

2023 Kern Family Health Care Member Handbook Update Medi-Cal

Your Kern Family Health Care (KFHC) Member Handbook or Combined Evidence of Coverage and Disclosure Form is updated as follows.

Section 3 – How to get care

Referrals

Your PCP or another specialist will provide you a referral to visit a specialist within the time frame listed in the “Timely access to care” section of this handbook, if you need one. A specialist is a doctor who has extra education in one area of medicine. Your PCP will work with you to choose a specialist. Your PCP’s office can help you set up a time to go to the specialist.

Other services that might need a referral include in-office procedures, X-rays, lab work and imaging, second opinions, minor surgery or other tests to understand your health and coordinate your care.

Your PCP may send a referral form to us to approve your visit to the specialist. We will review the referral and make a decision. We will send you and your PCP a notice in the mail about our decision. If approved, the specialist will treat you for the approved service as long as the approval has not expired.

If you have a health problem that needs special medical care for a long time, you may need a standing referral. This means you can go to the same specialist more than once without getting a referral each time.

If you have trouble getting a standing referral or want a copy of the KFHC referral policy, call member services at (661) 632-1590 (Bakersfield) or toll free at 1-800-391-2000 (outside of Bakersfield) (TTY 711).

You do not need a referral for:

- PCP visits
- Obstetrics/Gynecology (OB/GYN) visits
- Urgent or emergency care visits
- Adult sensitive services, such as sexual assault care
- Family planning services (to learn more, call Office of Family Planning Information and Referral Service at 1-800-942-1054)
- HIV testing and counseling (12 years or older)
- Sexually transmitted infection services (12 years or older)
- Chiropractic services (a referral may be required when provided by out-of-network FQHCs, RHCs and IHCPs)
- Initial mental health assessment
- Acupuncture – the first two services per month; additional appointments will need approval
- Podiatry services
- Dialysis

How to get care

Minors can also get certain outpatient mental health services, sensitive services and substance use disorder services without parent's consent. For more information read "Minor consent services" and "Substance use disorder treatment services" in this handbook.

California Cancer Equity Act Referrals

Effective treatment of complex cancers depends on many factors including getting the right diagnosis and getting timely treatment from cancer experts.

If you are diagnosed with a complex cancer, the new California Cancer Care Equity Act allows you to ask for a referral from your doctor to get cancer treatment specifically from an in-network National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer center, NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP)-affiliated site, or qualifying academic cancer center.

If KFHC does not have an in-network NCI-designated cancer center, KFHC will allow you to ask for a referral to get cancer treatment from one of these out-of-network centers in California, if one of the out-of-network centers and KFHC agree on payment, unless you choose to see a different cancer treatment provider.

If you have been diagnosed with cancer, contact KFHC to see if you qualify for services from one of these cancer centers.

Section 4 – Benefits and Services

Medi-Cal benefits covered by Kern Family Health Care

Outpatient (ambulatory) services

Cognitive health assessments

KFHC covers an annual cognitive health assessment for members who are 65 years of age or older, and are otherwise not eligible for a similar assessment as part of an annual wellness visit under the Medicare Program. A cognitive health assessment looks for signs of Alzheimer's disease or dementia.

Other KFHC covered benefits and programs

Street medicine programs

Members experiencing homelessness may receive covered services from Street Medicine Providers within KFHC's provider network. A Street Medicine Provider is a licensed primary care physician or primary care non-physician in the KFHC provider network. Members experiencing homelessness may be able to select a KFHC Street Medicine Provider to be their Primary Care Provider (PCP) if the Street Medicine Provider meets PCP eligibility criteria and agrees to be the member's PCP. For more information on KFHC's street medicine program, call 1-800-391-2000 (TTY 711).