



# *PacifiCare* **Health Watch**

## *What is Continuity of Care?*

HMO/MCO/POS

### What Is Continuity of Care?

Continuity of Care for New Enrollees is a health plan process that, under certain conditions, provides members with short-term, temporary coverage for care received from a former, non-participating or non-contracting provider while transitioning to a PacifiCare contracted provider. The Continuity of Care for New Enrollees process acts like a “bridge of coverage” as you transition from your old plan, to your new PacifiCare plan. To qualify, a new member must be in the middle of an acute episode of care at the time of the change in health plans, and a formal determination must be made by PacifiCare that a change in providers on the new member’s effective date would have a negative effect on his or her health. Note that an acute episode of care generally includes treatment for medical conditions with a sudden onset that requires prompt medical attention, and has a limited duration.

### Who Authorizes Continuity of Care for New Enrollees?

If you or a member of your family is currently receiving medical care for an acute condition authorized by your previous Health Plan, you have the right to request a Medical Review by using the Request for Continuity of Care for New Enrollees Form. Temporary coverage with a non-participating or non-contracting provider may be authorized in those cases in which a change in physician could adversely affect you or your dependent’s medical care. A preference for a particular physician or on-going monitoring for a chronic condition will not qualify you for Continuity of Care for New Enrollees. If you do not receive preauthorization by PacifiCare or by your chosen Medical Group, payment for services rendered by a non-participating or non-contracting provider will be your responsibility.

## What Types of Cases Qualify for Continuity of Care for New Enrollees?

The following statements are examples of cases in which Continuity of Care for New Enrollees might apply to you or your dependents. If any of these statements are true for you or a family member or will be true during your open enrollment period, you should fill out the Continuity of Care for New Enrollees Form.

- I am, or a member of my family is, pregnant and in the third trimester.
- I am, or a member of my family is, presently in an acute hospital or scheduled to be in the hospital immediately after our PacifiCare coverage becomes effective.
- I am, or a member of my family is, presently undergoing a course of chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or psychiatric counseling.
- I am, or a member of my family is, presently on a transplant list.
- I, or a member of my family is presently utilizing rental equipment or is receiving oxygen.

If you think you or a member of your family qualifies for Continuity of Care for New Enrollees, complete the Continuity of Care for New Enrollees Request Form and forward it to PacifiCare as soon as possible. Upon receipt of the completed form, the Medical Review process will be completed in three business days. If you qualify for Continuity of Care for New Enrollees, you will be notified by telephone of the decision and provided assistance with the transition process. If you do not qualify, you will be contacted by phone within three business days of the receipt of your request or a written notification will be sent to you, you will be provided with reasons for the determination and alternative plans for your care as well as information about how you can appeal the decision.

*Questions?*

*Call the*

*Customer Service*

*department*

*toll-free at*

*1-800-531-3341.*

## Continuity of Care for Terminating Physicians (Option One and Option Two)

In the event your participating or contracting physician is terminated by PacifiCare or your Participating or Contracting Medical Group for reasons other than a medical cause, fraud or other criminal activity, you may be eligible to continue receiving care from your physician following the termination, providing the terminated provider agrees to terms and conditions of the contract. Continued care from the terminated physician may be provided for up to ninety (90) days or a longer period if Medically Necessary for chronic, serious or acute conditions or through post-partum for pregnancy related conditions or until your care can safely be transferred to another provider. This does not apply to physicians who have voluntarily terminated their participation with PacifiCare or a Participating or Contracting Medical Group.

If you are receiving treatment for:

- an acute condition (such as open surgical wounds, or recent heart attack)
- serious chronic condition (such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy)
- a high risk pregnancy (such as multiple babies where there is a high likelihood of complications)
- pregnancy in the second or third trimester

and your physician is terminated, you may request permission to continue receiving treatment from the terminated physician beyond the termination date by calling PacifiCare. Your Participating or Contracting Medical Group's Medical Director in consultation with your terminated physician will determine the best way to manage your ongoing care. PacifiCare must preauthorize services for continued care. If you have any questions or would like a copy of PacifiCare's Continuity of Care Policy, or would like to appeal a denial of your request for continuation of services from your terminated physician, you may call PacifiCare Customer Service department.