

READY TO SERVE

A Newsletter for USFHP Network Providers

PROVIDER SATISFACTION IS JOB #1 FOR BRIAN KEEFFE

“My number one priority is to make sure our providers have everything they need so they can focus fully on taking care of our members.”



That’s how Brian Keeffe, the newest member of the USFHP at PacMed Provider Relations team, describes his role. Brian joined PacMed last summer after five years at Molina Healthcare, where he primarily worked with the Medicaid program. So he knows a lot about

helping providers navigate a bureaucracy, indeed, one that is far more complex than PacMed.

For Brian and Elizabeth Maltos, his partner on the Provider Relations team, their day starts with finding out if any providers have reached out for assistance, whether by email or voicemail or through another internal team member. They’ll work with individual providers for anything they need to make sure their USFHP experience is smooth and effortless. That may be helping them navigate the online provider portal or troubleshooting any kind of administrative details.

The goal is to make sure providers know they are valued, that they have advocates at USFHP, and that the care they provide to our members is deeply appreciated. And that their time is freed up to care for members rather than get caught up in administrative details.

Brian encourages providers not to hesitate in reaching out, even if it seems like a small issue, because sometimes they turn into big issues. Clarifying a process, updating records, getting some training — all providers have to do is ask.

Because of Type 1 diabetes, Brian was not able to serve in the military himself. But a ‘large chunk’ of his family is military, and caring for military families is important to him.

“When this opportunity came up to serve active-duty military families and retired military and their families, it seemed like a great way that I can give back to a population that gives so much,” Brian says. “And not just the people who are actively in uniform. I’ve always said that the whole family serves.”

Brain grew up in Seattle. In his spare time, he likes to cook, get out and hike with his dogs, Lucy and Rocky, and take in the local arts and music scene.

In closing, Brian encourages providers to reach out to him for anything they need. He is happy to help. USFHPPProviderRelations@usfhppacmed.org.

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MEDICAL DIRECTOR MESSAGE

by Alexander Park, MD
Medical Director, US Family Health Plan at PacMed
Internal Medicine, First Hill Clinic

Adolescents Need Vaccinations, Too

Patients and parents don't always recognize the importance of immunizations for adolescents. But vaccines are a safe, effective, *and necessary* way to protect adolescents against potentially deadly diseases, including:

- ✓ Meningococcal meningitis
- ✓ Influenza
- ✓ Tetanus
- ✓ Diphtheria
- ✓ Pertussis
- ✓ Human papilloma virus (HPV)

These are serious diseases that can cause breathing difficulties, heart problems, nerve damage, pneumonia, and, in some cases, even seizures and death. The HPV vaccine can also prevent cancers of the throat and cervix later in life.



Many of our members might be new to you and have immunization records from different states and medical providers. We encourage you to work with parents to obtain prior records. The CDC has a list of state immunization record contacts to utilize when needing [immunization information system](#) (IIS) data for patients who have transferred from other locations.

Is It Viral Or Bacterial? If It's Pharyngitis, Test!



How serious is antibiotic resistance, really? Really serious. The CDC reported three million resistant infections and 35,000 deaths in 2019. CDC data in ion. Patients presenting with pharyngitis or upper respiratory conditions often request antibiotics as a silver bullet. But proper testing is required to identify whether the source of the sore throat is viral or bacterial, and to prevent the spread of sickness and reduce unnecessary use of antibiotics. If the test indicates viral pharyngitis or upper respiratory infection, antibiotics are contraindicated.

The US Family Health Plan at PacMed encourages the use of strep testing and viral swabs to help identify the cause of pharyngitis and upper respiratory infections. Empiric treatment without testing increases the risk of personal and systemic problems for the patient and for healthcare system down the line.

Let's all do our part to reduce excessive use of antibiotics. Many patients will ask for antibiotics inappropriately and cite that they improved symptoms in past episodes of viral bronchitis, pharyngitis, or URI. The anti-inflammatory effect of antibiotics can be quite alluring. It may seem challenging to counsel patients about this when they are asking for antibiotics that are not indicated. But the truly hard part will come when antibiotic resistant infections become even more commonplace than they are now, due to poor stewardship in the current era.

10 WAYS TO BE SAFER ONLINE

Winter is in full swing and we're spending more time indoors engaged with our phones, tablets, Smart TVs and other devices. It's important to take a minute to remember basic safety steps to protect ourselves and loved ones online. Here are 10 simple tips that can keep you safe online.

1. Make sure all your devices are updated and set to auto-update so you don't miss important fixes and updates.
2. Make sure all your tablets, smartphones and computers have anti-virus protection installed and active; set these to auto-update, too, to be protected from the latest threats.
3. Check that your privacy settings are set correctly on all your devices and sites you visit.
4. Make sure you use strong passwords and don't reuse your passwords. A password manager is a good way to generate strong passwords and keep track of them for you.
5. Enable two-factor authentication everywhere you can. This will help protect your account in case your password is ever leaked or compromised.
6. Be careful about sharing personal information. Once its posted, it's posted for life and there is no taking back. For example, never share your real birthday unless absolutely necessary. Your birthday is one of the keys to stealing your identity.
7. Watch out for phishing emails and avoid clicking on links in any emails you may be suspicious about.
8. The same goes for texts. Junk texts and phishing texts are a huge and growing phenomenon. Best practice: Immediately delete any texts that are from numbers you don't recognize.
9. Be careful with what you download and from where.
10. Be cautious when buying anything from social media sites.



