

## Ideas for FPS Redesign

### Important things the medical community expects from you in general:

- That you will attend scheduled appointments on time
- That you will change appointments if you cannot attend them
- That you will reschedule any cancelled or missed appointments without prompting from the office
- That you will call and notify the provider (or nurse, medical assistant) if there is a change in the child's condition or if you have had to bring the child to acute care or ER for that condition so they can decide if an appointment should be made or if they would like to move an appointment to closer date
- That you will share information that they give you to involved parties (such as the school, or speech therapist)
- That if you are having difficulty getting transportation to an appointment you should either tell the clinic or problem-solve it yourself.

### Did you know?

- Medical providers always have someone on call for them. If you call the clinic line after hours you might be connected to the provider's answering service, a call center that has nurses (such as Seattle Children's) or maybe even the provider's cell phone.
- If you move to a new area and have to change providers you need to establish care with a new provider as soon as possible. That way if your child has a fever and is vomiting at 2 am you have a primary care practice you can call to help problem solve. You will need to call and ask for a new patient appointment. As a new patient appointment is often scheduled for a longer time frame than a "sick appointment" the provider might not have an opening for a few weeks.

## Module One

### Making an Appointment for your Child:

First of all, understand that you may reach a variety of people when you contact a medical provider's office:

- Scheduler
- MA- Medical Assistant
- LPN- Licensed Practical Nurse
- RN- Registered Nurse

What are reasons that you should call and schedule an appointment with the child's primary care provider?

- Child is ill
- Change in behavior, behavior problems

- Change in growth and development, losing/gaining weight
- Change in appearance
- Your child's routine well child exam is due
- Your child is due for their immunizations, such as yearly flu vaccine

**When should you ask to speak to a nurse or the provider's MA?**

- Your child is sick and the office staff answering the phone says the next available appointment is in 2 weeks. In this situation, the bio-mom should ask for the nurse or MA, as she needs to have the child's health issue "triaged". Let's talk about what "triaged" means. This is where either the nurse or the medical assistant decides what is priority for the provider seeing children that day. For example, a child with a very high fever who has been up all night and hasn't slept will be seen before a child who has a runny nose.
- There is a change in the child's condition and you are not sure if the child should have an appointment or if it would be ok just to update the staff over the phone
- You don't feel like the scheduler understands what you are trying to explain

**When calling to make an appointment, give this information:**

- Your name and relationship to the child
- The child's name
- Reason you called
- Details that will help them decide if you need an appointment right away or later in the day/week. You will want to say exactly what the problem is and how long the child has had it.

**Instructor: Please discuss the examples below with the parent before making the "pretend" practice phone call.**

**Example 1:**

Hi, this is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am mother of \_\_\_\_\_. I am calling to see if I can schedule an appointment as she has been all night with a fever and coughing.

**Example 2:**

Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am Sally's mother. Sally has been complaining of a stomach ache for three days and she has vomited one time this morning. I am really worried because she just isn't looking well. I think she needs to be seen right away this morning.

**Question to Discuss:**

What if the person who schedules the appointment says; "there is an opening at 4 pm today, do you want to take that one?"

Your response could be:

Actually I think she needs to be seen sooner than that. Can I talk to the nurse?

**Practice:**

Keeping those examples in mind, let's practice making a pretend phone call. In this scenario, the parent is going to make the call to the doctor's office, and the instructor is going to pretend to receive the call. You can go so far as to go into separate rooms with your own phones, to make this as real as possible.

**Instructor:** Please ask the parent to call and schedule an appointment for their child that has been up with a fever all night, and hasn't slept.

**Instructor,** remember that you are playing the role of the office staff receiving the phone call from the bio mom. These are the things that you should be hearing from the parent placing the call:

- Their name and relationship to the child
- The child's name
- Reason they are calling
- Details that will help you as the clinic decide if the child needs an appointment right away or later in the day/week. Parent will want to say what the problem is and how long the child has had it.

After this pretend call has been practiced, instructor should give feedback to parent in regards to whether they followed all the necessary steps to schedule an appointment. Please remind parent that the staff makes appointments based on the information given. If the child is very sick, that needs to be conveyed during the phone calls. They can't simply say, "I want to make an appointment", rather, details need to be shared.

## Module Two

There are many different types of medical providers that see children for a variety of conditions. It's important to have a general understanding of who the child will be seeing. There are a few examples listed below.

### What type of provider are you seeing?

- MD- Medical Doctor
- ND- Naturopathic Doctor
- OD- Osteopathic Doctor
- PA-Physician Assistant
- ARNP- Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner

### What is a primary care provider?

- A Primary Care Provider (PCP) is a physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant who manages your child's care. This can be the provider your child sees for a well-child exam, sick visit, and coordinating care of multiple health conditions. Sometimes, the PCP makes referrals to different specialists.

