

PATIENT HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| Section 1: Introduction and Summary of Benefits | 1 |
| Section 2: Frequently Asked Questions | 4 |
| Section 3: Policies and Customs | 6 |
| Section 4: Fee Schedule | 9 |

Patient Handbook - Section 1
Introduction and Summary of Benefits

Welcome to New West Medical Care!

Our practice is committed to providing the highest quality care for our patients. We offer personalized attention in a friendly, courteous setting. We pride ourselves in educating our patients and becoming your partner in managing your health care and well being. We think it is as important for you to know your doctor as it is for us to know you.

With our open scheduling, you can get an appointment the same day with your own doctor nearly every time. No long waits either for an appointment or in the reception area.

We offer longer visits when you need them because we are committed to your health and take the time to listen to you.

We have electronic medical records for accuracy and safekeeping of your health history.

Because we do not accept insurance payments, we do not have the distractions and administrative burdens of a traditional practice.

Our membership fee covers all services offered in a traditional primary care practice as well as enhanced access to your personal physician. You are not charged anything more for this level of service.

This handbook sets out the current benefits, policies and programs of membership. After you have reviewed the handbook, if you have questions, please do not hesitate to ask any of our physicians or staff members for clarification.

Membership entitles you to traditional primary care physician services such as:

- Same-day or Acute Care Visits as available
- Comprehensive Annual Physical Exams
- Sports Physicals
- Immunizations* for children age 18 and under
- Unlimited appointments
- Extended appointments for counseling, education and evaluation of more complex concerns
- 24-hour access to your physician and staff
- Prescription refills via the telephone within a 72-hour turnaround
- Referrals to specialists
- Direct email, voicemail, and after hours access to your physician
- Assistance in navigating the complex medical system and working with any sub-specialists involved in your care

Also included are procedures performed in the office such as:

- ECG with interpretation
- Oxygen levels by saturation monitor (Pulse oximetry)
- Urinalysis, pregnancy tests and spot hemocults
- Pap smears
- Laceration repair
- Splinting of minor orthopedic injuries
- Administration of immunizations* and therapeutic injections*
- Ear lavage
- Spirometry
- Nebulizer treatments*
- Peak Flow evaluation
- Blood draws
- Wound repacking from our procedures
- In-house labs

Certain procedures will incur additional charges and include, but are not limited to:

- Endometrial biopsy
- Diaphragm fitting
- Skin tag removal
- Joint injections
- Skin procedures such as biopsy, excision, destruction and wart treatments
- IUD insertion/removal

**There will be an additional charge for the cost of medicines, vaccines and invasive procedures.
A price list is available for viewing on request.*

As New West Medical Care is a patient-centered practice, we will always be open to your suggestions regarding other services we may offer.

Patient Handbook— Section 2 Frequently Asked Questions

- **Why have you changed your practice?** Over the last several years, it has become clear that many of our patients share our concern regarding the present healthcare system. Complaints of poor access to personal physicians, long waiting times for short appointments, slow response to call-back requests, and endless paperwork have not been uncommon. In response to these frustrations, we have found a model that allows us to return to the true interaction in healthcare: the patient-physician relationship. The primary focus of our new practice model is you, our patient. We believe the primary benefit of membership is simply improved focus on and service for our patients. Through every aspect of our new model, from our front door to our back office, our primary focus is on enhancing our service and relationship with you.

- **What are the benefits of membership in New West Medical Care?** As a member, you will be able to contact your personal physician by e-mail, cell phone, and internet. Many of the healthcare concerns that required you to see your doctor in a traditional fee for service practice may now be accomplished over the phone or internet, saving you time, hassle and money.

- **What are the fees?** Our Membership Fee Schedule is listed in Section 4 of the Patient Handbook and is always available on request. Fees are based on the age of each member patient.

- **How do I pay?** You may pay annually, quarterly, or monthly. If you decide quarterly or monthly payments are best for you, we will arrange for automatic deductions from the financial institution of your choice, or you may have a Visa or MasterCard on file for automatic payments. Yearly fees qualify for a discounted rate and may be paid by check, money order, Visa or MasterCard.

- **Will I have to pay a co-pay?** No. You will not have a bill from us other than your membership fee or for certain procedures, medicines or vaccines (see p. 2). All fees are discussed up front and approved by you.

- **Do I need insurance?** We do not require insurance. We do, however, strongly encourage all of our members to have and maintain insurance coverage for services that are not provided by your physician.