USFHP at PacMed Information Security Team

Don Carter

Information Security
Manager

McCall Paxton

Senior Security Engineer

Abolaji Filani

Information Security
Governance and
Compliance

Hopefully these small tips will help you and your loved ones be safer online and have a more enjoyable experience. Until next time, take care.

COMPLIANCE CORNER

Other Health Insurance

UNIFORMED FAMILY SERVICES HEALTH PLAN takes pride in paying claims right the first time, including claims where there is other health insurance (OHI). If a patient has any health insurance other than TRICARE, it is called OHI. OHI can be through an employer or a private insurance program. Determining which payer is primary can be difficult, as well as have an impact on timely and proper claim reimbursement. Below is some guidance to understanding the interaction between TRICARE and OHI.

USFHP at PacMed does not coordinate federal benefits. By law, TRICARE pays after all other health insurance, except for:

- Medicaid
- TRICARE supplements
- State victims of crime compensation programs
- Other federal government programs identified by the director, Defense Health Agency

Providers should submit claims for processing to a patient's OHI before submitting to TRICARE. Once primary benefits are received, forward the explanation of benefits along with a paper claim to:

USFHP at PacMed
Attention: Claims Department
1200 12th Ave. S
Seattle, WA 98144



For Patients on Medicare for ESRD:

- USFHP at Pacmed is secondary to Medicare for patients on End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) coverage

As a reminder, verify your patient's health insurance by reaching out to the health plan or plans if they have any other health insurance. This keeps your records up to date and allows for timely claim processing and accurate reimbursement.

INVITATION:

Help USFHP Advance Quality, Safety and Utilization Management

US Family Health Plan encourages you to serve as a member of the USFHP Quality, Safety, and Utilization Management Committee.

We welcome your ideas and suggestions on how service may be improved for providers and health plan members. To express interest in serving on this committee, or other committees that may be formed by USFHP, please contact USFHP Provider Relations: USFHPPProviderRelations@USFHPPacmed.org

DON'T LET PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FORMS RUIN YOUR DAY

Tips For Reducing Prior Authorization Headaches

Dealing with prior authorization forms can be a big disruption to a provider's workday. We have some suggestions for streamlining that process.

USFHP and our providers are required to follow the Uniform Formulary, a formulary set forth by the Department of Defense/Defense Health Agency. Government contracts, require prior authorization for many medications, as they can cost ten to as much as fifty times more than comparable drugs in the same class. Government contract pricing is confidential, so you as a provider will only know that the medication you selected is not a preferred agent when you receive a prior authorization form.



Here are some tips for filling out USFHP prior authorization forms:

1. The forms often have you skip to another question based on your response. Just answer the questions that apply to your patient.
2. The first questions ask whether the patient had an adequate trial or treatment failed with the preferred medication. If the preferred agent is a good therapy for your patient, simply

switch the patient to that medication and return the form with a message such as "changing to preferred drug."

3. If no response has been received after 72 hours, a repeat prior authorization form will be sent out. To avoid duplicate prior authorization forms, try to finish paperwork by the next business day.
4. Simply sending medical charts is usually not sufficient. It gives the insurer more information than is needed and HIPAA requires that we share the minimum amount of information necessary for the task. In addition, chart notes often do not contain information on certain labs or historically relevant data needed to make a final determination.

Here are a few hints that can help you avoid prior authorizations altogether:

1. If there is a generic in the drug class, it most often will NOT need prior authorization.
2. Diabetes drugs often trigger prior authorizations. Brand Lantus (not the biosimilars) is the preferred long-acting insulin. Brand drugs that are preferred in their class include Trulicity, Bydureon, and Jardiance.
3. Humira is the biologic treatment for many auto-immune disorders.

Help patients save with mail order. Finally, selecting MXP Pharmacy as the pharmacy of choice for chronic medications will ensure that USFHP patients are getting the most medication (up to 90 days) at the lowest copayment. In addition, MXP pharmacists are highly experienced in working with USFHP patients and the Uniform Formulary.

BILLING TIPS

Commercial insurance is always the primary plan.

While US Family Health Plan is the primary plan for benefits and the primary manager of care, it's the secondary payor when a patient has commercial insurance.

Always submit a claim to the primary payor—even if the balance is zero.

Per the Department of Defense, USFHP must report all insurance reimbursement amounts collected by any provider.

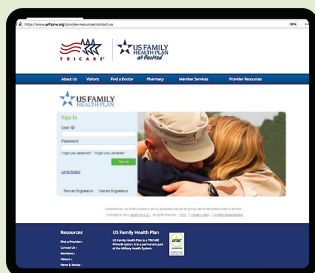
Our member cannot be billed for any remaining balance. When the primary payor issues payment, bill USFHP and include the Explanation of Payment from the primary payor.

