

<b>DEPARTMENT: Doylestown Healthcare Partnership</b>	
<b>FACILITY:</b>	
<b>DATE OF ORIGIN: 7/14/2021</b>	<b>NEXT REVIEW DATE: 7/29/2022</b>
<b>AUTHOR (ROLE): ADM Director DHP</b>	
<b>APPROVED BY (ROLE): Network Development / DHP Managing Committee</b>	

**PURPOSE:**

To create a strategy for patients to seek treatment or medical advice from their Primary Care Provider prior to making a specialist appointment or ED visit for non-emergent conditions.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all Doylestown Healthcare Partnership Primary Care Practices.

**POLICY:**

To encourage patients to call their PCP first prior to seeking an appointment from a specialist or utilizing the ED for non-emergent issues. This strategy aims to increase appropriate usage of specialists as well as reducing unnecessary ED utilization.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Triage process
  - a. Create a process for patients who call with an urgent complaint
    - i. provide staff education and/or scripts for each step of the process
2. Accessibility of practice
  - a. Same day appointments
  - b. Appointments in evenings/weekends
  - c. Off hours messaging

3. Patient Awareness

- a. Provide Call Us First information to patients in various manners
  - i. Signage
  - ii. Website
  - iii. Phone message
  - iv. Mailers
  - v. Follow up discussion with patient after unnecessary ED or specialist appointment to explain the value of calling their PCP first
    - 1. Review with patient
      - a. the PCP knows you and your health history
      - b. provider on-call after hours
      - c. available same-day appointments

4. Words That Matter

- a. The need to get urgent care comes up from time to time. Please Call Us First. We can do a lot here. This may save you an urgent care or emergency room visit.

*Reviewed:*

*Revised:*