

**PAIUTE TRIBE OF UTAH
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL**

	Policy Number:	
Policy Title:	AFTER HOURS COVERAGE	

Policy Statement: The PITU Health Centers will provide access to professional medical services during the hours the Centers are closed. Patients who contact the Health Center afterhours will be told to immediately call 911 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room if they believe their condition is life threatening. Patients who do not believe they need immediate emergency care will be given the opportunity to speak with the on-call medical professional. The on-call medical professional will be one of the providers from the PITU Health Centers.

Policy Purpose: This policy provides access to professional medical coverage when the Health Centers are closed. Providing after-hours access to professional services 24/7 improves the continuity and quality of patient care; contributes to higher patient satisfaction; and reduces inappropriate high cost emergency room visits.

Responsibility: The Health Director is responsible for implementing this policy. The Health Director delegates the implementation and monitoring of this policy to the Clinical Director. The Clinical Director is responsible for the clinical management of the policy.

Definitions:

A medical professional is a licensed medical provider such as a Physician, Physician Assistant, Nurse Practitioner or a Registered Nurse who is trained to use medical guidelines to assess the patient's needs telephonically and provide advice and/or direct the patient to an appropriate level of care.

A life threatening medical emergency requires immediate access to emergency services. It is any situation which endangers life or limb such as a situation that involves uncontrolled bleeding, loss of consciousness or labored breathing.


Procedure:

1. During their first clinic visit, all patients or their legal representative will receive information in writing about how to access health care services when their Health Center is closed. The written material will include:
 - a. Clear instructions to go to the nearest hospital emergency room if they are experiencing a life threatening emergency.
 - b. A description of medical services available to the patient when the Center is closed. This will include Instructions to speak with the on-call medical professional, who will assess the patient's situation, provide medical advice and direct the patient to the appropriate care.
2. Signage will be prominently posted at the entrance to all PITU clinics, in waiting rooms and exam rooms that include the information outlined in items 1a and 1b.
3. The Health Center phones will be forwarded to the on-call medical professional when the Health Center is closed. The person calling will receive the message that the clinic is closed and that they should seek emergency care if they believe their situation is an emergency. They will also be given the option of discussing their problem with the on-call medical professional if they feel their situation is urgent, but not an emergency.
4. All patient information including written materials and phone messaging will be available in English and Spanish and be at an appropriate literacy level.
5. The on-call medical professional will provide reports of all patient contacts to the Clinical Director for review and inclusion in the patient's medical record. The contact report will be distributed to the appropriate Health Center at the earliest possible opportunity. Patient encounter records will include all demographic information about the patient (including name, date of birth, contact information), presenting complaint, record of assessment, advice provided to the patient, disposition, and any follow-up.
6. PITU Health Center Staff will review the encounter form as soon as it is received and contact the patient for follow-up if needed. Any follow-up encounter will be documented in the medical record.
7. The PITU Clinical Director will review the processes and medical guidelines used by the on-call medical professional for medical appropriateness and outcomes at least annually. The Clinical Director will review any unexpected medical outcomes related to patient encounters in the ongoing clinical quality review processes.

References

HRSA Program Guide, Jan. 2014 - After Hours Coverage

<i>Date Approved by Tribal Council:</i>		<i>Effective Date:</i>	
Dates Reviewed:			
Supersedes Policies :	None		
HRSA Program Requirement	Program Requirement #5		


Tami Borchardt-Slayton, Tribal Chairperson

6/15/17
Date