- **Are lab tests, x-ray, hospital. care or services provided by other physicians or specialists covered?** Only those services provided by your New West Medical Care Physician are covered by the membership fee. All other healthcare services would be billed by those separate entities.

- **Should I consider this a form of insurance?** Our membership fee covers only the services listed in Section 1 and throughout this Handbook. We will not pay other parties for care or services outside our practice. This is not considered a traditional form of insurance.
- **What types of insurance are best suited for this type of practice?** We do not endorse a specific insurance plan. We have made every effort to work with each insurance carrier to ensure that you receive full coverage for tests and referrals that we order. However, many HMO and managed care plans that require you to choose a primary care provider (PCP) will not allow full coverage for services we order. These are complex and often confusing issues and we encourage you to speak with us, your insurance carrier or employer if you do not understand your health plan fully.
- **Can my membership fee be reimbursed by my insurance carrier?** At this time, insurance plans consider this fee to be a non-covered service and not reimbursable.
- **Can my membership fee be paid out of pre-tax medical accounts such as my FLEX, HRA or HSA account?** Each employer's policy for their FLEX and HRA plans is different and we encourage you to speak with them about coverage for our membership fee. HSA accounts are a very recent creation and so far do not have specific guidelines for use with membership practices. Please consult your tax attorney or CPA if desired.
- **Can I still participate if I have Medicare?** Yes. Because our physicians have "opted out" of Medicare, there is no barrier to a contracted relationship with us. We do not submit bills to Medicare.
- **How do I reach my doctor?** The best way to reach us at all times, 24 hours a day, is through our office phone at 360-574-9730. **In the event of a life-threatening emergency, we strongly recommend you dial 911.** You may also reach your physician for general questions at health@gwfamcare.com; for a free, secure connection to protect your medical information, sign up at www.rhoffman.yourmed.com and follow the on-screen directions. For more information, access our website at gwfamcare.com. We ask that you use your best judgment and not send urgent or emergent questions via email.
- **What happens if my doctor is out of town or otherwise unavailable?** Your physician will take a certain amount of time out of the office for vacation and continuing medical education. When your physician is out of the office, another physician will provide coverage to ensure that your access to medical care is uninterrupted.
- **Can I see my physician whenever or wherever?** While your physician is unable to be available to see you at all hours or locations, your personal New West Medical Care Physician is in the unique position to work with you directly to arrange or provide care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **What if I no longer wish to be a member?** You may cancel your membership in our practice at any time. Membership is always voluntary. If you have an automatic withdrawal for your membership, you will need to contact us so that we can cancel it as soon as possible. Because any money you paid in advance is kept in escrow, any money not already used to pay for your previous monthly membership fees will be returned to you within 30 days. Please remember, that if you are canceling membership because of financial hardship, please talk to your physician or the office administrator first.
- **What happens if there are changes to this Handbook or the Fee Schedule?** All changes to this handbook and fee schedule will be mailed to our members in a written notification, either via email or U. S. Postal Service. Please be sure to read notices from New West Medical Care so you know how to continue to access benefits in our program. Fee changes—if any—will only be made to be effective in the month of July.

Patient Handbook - Section 3 **Policies and Customs**

The following outlines more specific policies and customs at New West Medical Care. We understand these may seem overwhelming. Please note that our focus is not on these minute details, but rather on our service and relationship with you. These are written by our legal counsel to inform, guide, and to protect both you and your physician from any potential misunderstandings.

I. Covered and Non-covered Benefits of Membership

This handbook expressly mentions those services provided by your New West Medical Care Physician that are covered by your membership. Any items not specifically mentioned here should be considered non-covered. Examples of services not covered with membership include: home visits, nursing home visits, specialist visits; diagnostic tests not provided by your New West Medical Care Physician; laboratory tests; hospital or emergency room visits or facility fees; surgical fees; outside facility fees such as nursing home or hospital fees; litigation costs and fees; medical record fees; or costs of some immunizations or medication given as an injection. These may be covered by your healthcare insurance. Each patient is responsible for knowing and understanding the benefits of their health plan.

II. Office Policies and Customs

Office Hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm; however, the office is closed for lunch from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. Office closure dates for holidays will be provided to members on an annual basis for their information. Office closures may occur due to severely inclement weather or natural disaster, but remember that your personal New West Medical Care Physician will remain available as set forth throughout this handbook.

Office Visits will be scheduled at standard 30-minute minimums to 90-minute maximums depending on the circumstances. Your New West Medical Care Physician, based on the medical necessity of your problem, may alter the length of an appointment. In order to allow sufficient time for scheduled patients, you should contact our office in advance and avoid "walk-in" visits. An adequate time to address each member patient's concern will be appropriately scheduled. In most cases, an appointment later that day or a next-day appointment can be arranged.

