



# PROVIDER *bulletin*

December 1, 2017

RE: Palliative Care

Dear Provider:

Effective January 1, 2018 palliative care will be a covered benefit for Kern Family Health Care (KFHC) Members. Palliative care consists of patient and family centered care that optimizes quality of life by anticipating, preventing, and treating suffering.

Members are eligible for palliative care services if they meet all criteria outlined below:

1. Member is likely to or has started to use the hospital or emergency department as a means to manage his/her advanced disease
2. Member's death within a year would not be unexpected based on clinical status
3. Member has either received appropriate patient-desired medical therapy or patient-desired medical therapy is no longer effective; Member is not in reversible acute decompensation
4. Member and, if applicable, the family/patient-designated support person, agrees to:
  - Attempt, as medically/clinically appropriate, in-home, residential-based, or outpatient disease management/palliative care instead of first going to the emergency department; and
  - Participate in Advance Care Planning discussions

**AND**

5. The Member has one or more of the following advanced illnesses, with appropriate documentation of continued decline in health status, and is not eligible for, or declines, hospice enrollment; illness must meet all criteria listed in APL 17-015, linked below:
  - Congestive Heart Failure
  - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
  - Advanced Cancer
  - Liver Disease

For those KFHC members that may be eligible to receive palliative care services, providers can submit a prior authorization request for services.

If your office is interested in learning more about the criteria for providing palliative care services, please contact Alejandra Martinez at 661-617-2579.

For additional information regarding this new benefit, including Member eligibility criteria and palliative care service requirements, please refer to the DHCS All Plan Letter 17-015:

<http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Documents/MMCDAPsandPolicyLetters/APL2017/APL17-015.pdf>

Thank you,  
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