
- g) If there is a pharmacy change requested after the appointment, the patient will need to pay the appropriate fee per prescription in order to have the prescription transferred to the patient's preferred pharmacy. There is no need to have this request reviewed by the medical provider.

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SECTION 3. Sample Medications

In an effort to provide patients with potentially cost prohibitive medications that may be considered medically necessary by their provider, we have the ability to dispense samples of name brand medications when appropriate and available.

All samples must be maintained as an inventory. The samples should be verified in the morning and at the end of the day with changes in quantity of boxes. When samples are delivered by pharmaceutical drug representatives, or when samples are dispensed they must be tracked on the sample medication log sheet.

SECTION 4. Medical Records

- a) Medical records (for patients receiving medication management services, not clinical therapy services) may be sent if the notes being requested are completed and signed by the medical provider. Further review of clinical therapy session notes is required if such notes are requested as psychotherapy notes are protected by law and require a court order signed by a judge for release.
- b) FMLA, short term disability, diagnosis letters, or other forms requested will take no longer to complete than 7 – 10 business days. Once requests are completed a full copy should be saved and uploaded to the patient's EMR documents. The records may not be released to the patient unless the fee has been paid or it is the responsibility of a third party to pay the fees (and an invoice has been sent). **See Disability forms policy for additional guidelines.**