Contacting your Physician during our usual office hours should be through the primary office number. To reach the receptionist, please call 360-574-9730. After office hours, please dial our main office number (360-574-9730) and follow the prompts to contact your New West Medical Care Physician. After hours calls are typically returned within 30 minutes, voicemail in 24 hours, and e-mails in 48 hours. However, sometimes it may take longer due to unusual circumstances.

Healthcare insurance or other coverage is not a requirement for enrollment in New West Medical Care. However, New West Medical Care strongly encourages its members to have and maintain such coverage if available. Each staff member of New West Medical Care will work with the member's insurance to ensure that all costs subsequent to the member's care, such as lab fees, x-rays or hospital fees, will be usual and customary. We strongly encourage all member patients to contact their insurance carrier regarding coverage and fees prior to contacting New West Medical Care. New West Medical Care cannot guarantee that insurance companies will reimburse any costs incurred by its members.

Pain management is an important aspect of healthcare and at New West Medical Care we do believe in adequate treatment of pain. A member patient must understand, however, that very specific and sometimes restrictive laws govern the use and administration of narcotic medications.

Quality Assurance will be the keystone of success for our practice here at New West Medical Care. Community and professional practice standards will be followed for the treatment of all illnesses to ensure the acceptable quality care for you and your family. To confirm that we are meeting those standards, New West Medical Care will confidentially screen randomly selected patient charts. New West Medical Care has designated Dr. Rebecca Hoffman as the contact person to receive and address any patient complaints or questions.

III. Membership

Membership in New West Medical Care is voluntary. New West Medical Care does not discriminate based on general health, age, sex, race or creed and there is no consideration of healthcare insurance status. Each member must indicate in writing their understanding and agreement with the policies and customs of New West Medical Care as outlined within the Agreement Contract and Patient Handbook.

The total number of patients will be limited in order for your New West Medical Care Physician to meet the needs of their membership panel in a timely and effective fashion. Membership enrollment will be closed once this number is reached. A waiting list on a "first

come, first serve" basis will be generated and maintained. Any individual may place their name and contact information on this list without financial commitment.

IV. Fees/Refunds:

A Membership Fee Schedule is attached which sets forth the costs and fees of membership. Annual payment discounts are available. A non-refundable enrollment fee equal to 3 months of membership is to be paid at the time of enrollment.

If any active member of the practice believes they can no longer afford the costs of membership, we strongly encourage them to contact their New West Medical Care Physician to review all options before terminating membership.

Payment options for your convenience include: monthly, quarterly, or annually. Annual payments may be made by money order, check, MasterCard, Visa, or automatic checking account withdrawal. For those paying monthly or quarterly, New West Medical Care requires that an automatic payment plan via MasterCard, Visa or automatic checking account withdrawal be arranged at the time of enrollment. All payments are paid in advance of the time covered.

Withdrawal from membership may occur at any time. A 30-day written notice is required. Any member who closes or ends their automatic payment agreement without written pre-notification will be treated as having terminated their membership. Your New West Medical Care Physician may also terminate the physician-patient relationship with 30-days written notice should interactions by the patient be seen to compromise the therapeutic nature of said relationship.

NON-SUFFICIENT FUNDS: Any check or automatic checking withdrawal (ACH) returned for non-sufficient funds (NSF) will be subject to a \$35.00 NSF fee.

Refunds will be provided to each individual patient or family within 30 days following the last month of membership. Refunds can be in the form of credits to your bank account via automatic clearing house, credits to your credit/debit card, check sent via U. S. Postal Service or may be available for pick up if pre-arrangements are made and the party presents appropriate identification. Refunds will include an itemized statement of fees and balances. Refunds will include the balance of any monies paid in advance minus the months used and the enrollment fee.

Appeals regarding any policy addressed herein may be made in writing. The relevant officer of New West Medical Care will review the circumstances and a written response will be given within 30 days.

Patient Handbook - Section 4

2009 Monthly Membership Fee Schedule

Established July, 2009

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| First Adult in Family | \$65 |
| Second Adult in Family | \$55 |
| Child (under age 18) | \$40 |

10% discount for annual prepayment

All fees paid in advance will be held in escrow and released to New West Medical Care at the end of the month for membership provided during that month. Patients may leave New West Medical Care at any time and receive a full refund of all fees held in escrow that have not been used as of the date of departure.