

June 26, 2006  
*Via Banner Message*

WELLCARE HEALTH PLANS, INC  
THE WELLCARE GROUP OF COMPANIES

WELLCARE OF FLORIDA, INC.

HEALTH EASE OF FLORIDA, INC.

WELLCARE OF GEORGIA, INC.

WELLCARE OF NEW YORK, INC.

FIRST CHOICE HEALTH PLANS  
OF CONNECTICUT, INC.

HARMONY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, INC.

WELLCARE OF LOUISIANA, INC.

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH  
MANAGEMENT, INC.

HARMONY HEALTH SYSTEMS, INC.

HARMONY HEALTH PLAN OF ILLINOIS,  
INC.

## WellCare Authorization Process for Inpatient Admissions

WellCare recognizes that not all patients with urgent or emergent conditions are admitted to the hospital through the emergency room. There are some patients with urgent or emergent conditions who are appropriate for direct admission. Therefore, WellCare distinguishes two groups of members admitted to the hospital:

1. planned and
2. unplanned urgent/emergent

For unplanned urgent admissions, WellCare is issuing an update to the authorization process policy requiring:

1. Notification which involves the doctor or hospital calling WellCare Provider Relations at (866) 231-1821 and stating there is a patient who is being urgently/emergently admitted. The doctor or hospital should state the name of the patient, member ID number, admitting hospital, referring physician, and diagnosis of the patient and
2. Authorization by the next business day, just as it is for admissions through the ER.

All admissions (planned and unplanned) are subject to retrospective review to determine medical necessity, using InterQual criteria. One day after admission and stabilization, the hospital or the physician may request an authorization determination. This policy applies to patients who are seriously ill and meet InterQual criteria for inpatient hospital stay.

The following clinical examples are provided to assist hospitals and physicians in understanding our unplanned urgent/emergent admission hospital policy. As per the above requirements, these examples only require notification by either the hospital or the physician followed by next day authorization by WellCare.

1. Patient seen in urgent care by physician; physician's assessment is that patient needs to be admitted directly to hospital.
2. PCP sees sick patient in office. He notes that outpatient therapies have been tried and failed; the patient condition is urgent/emergent; he arranges for direct admission to hospital.

3. ER doctor sees patient in ER and notes patient failed ER therapy for asthma. He arranges for direct admission to another hospital where a hospitalist accepts the admission.
4. A pediatrician has a newborn baby with congenital stomach problem. The Pediatrician refers to a pediatric tertiary facility to accept the transfer and care of the child and to arrange for surgical repair.

If you need additional information about the notification or authorization process in your area, please visit <http://georgia.wellcare.com>, or contact Provider Relations at **1-866-231-1821**. We look forward to helping you provide the highest quality of health care for Georgia's Medicaid recipients and Peach Care for Kids enrollees.

Sincerely,



John Esslinger, MD  
Senior Medical Director