All claims for all USFHP beneficiaries should be mailed to:
US Family Health Plan
1200 12th Avenue S,
Seattle, WA 98144-2712

Payment will be based on the amount the primary payor indicates the patient is responsible for, up to the contract/CMAC allowed amount.

Don't bill Medicare. Some of our Medicare-aged enrollees are grandfathered into US Family Health Plan. USFHP enrollees who are Medicare beneficiaries have waived their use of Medicare. Do not bill Medicare for care provided to these enrollees.

All claims for **all** our beneficiaries should be mailed to US Family Health Plan.



Tools You Can Use: USFHPNW Provider Portal

1. US Family Health Plan providers can view USFHP eligibility and claims status electronically through our provider portal. In addition, referral coordinators can submit referrals and view authorization status on the portal. Our goal is to make working with us that much easier!

To set up your account, contact USFHP Provider Relations at USFHPPProviderRelations@USFHPPacmed.org

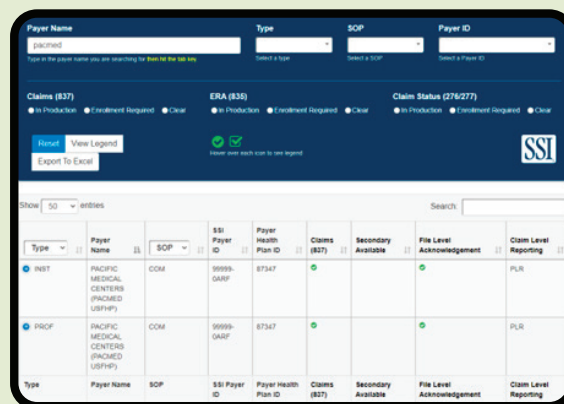
Already have a portal account? Please let your caregivers know they can gain access by reaching out to designated administrators in your organization.

2. Providers can now submit claims electronically through our clearinghouse, SSI:

- USFHP's payer ID with SSI is 87347.
- For clearinghouse to clearinghouse connections use ID 999990ARF (zero, not o).
- On the payer list page, enter pacmed as the payer name, as shown here:

For questions or problems getting connected contact your clearing house or SSI Support:

<https://thessigroup.com/contact-us/>



Electronic Referral & Claims Submission Now Available

We are pleased to announce providers can now submit referrals electronically through the **USFHP HealthTrio provider portal**. Users with a "Referral Coordinator Active" role assigned to their profile can submit referrals for specialist, outpatient or facility admission services. Local administrators should contact USFHP Provider Relations for training on how to use this new feature and to get set up.



REMINDER: REGISTER WITH INSTAMED FOR DIRECT CLAIMS PAYMENT

For accelerated access to claim payments, USFHP at PacMed uses InstaMed for direct deposit into your existing bank account. You should experience no disruption to your current workflow—just choose to have electronic remittance advices (ERAs) routed to your existing clearinghouse.

Register for free for InstaMed Payer Payments:
www.instamed.com/eraeft

With InstaMed, USFHP at PacMed delivers claim payments via ERA and electronic funds transfer (EFT). ERA/EFT is a convenient, paperless and secure way to receive claim payments. Funds deposited directly into your designated bank account include the TRN Reassociation Trace Number, in accordance with CAQH CORE Phase III Operating Rules for HIPAA standard transactions.

CONTACT US

We are here to answer your questions, and we welcome your suggestions or feedback.

MEMBER SERVICES

1 (800) 585-5833, option 2

CREDENTIALING

Credentialing@USFHPpacmed.org

Lisa Velotta
Credentialing Manager
(206) 774-5679

Miranda Suggitt
Credentialing Manager
(206) 774-5690

NETWORK CONTRACTING & PROVIDER RELATIONS

USFHPPProviderRelations@USFHPpacmed.org

(800) 585-5883, option 2

Elizabeth Maltos
Senior Provider Network Contract Specialist
(206) 774-5660

Brian Keeffe
Senior Provider Network Contract Specialist
(206) 774-5709

www.usfhpnw.org

US FAMILY HEALTH PLAN

A health plan sponsored by the Department of Defense (DoD) that offers the TRICARE Prime® benefit to uniformed services beneficiaries in the Puget Sound region.

The plan is administered by Pacific Medical Centers, which has performed this role for over 30 years.

MISSION

To provide quality health care for uniformed services family members, retirees and their family members; to have extremely satisfied members; to demonstrate quality, value and operational effectiveness; and to be an integral and respected health care partner in the DoD's Military Health System.



REMINDER:

USFHP and Health Net Are Different Organizations

To avoid complication and frustration for you and US Family Health Plan patients, please make sure that bills/claims/referrals and anything else intended for USFHP does **not** go to Health Net Federal Services. We are not the same organization!

Claims are processed by date of service, and USFHP reimburses facility-based care at the TRICARE/CHAMPUS DRG or contracted rate. TRICARE rates are updated annually. To access information about TRICARE fee schedule changes, as well as our current [Provider Manual](#), please visit www.usfhpnw.org.