### **Why would my child need to see a specialist?**

- Some health conditions need to be looked at by medical providers who see these kinds of conditions all the time. For example, maybe your child has been very constipated. Your PCP may want a specialist to look into this further.

### **After a referral to a specialist has been made, these are some of the different things that can happen:**

- Some clinics put referrals on a waiting list and when the child's name gets to the top they call
- Some clinics will call you as soon as they receive the referral
- Some clinics want the parent to call after they receive the referral
- Sounds confusing? The best plan is to ask the child's provider who they are making a referral to (name and phone number), and one week later call the specialist's office to see if they received the referral. At that time, you can ask to make the appointment. If they haven't received the referral you will need to call your child's PCP to see if they can resend the referral.

### **Practice:**

**Instructor:** Explain that you and the parent are going to practice making a second pretend phone call. Let's use the health condition we mentioned above about the child who has been constipated. Ask the parent to pretend that he or she has already talked about this problem with the PCP, and that the PCP has made a referral to a gastroenterologist (doctor who looks at how food passes through the body). The appointment with this doctor is 4 months away (remember that specialty appointments can take a very long time to get into for the child's first appointment). **FYI:** Until the child sees the specialist, the PCP is the person who should be told of any changes in the child's health conditions.

**Parent:** Pretend that your child develops a new symptom that is very concerning to you. Your child begins to complain of severe stomach pain, not relieved by going poop.  
What should your next step be?

**Instructor:** Please ask the parent what they're going to do next. You want to hear them say that they're going to call the PCP and ask to schedule an appointment.  
You can go so far as to go into separate rooms with your own phones, to make this as real as possible.

**Instructor,** remember that you are playing the role of the office staff receiving the phone call from the parent. These are the things that you should be hearing from the parent placing the call:

- Their name and relationship to the child
- The child's name
- Reason they are calling (in this case, abdominal pain, not relieved by pooping) and how long this has been occurring
- The parent should explain that a referral to a gastroenterologist has already been made, but their appointment is 4 months away

### **What does the specialist need to have before the appointment?**

- Medical records, copies of MRI's, CT scans, x-rays, labs
- Hopefully the referring provider has sent medical records so that the specialist can review them.

- You should call the specialist's office and ask if they have received the child's medical history and results of any medical tests that would be helpful. If they have not, give them the name of any previous medical providers so they can call and get the records. Another option is for you to get the medical records and hand deliver them to the appointment, that way you know they have them.

## Module Three

**Sometimes, transportation to medical appointments can be hard for a parent to arrange.**

### **What if you need transportation to appointment?**

**Instructor:** Talk about the scenario below with the parent:

Your child has an appointment at Seattle Children's hospital in one month, but you do not have a car and the bus service would take you 5 hours each way. What are your options to help with transportation?

**Instructor,** you can remind the parent of this option:

Medicaid Transportation will provide transportation for any service covered by Medicaid (Apple Health)  
To Request Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

<http://www.hca.wa.gov/medicaid/transportation/pages/newrequest.aspx>

Click on *Regional Broker* and call the number associated with the county you live in.

### **What information will the parent need before they call?**

- Your Provider One Card
- Your complete pick-up address
- The name, and phone number of your medical provider
- Exact appointment date and time
- The type of healthcare appointment (i.e. dialysis, OB, dental, etc.)
- Your return time, if known

**Instructor:** In this module, you can "practice" having the parent make calls to the Transportation Department at Health Care Authority, as well as "practice" making phone calls to a clinic to explain they need help with transportation.

## Module Four

**How to navigate a large medical system** (Seattle Children's, Mary Bridge, Randall Children's, Sacred Heart, Doernbecher Children's)

Most of the large systems have you call the clinic number you are interested in, and then the automated phone system gives you multiple options. Two of the options most commonly used by parents are:

- **Scheduling an appointment:**
  - To ask if the clinic has received the referral
  - To ask to make the appointment
  - To ask if the child is on the wait list for an appointment
  - To ask to change the date/time of an appointment
- **Speak to the nurse:**
  - The child's condition has changed and you want to update the provider/doctor so they can decide if she should have an appointment sooner than planned.
  - You have a question about the medication that was ordered
  - You need to clarify some information the doctor gave you at the last appointment
  - You need paperwork filled out from the doctor explaining why the child needs to take the medication at school

**Instructor and parent**, it's time to make a "real" call to a clinic about any of the scenarios in the modules you have covered. Allow the parent to make the call, and stand by to assist with any area the parent might get "stuck" in. The parent can put the clinic on speaker phone, so that you can assist in any way the parent might need. You could practice:

- Confirming an appointment date/time
- Confirming appointment location (sometimes there are satellite clinics at different locations)
- Scheduling an appointment for a new health condition
- Checking on status of a referral
- Asking about Immunization Records for school