

COVID-19 UPDATE



Managing Referrals During COVID-19 Surges 11.19.2020

For Advocate Aurora's Home Health, Hospice, Home Infusion and Home Medical Equipment

Situation

In some markets, the rapidly changing COVID-19 environment is resulting in a large increase in patient volumes and a decrease in available staff. This is challenging our ability to provide safe care for our patients. Scenarios are very fluid, often changing by geography and product line.

Background

Home medical equipment inventory and staffing levels are good.

For other services, as staffing challenges have occurred in local markets, we have implemented the following tactics to quickly respond and continue to meet the needs of our Advocate Aurora Health (AAH) hospitals:

- Working closely with staffing agencies
- Expanding the use of virtual health to extend staffing
- Limiting or stopping the acceptance of referrals from non-AAH sources in certain geographies
- Moving our staff from other branches to those geographies experiencing greater need
- Working with our partner hospitals, triaging patients and flexing start of care dates where appropriate so we can service more patients

Assessment

As COVID-19 increases, we may need to further limit acceptance of referrals to ensure safe patient care. Because changes occur quickly and will vary by market, written communication is not timely and one-on-one communication will be needed.

Recommendations

- Continue to limit or stop non-AAH referrals to ensure we can support our AAH hospitals
- Trust we are working together with our hospital partners to get patients out of the hospital and back home
- Assume we are accepting referrals as usual unless we inform you of an exception
- *Communication of exceptions* - because the COVID-19 environment is fluid and changes are happening quickly, exceptions will be provided to Care Management immediately via our Intake staff:
 - Home Care/Hospice Liaison at your site
 - Our Intake staff via our call centers in IL and WI