



Parallel Links Pediatrics PLLC

2275 Swallow Hill Rd. Ste 800, Pittsburgh PA, 15220 Ph: 412-668-1924 Fax: 412-207-3117 pedconsult.net

Notice of Patient Care, Business and Financial Practices

Patient care should occur during scheduled appointment times (except in the case of emergency, see below).

- Office appointments are the standard of care. This allotted space and time is designed to provide as ideal of an environment as possible for medical care to occur-- the appropriate level of privacy, an adequate allotment of time, the appropriate parties and sources of information ideally available and present, all at a time when we can provide undivided attention to the task at hand.
- During appointment times the identified patient must generally always be physically present at some point during the appointment to adhere to standards of care. Please consider that visits without the patient present may not be reimbursable by your insurance due to medical coding standards.
- As would be common practice with other medical providers and practices, please do not expect us to be available to address an imminent or serious medical/ psychiatric concern outside of your scheduled appointment times. We will do our best to return messages as soon as possible but significant concerns will often require a sooner follow-up appointment to adhere to standards of care.

Your next appointment time has been specifically reserved for you—please make every effort to keep the follow-up appointment as it has been scheduled.

- Standards of care dictate intervals between office appointments and guide the scheduling. Drive to follow these guidelines, the office hours schedule, and the very high demand for services make it not possible to accommodate seeing patients in active treatment only outside of school hours or only at specific times of the day. Please do not expect or request this, but DO communicate your preferences. These requests will be honored as much as possible as long as safety guidelines are being satisfied.

- If you are not able to attend your scheduled appointment, please understand that an appointment may not be available within the ideal time frame and ultimately this may delay or potentially compromise care.
- Requesting to reschedule appointments should be restricted to times of illness or other unavoidable issues. Please refrain from making inquiries to reschedule appointments simply for the sake of convenience.
- If you cancel an appointment, it is likely to be offered to someone else who needs an appointment in that time frame very shortly after you cancel. Please be sure that you cannot make the appointment prior to formally cancelling.
- If you happen to miss, cancel, or need to reschedule an appointment, it is your responsibility to facilitate contact to get back into the schedule. This is most easily accomplished with email (Spruce). As soon as possible, we can then return your email with available appointment times to select from at your earliest convenience.
- **As per the practice financial policy, cancellation of an appointment within 24 business hours of appointment time or not showing to an appointment will result in a charge of the full fee of the missed appointment.**

If there is ever an emergency, please seek care at the nearest Emergency Department, call 911 for immediate assistance, or contact your local crisis resources.

- Crisis resources for Washington and Allegheny counties in PA are available in hard copy in the office and at the practice website at all times.
- Please prepare and identify your local resources prior to an emergency situation presenting.

Please do not make requests or solicit communication with the doctor in between scheduled appointments unless it is absolutely necessary.

URGENT matters SHOULD be reported without hesitation! Return contact in regard to these type of concerns will NOT render out of pocket charges.

- o concerns potentially related to medications/ medication side effects or concerns regarding unexplained behavioral changes
- o any concerns regarding thinking/ verbalizations/ behaviors that are felt to be potentially dangerous, or new or worsening medical concerns
- o Appointment requests that cannot be avoided (please see above)
- o Medication refill requests
- o Urgent insurance/ pharmacy matters

o Any other URGENT concerns that cannot wait until the next appointment for doctor notification

If there is an urgent concern between appointments:

o Please convey EXACTLY what your request/ concern is in your communication to the doctor. This will help to triage each request received to prioritize return contact for everyone's safety.

o Email (Spruce messaging) is preferred for this communication. Please leave your phone number(s) in your email also so a return call can easily be made if it is more efficient way to communicate that way.

o The phone system messages do not identify the caller, or sort themselves in order of importance/ urgency so must all be retrieved to sort this out hence email (Spruce messaging) being a more efficient form of communication.

o Messages will be addressed, in order of urgency, as soon as possible after they are received.

o Please be aware that we do not systematically check phone/ email (Spruce) messages on non-office days, holidays, weekends, or during vacations.

o On office days, we may be, at times, unable to receive Spruce/ phone messages until late in the day due to the demands of the patient schedule that day.

NON-URGENT matters should be held for discussion until the time of the next scheduled appointment.

Any communication with the doctor that is requested by a patient or family member, AND is determined to be not urgent in nature, AND requires response/ intervention from the physician between scheduled appointments WILL render out-of-pocket charges (see fee schedule below).

**** Out-of-pocket charges for these items are not reimbursable by insurance.**

Telephone Contact (1- 10 min) \$50.00

Telephone Contact (11- 20 min) \$75.00

Telephone Contact (21- 30 min) \$100.00

Online Contact, per email response \$50.00 (this would be explained up front prior to response)

Time spent writing letters, completing forms, etc. proves to be extraordinarily time consuming for all medical professionals. At the same time, these items can be necessary at times and therefore letters and form completion may be requested by a patient or family at any time. The following standards will be in place regarding these type of requests:

- As the physician, we reserve the right to decline any request if it is felt to be unethical in any way, may violate the patient's privacy, violates standing state or federal privacy laws regarding release of privileged psychiatric medical information, or is solely for purposes of obtaining disability.

