



## Texas Children's Health Plan

# Provider News

January 2001

## CHANGES FOR 2001

**A  
T  
T  
E  
N  
T  
I  
O  
N**

The contractual relationship between Texas Children's Health Plan (TCHP), and Humana HMO, PCA HMO, and Memorial Sisters of Charity Commercial HMO (collectively "Humana"), terminated December 31, 2000. TCHP will only be financially responsible for payment of "Humana" claims with dates of service prior to January 1, 2001. Any such claims must be submitted to and processed by TCHP prior to September 30, 2001. (Still adhering to the 95 day filing deadline for claims submission). Humana will be financially responsible for claims prior to January 1, 2001 that have not been submitted and processed by TCHP by September 30, 2001. Beginning January 1, 2001, you must be contracted directly with "Humana", or be contracted with "Humana" through an IPA in order to continue treating "Humana" patients as an in network provider. The "Humana" provider network, authorization process, and policies and procedures must be followed and the claims must be sent directly to "Humana" for dates of service beginning January 1, 2001 (if you are participating in "Humana" through a direct contract).

Questions regarding "Humana's" provider network and medical management procedures should be directed to "Humana".

For Humana's eligibility and benefits numbers please refer to the back of the member's identification card for appropriate 800 number.

Precerting inpatient admission for HMO, POS and Humana PPO may be accomplished through 1-800-523-0023. They are open 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

Urgent referrals may be obtained through 800-626-2698, all other referrals for outpatient need to be faxed to 1-800-921-7751.

For ChoiceCare PPO or EHI PPO you must call 1-800-647-4477.

### REFERRALS/PRIOR AUTHORIZATIONS

Referrals are used ONLY for IN NETWORK SPECIALISTS. These physicians can be located in your Provider Handbook. For OUT OF NETWORK physicians, a PRIOR AUTHORIZATION form needs to be completed.

PODIATRY AND CHIROPRACTIC requests require a PRIOR AUTHORIZATION, NOT A REFERRAL form.

## From the Medical Director

### Protecting Kids in Traffic Crashes:

#### Our Findings and Successes in 2000

Parents look to their children's health care providers to advise them on what type of car seat to use. Thanks to you, many of Houston's children are more secure as they ride in traffic. Most T CPA practices are using the Booster Seat Educational and Endorsement Program (BEEP) materials to encourage families of children weighing up to 80 pounds to use booster seats. T CPA practices and Health Centers refer over a quarter of the families who attend the Safe Kids car safety seat checks. After checking 1053 car restraints this year, the Texas Children's Center for Childhood Injury Prevention and the Greater Houston Coalition for Safe Kids would like to share our findings with you:

- Only 4% of the restraints checked were used correctly.
- 24 babies less than a year old were riding forward-facing. (Their spinal cords could be snapped in head-on crashes, the most common type of crash). Infants should ride rear-facing until they are 20 pounds AND at least one year old.
- 51% of the 1111 children observed in cars at 60 sites across Houston were unrestrained.
- Fewer than 2% of 5 to 8 year-olds observed rode in booster seats.

Certainly there is much room for improvement. The good news is that 408, or 39% of the children who came were fitted with new car seats or boosters free of charge, thanks to grants from GM, National Safe Kids Campaign and the Texas Department of Health. All rode out in securely installed seats. We helped provide training for 75 car safety seat technicians and an instructor this year. We furnished five law enforcement groups with car seats and supplies so that they can check car seats by appointment in their communities. Please do not hesitate to call the Texas Children's Center for Childhood Injury Prevention at

832-824-2045 with any questions or concerns you may have about car passenger safety.

The winter disease season and the influx of new patients due to the large number of children becoming insured under the CHP product has created some problems in seeing new patients, especially those that are ill. To assist these parents, you may want to have your triage nurse screen each patient, no matter what his or her health insurance coverage is, before an appointment is given. Many require visits and those that don't need to come immediately, or can wait, need instructions on how to treat their child at home. They also need information as to when to call back and what to look for if the child is not improving.

If a member has an emergency or urgent care need requiring an office visit and has not been seen before in your office, a short visit addressing the child's needs can be performed and the child rescheduled at your convenience for a full "initial visit". The urgent visit would be coded as a new patient E/M visit using the appropriate code for the intensity of service and the well child exam, done at a later, mutually convenient time, would be coded as an established patient preventive service.

Helping these children to be seen quickly and with proper instructions improves care. In addition, the complaints we receive and that you must respond to will decrease.

### CLOSED PANELS

At times it may become necessary for a primary care physician to limit the patient panel in order to facilitate patient care. A patient panel can be designated as "Current Patients Only" when the physician makes a written request to the TCHP Provider Services Department, with 60 days notice. Similarly, a patient panel can be reopened to new patients with 60 days written notice. Any member who selects the primary care physician prior to or during this 60 day period should be accepted into the physician's practice and should not be viewed as a "new patient." A physician may not select an "open" or "closed" status by product.

### Medical Diagnostic Testing Processes

TCHP has established a process to be used for ordering medical diagnostic tests on members with inpatient stays at a mental health facility. When a medical test or service is requested on a patient in a mental health facility, the mental health facility will contact the PCP for specific orders. The PCP will initiate the order and route to an in-network facility licensed for the particular diagnostic tests needed. The PCP will be responsible for submitting an authorization request or issuing a referral (whichever is appropriate).

### TCHP PHONE NUMMERS

Member Services	832-824-7635
Claims	832-824-7635
Eligibility/Benefits	832-824-7635
Network Development	832-824-2695
Medical Management	832-824-7648
Referrals/Prior Auth	832-824-7648