

Memorandum

To: Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) Providers

From: Steve Peiser
Senior Director of Network Management

Re: **MyGoldCare Palliative Care Program Changes – Effective January 1**

Date: January 22, 2019

Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) implemented the following changes to the MyGoldCare palliative care program as of January 1 in an effort to improve access and care for the Plan's adult palliative care members.

No Prior Authorization Required for Palliative Care Services

As of January 1, referring providers may refer directly to a MyGoldCare palliative care provider to assure timely access. A list of contracted outpatient and in-home palliative care providers can be found in GCHP's [Provider Directory](#).

Expansion of Eligibility Criteria for Palliative Care

GCHP will provide palliative care services to all members who elect and qualify under all the following general eligibility and disease-specific criteria.

Eligibility Criteria

1. The beneficiary is likely to or has started to use the hospital or emergency department as a means to manage their advanced disease. This refers to unanticipated decompensation and does not include elective procedures.
2. The beneficiary has an advanced illness with appropriate documentation of continued decline in health status and is not eligible for or declines hospice enrollment.
3. The beneficiary's death within a year would not be unexpected based on clinical status.
4. The beneficiary has either received appropriate patient-desired medical therapy or is a beneficiary for whom patient-desired medical therapy is no longer effective. Patient is not in reversible acute decompensation.
5. The beneficiary and, if applicable, the family- / patient-designated support person, agrees to:

- a. Attempt, as medically / clinically appropriate, in-home, residential-based, or outpatient disease management / palliative care instead of first going to the emergency department; and participates in Advance Care Planning discussions.

Disease-Specific Criteria

A member must qualify for palliative care services in accordance to APL 17-015.
OR

Have a serious diagnosis (which is not defined in the APL) and death would not be unexpected within a year.

- *Qualified conditions include, but are not limited to, the following:*
 1. Congestive Heart Failure (CHF)
 2. Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
 3. Advanced Cancer
 4. Liver Disease
 5. Other: Prognosis of death within a year would not be unexpected based on clinical status.

If a beneficiary continues to meet the above eligibility criteria, he or she may continue to access both palliative care and curative care until the condition improves, stabilizes, or results in death.

Billing Changes for Palliative Care Providers

The PE modifier is no longer required for billing palliative care services.

NEW for Patient Encounter Submission for Palliative Care Providers

Effective January 1, all MyGoldCare palliative care providers will need to bill for palliative care services with a diagnosis code of Z51.5.

If you need more information regarding the MyGoldCare program, please click [here](#) or email Provider Relations at providerrelations@goldchp.org.