- Although we will do our best, we will never be able to promise to have any requested documentation completed by a certain date or deadline, due to these items never being considered urgent or emergent compared to other concerns within the practice that can unpredictably mandate our time. This is frustrating to us as well, but we appreciate your understanding and patience.
- If the agreed upon item(s) is/ are able to be completed during the scheduled appointment time without compromising necessary care, there will be no additional charge(s) rendered.
- Please make requests for letters and form completion, and provide the forms and/ or the written outline of needed information from the requesting party prior to (or at the latest, at the beginning of) a scheduled appointment, to ensure that appointment time is utilized as efficiently as possible and to increase likelihood of item completion without incurring additional charge.
- **If completing the agreed upon item(s) exceeds the time available during the patient's scheduled appointment, an additional out-of-pocket fee will be assessed to the patient's financially responsible party.** The financially responsible party would be notified of this fee to gain authorization and approval prior the completion of the item(s) and fees being assessed.

-Letter/ Form Preparation \$25.00/ item (fee may be higher if item is time-intensive)

Please be an organized and a responsible partner in treatment.

- Make every effort to be on time for appointments.
- Unfortunately, we find that we can, at times, run somewhat behind schedule.
 - o We will continue to always make every attempt to run as close to the schedule as possible.
 - o We try to ensure every patient has the time they need to ensure that our meetings are as productive as possible with the time allotted. We extend this courtesy to each and every family in our care and we have heard that many (if not all) of the families appreciate this and know that we will do the same for them when necessary.
 - o If a particular patient is often exceeding time that can be allotted for their appointment, we will specifically ask that patient/ family to focus on organizing themselves prior to our meetings by establishing a list of goals for their meeting and to provide as much communication as possible prior to the appointment in an effort to respect everyone receiving care through the practice.
- Please note: when a patient appointment cannot start due to the patient or family running late, we will plan to conclude the appointment at the scheduled time anyway. The family running late will be asked to modify expectations for that day's appointment instead of inconveniencing the following patients and families scheduled.
- Please keep information and items given to you organized and in a safe and accessible location.

- appointment dates/time
- patient portal login/ password information
- school excuses
- paper medication prescriptions
- medications

- Upcoming scheduled appointment dates and times, school excuses, letters, and forms are always available to you in the patient portal.

- o If you would like to be reminded of patient portal log-in or would like your patient portal password to be reset, please do not hesitate to ask during any scheduled appointment time to avoid incurring out of pocket charges.

Please establish an effective method of communication with your chosen pharmacy and for tracking and filling prescription medication(s), ideally a little early each month to allow for grace period in the case of insurance problems, medication supply issues, missing prescriptions, etc.

- **Prior to requesting a medication refill from our office**, ensure that your pharmacy does not have the needed **prescription (Please ask your pharmacy directly, “Is this prescription ‘on hold?’ or ‘on file?’”)**. We attempt to send refills at each office appointment to be efficient and the pharmacy may place these prescriptions “on hold” for you in their “file” when it is too early to refill it.

- **We will not refill based on a pharmacy request.** Many pharmacies are now working to maximize prescription “sales” and therefore will request prescriptions to be renewed that are not needed due to timeframe (or even medications that have been discontinued long ago!!). **Therefore please contact us directly if you are in need of a prescription refill to maximize efficiency of the prescription refill process.** We are no longer willing to work with the pharmacies exclusively on these matters to attempt to avoid medical errors, unnecessary costs to you, etc.

Please be a responsible financial partner.

- A copy of practice financial policy is available on the practice website at www.pedconsult.net
- If you are hoping to have care reimbursed through your out of network insurance benefits, please be sure to familiarize yourself with the patient’s medical benefits and keep up to date. Please understand that we do not facilitate any contact with the insurance companies as we are out of network with every insurance product at this time.
- A full, updated practice fee schedule is available, upon request, at any time.

- Please note that fees are subject to change, at any time, without notification but we will ALWAYS do our best to notify families if a change in the practice fee schedule is anticipated.
- Please ensure that your credit card on file is active and funded so that you can be charged that day's appointment charges upon the conclusion of each scheduled appointment.
- When payments are not made promptly, this costs additional time and effort on our part to follow-up. Failure to pay outstanding account balances will result in late payment charges, collection actions, and will ultimately will compromise our partnership likely resulting in notification for termination of care.
- If you are unable to pay your bills in full and in a timely manner, please communicate this with us. We will be happy make every effort to work with you if concerns of this nature present at any time