

# PROTOCOL I

## Subject: Specialty Referral Process

Effective Date: 3/00

Revised Date: 9/10

All NHP HMO patients require a referral before scheduling appointments for specialty services.

PCPs will request one of the following referral types:

- Level I

*Consult* – PCP is authorizing a consultation only. S/he requires a written or verbal communication prior to authorizing additional services. This level certifies a specialist to see the patient for one visit during a 60-day period.

- Level II

*Consultation & Diagnostics* – PCP is authorizing a consultation and diagnostic tests that will be performed by the specialist and billed by the specialist on the same day as the consultation. Specialized diagnostics tests that are identified on the pre-certification protocol are not covered as part of this referral. This level certifies a specialist to see the patient three times during a 90-day period.

- Level III

*Consultation, Diagnostics & Treatment* – PCP is authorizing a consultation and diagnostic tests and any treatment that will be performed by the specialist and billed by the specialist on the same day as the consultation. Specialized diagnostics and treatments that are identified on the pre-certification protocol are not covered as part of this referral. This level certifies a specialist to see the patient three times during a 90-day period.

- Chronic Care

*Chronic Care* – PCP is authorizing three or more visits, diagnostic tests and/or treatments over a course of more than 90 days that will be performed by the specialist in the office and billed by the specialist. The referral needs to include a written plan of care. Specialized diagnostic tests and treatments that are identified on the pre-certification protocol are not covered as part of this referral.

**IMPORTANT:** Reimbursement for services that have not been authorized will be denied. The patient cannot be billed for these services unless they have signed a waiver of liability or the services are denied as non-covered services.