

HealthWatch

A Publication of Bakersfield Family Medical Center / Heritage Physician Network

Summer 2021

COVID-19 Vaccine

What you need
to know

Navigating Through Our Network

Understanding
the Referral and
Authorization
Process



Urgent Care Hours: 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. 365 Days a Year

Appointments Available Mon-Fri, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. **(661) 846-4848**

24-Hour Nurse Hotline Available 24/7 at **(661) 327-4411**

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

Across the country, the COVID-19 pandemic is having devastating effects. Here at BFMC/HPN, we have felt the pain and loss in our own community. We are supporting families who have been affected and mourn for those we have lost.

While the pandemic has kept us apart, there is hope — vaccines are now available. Vaccinations will help us move closer to ending this pandemic.

We want everyone in our community to be safe and get back to hugging our families and friends and shaking hands with our neighbors. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine adds one more layer of protection for you, your family, and your loved ones. Here are some key points about the COVID-19 vaccine:

- All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States are very effective.
- The most common side effects are pain in the arm where you got the shot, feeling tired, headache, body aches, chills, and fever.
- Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools we have available — wearing masks, staying at least 6 feet apart from people who don't live with you, avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces, washing your hands frequently, and getting vaccinated.



We're all in this together! BFMC/HPN Provider Derek Harmon (PA-C) shares why he got the COVID-19 vaccine: "I got vaccinated because we're all in this together. Protect each other!"



COVID-19 vaccines are readily available throughout Kern County. Please consult with your PCP if you have questions about receiving the vaccine.

BFMC/HPN is not a vaccination site, but there are several sites around the county where you can receive the vaccine. If you have questions about vaccination clinics in Kern County, please visit our website bfmc.com or contact the BFMC/HPN Customer Service Department at (800) 763-7732. Our staff is happy to assist you in finding a convenient location to schedule and receive your vaccine.

Navigating Through Our Network

Understanding the Referrals and Authorization Process

Did you know that BFMC/HPN has a Utilization Management Department dedicated to assisting you with inquiries you may have regarding referrals to specialists or any other provider required to address your healthcare needs? The staff in the department will review the recommendations of your Primary Care Physician (PCP) or Specialist and ensure you receive the most appropriate medical care, from the most appropriate provider, based on your individual health care requirements.

The Utilization Management Department has time frames that they must comply with when processing referrals. Keep in mind, these time frames apply from the time the Utilization Department receives the referral from your provider — not from the time you see your provider. For Commercial Members — Expedite: 72 hours; Routine: 5 business days. For Medicare Advantage Members — Expedite: 72 hours; Routine: 14 business days.

There are times when a referral can be delayed, such as not having enough medical records to help our Medical Director to make a decision, or further workup or testing is needed by the PCP or Specialist. There are also times when a referral can be modified, such as the required medical information was not submitted, additional tests are needed prior to approving the requested service, or the requested provider is not a contracted provider.

All care must be provided by a contracted network provider and requested services will be re-directed to these providers whenever possible, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

There are also times when a referral can be denied; when the requested service is not a covered benefit under your specific medical health plan, or the medical documentation received does not support the medical need for the service requested.

The Utilization Management staff can be reached by calling (661) 846-4754. UM staff can also assist you in person on the first floor of the 4570 California Avenue BFMC Administrative Building, Monday through Friday, 8:00am-5:00pm.

Referral Time Frames *

Commercial

Expedite: 72 hours
Routine: 5 business days

Medicare Advantage

Expedite: 72 hours
Routine: 14 business days

* From the time the UM Department receives the referral from your Provider's office.

BFMC/HPN Quality Improvement Program

Bakersfield Family Medical Center/Heritage Physician Network has a Quality Improvement Program that is responsible for the development and reporting of quality initiatives. These are improvement guidelines for the care of BFMC/HPN Commercial and Medicare members. The Quality Improvement Program is used throughout BFMC/HPN and each department is responsible for meeting set performance standards and reviewing processes and procedures to ensure we provide excellent service to our members and providers.



For your convenience, the Quality Improvement Program is available on the BFMC/HPN website at bfmc.com under "Services." If you would like more information regarding the Quality Improvement Program, please contact Customer Service at (800) 763-7732.

BFMC/HPN HEALTH WATCH is published as a community service for friends and members of BAKERSFIELD FAMILY MEDICAL CENTER / HERITAGE PHYSICIAN NETWORK 4580 California Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93309
(661) 327-4411 www.bfmc.com



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Rollin' Thru the Drive-Thru

Coffee Club | Arts and Crafts

What: FREE Drive-Thru events for Seniors

When: Twice a month, Monday and Fridays

Where: BFMC/HPN Parking Lot, 4580 California Avenue, 93309



For more information, contact the Marketing Department at
(661) 846-4662

Connecting to our members

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URGENT CARE

