

Consumer Choice of a Primary Care Provider (PCP)

When choosing a managed care plan, a consumer must also choose a primary care provider (PCP). This doctor will treat most of the consumer's health care needs. The PCP will work with the consumer to coordinate his/her health care (e.g., referring the consumer to specialists or admitting the consumer to the hospital). The PCP will keep a record of the consumer's health related services in order to promote continuity of care.

PCP Responsibilities for Care Coordination

PCP care coordination responsibilities include, at a minimum, the following:

- Assisting with coordination of the consumer's overall care, as appropriate for the consumer;
- Serving as the ongoing source of primary and preventive care;
- Recommending referrals to specialists, as needed;
- Triaging consumers with emergency care needs, persistent symptoms, or requests for routine care;
- Participating in the care management process (e.g., developing care treatment plans and notifying the MCP of consumers who may benefit from care management).

When choosing a PCP, consumers should keep the following in mind:

- Each MCP contracts with specific doctors. Consumers must choose a PCP from their MCP's Provider Directory.
- Consumers may call the Managed Care Enrollment Center (MCEC) or their MCP's member services toll-free telephone number to ask if the doctor they want to choose as their PCP is listed in their MCP's Provider Directory.
- A PCP close to the consumer's home may ensure faster access.
- Family members enrolled in an MCP may choose different PCPs.
- Some PCPs speak different languages. If a consumer is unable to find a PCP that speaks his/her language, interpreter services are available.