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A Department of Ventura County Health Care Agency

## What's new with VCHCP!

County employees serving County employees. We are the plan with a ❤️!

### Health Plan Options

VCHCP wants to be the health plan of choice for our fellow County employees.

We understand that cost is an important factor when reviewing your health plan options. Other important factors to consider include the network size, prescription drug list, authorization and referral guidelines, and customer service.

### Premiums

The Ventura County Health Care Plan (VCHCP) is a nonprofit health plan dedicated to providing County of Ventura employees and their covered dependents with access to high-quality health care at an affordable price.

As a nonprofit, our mission is to set premiums at the lowest rate possible to cover health care expenses while ensuring quality health care for our members.

Due to medical advancements and new pharmaceuticals available, medical costs are increasing at an unprecedented rate. Since the intent is to minimize premium increases, while still offering quality health care, it is prudent for a health care plan to set premiums at the appropriate level each year, to prevent an unexpectedly high premium increase in the future. VCHCP takes this very seriously, as we want to provide our members with stability and peace of mind year after year.

### Network Size

VCHCP offers its members access to a full HMO network. Although we understand that a limited HMO network could potentially equate to lower premiums, we believe that choice and having access to a broad network of Primary Care Providers (PCPs) and Specialists is important to our members.

There are close to 200 PCPs and 330 Specialists in the VCHCP network, and we are continuing to add providers to meet the needs of our members.

## **Prescription Drug List**

VCHCP offers its members access to a National Preferred Formulary. It is a very robust drug list, as we understand how important this is to our members, and we know it is an important factor when selecting your health care plan.

## **Service**

We understand that good customer service is important and that you should be treated with dignity and respect. As fellow County employees, we strive to provide that service when you contact the plan directly. We are your local health care plan option, and we are focused on ensuring that our service meets the needs and expectations of our members.

Our main line (805) 981-5050 is staffed by our Member Services team who are available to answer your questions from 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday.

## **Authorizations & Referrals**

VCHCP wants to ensure that you can obtain the services needed and recommended by your doctor, by eliminating barriers. That is why we continue to review services that require prior authorization and when appropriate, remove prior authorizations or move the services to the direct referral list.

- **Direct Referrals**

Those services on the Direct Referral List do not require prior authorization from VCHCP. This means that your PCP can provide you with a referral to a specialist, without the need to wait for an authorization from the Plan.

The current Direct Referral Chart is attached for your reference. However, as VCHCP makes updates periodically, it is recommended that you or your doctor contact us to confirm or if you have any questions.

- **Authorizations**

For those services that do require prior authorization, VCHCP has stringent guidelines regarding turnaround time. Once VCHCP receives the authorization request from the provider, a decision will be made within 5 business days for standard requests, and 72 hours for urgent requests.

Although VCHCP cannot control when the office submits the authorization request, once received we ensure that the above noted timelines are met.

## Access to Care

We've heard you and we are working hard to improve access for all our members.

### Actions Include:

- Added 33 new primary care providers (PCPs) to our network in 2024.
- Added 32 new specialists to our network in 2024.
- Negotiating new contracts to add additional PCPs and Specialist to East County.
- Distributed VCHCP's Referral Guidelines to the VCMC Clinics and Referral Center to ensure timely access to care, which state:

*If a timely appointment is not available at any of our contracted clinics/facilities, then an out-of-network (OON) referral request should be sent by the referring provider to the Plan for authorization. The authorization request must include the details regarding the access issue and why an OON referral is required.*

*Note: The referring provider may allow for an appointment outside of the timely access requirements if it will not be harmful to the patient's health. These instances must be documented in the patient's chart and communicated to the patient.*

## Contact Us

If you have any questions, please contact us.

We can be reached via phone, email, mail, or in person.

Ventura County Health Care Plan (VCHCP)  
2220 E. Gonzales Rd, Suite 210-B  
Oxnard, CA 93036  
Phone: (805) 981-5050  
Email: [vhcp.memberservices@ventura.org](mailto:vhcp.memberservices@ventura.org)

You can review member documents, contracted providers and pharmacies, as well as information on services like Teladoc, Nurse Advice Line, and AbleTo (a behavioral health app offered by Optum Health), and much more by visiting the member page on our website at <https://www.vchealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx> or via the following QR Code:



9/30/2024

# DIRECT REFERRAL CHART

The “Referred By” column indicates who can directly refer to the listed specialty/services.

	<b>REFERRED BY</b>	<b>SPECIALTY</b>	<b>SERVICES</b>
1	PCP	Allergy	All allergy services
2	PCP, ER, Urgent Care	Cardiology	Office Procedure: EKG, Ziopatch (with Irythm), Ziopatch (interpretation by Cardiologist), Pacemaker monitoring.  Facilities Treatment (i.e., VCMC Clinic): Exercise stress echo, echocardiogram, doppler echo, trans-thoracic echo, doppler echo (pulse wave used in conjunction with doppler echo, exercise stress test (not thallium), stress tests (all kinds) for chest pain, Holter monitor for arrhythmias, 2D-echo with Doppler for CHF, troponin test
3	PCP	Dermatology	Office Procedures: destruction of lesions by any method and repair, biopsy and excision of lesions and repair, Moh’s procedures except when plastic surgery is required for closure.
4	PCP	Endocrinology	Office Procedure: Thyroid FNA biopsy; Diabetes Medical Services at Las Islas Family Medical Group such as Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT), Group Education Counseling. –and Diabetes Outpatient Self-Management Training,
5	PCP	ENT	Office or Facilities Treatment: oronasal endoscopy, laryngoscopy Office Procedures: removal of cerumen, nasal endoscopy, use of binocular microscope, nasopharyngoscopy, removal of foreign body from EAC, excision of lesion vestibule of mouth without repair, biopsy of anterior tongue, biopsy of lip, excision of tongue lesion without closure, biopsy of floor of mouth, biopsy of oropharynx, I&D of peritonsillar abscess, control of nasal hemorrhage, anterior, simple fine needle aspiration of thyroid without image guidance, thyroid core biopsy, adult tympanostomy tube placement under local anesthesia; audiometry testing; tympanometry.
6	PCP	Gastroenterology	Facilities Procedure: Colonoscopy Screening and diagnostic colonoscopy; upper GI endoscopy, monitored anesthesia care (MAC) for colonoscopy and upper GI endoscopy only
7	PCP	General Surgery	Office Procedures: needle biopsy, excision of lesions (non-cosmetic)
8	PCP	Hematology-Oncology	CBC & Ferritin laboratory services
9	PCP, Neurosurgery, Orthopedics	Neurology	Office Procedures: EMG-NCV, EEG
10	PCP	Neurosurgery	Office Procedures: EMG-NCV, EEG
11	PCP	Obstetrics/ Gynecology	Office Procedures: Colposcopy and biopsy, endometrial biopsy, insertion and removal of IUDs for contraception, insertion of mirena for control of menorrhagia or endometrial hyperplasia, vulvar biopsy, insertion of nexplanon.
12	PCP	Ophthalmology	Office Procedures: medical examination and evaluation/treatment, visual field examination, ophthalmic diagnostic imaging, ophthalmic biometry, glaucoma testing, ophthalmoscopy, fluorescein angiography and fundus photography with interpretation and report, diabetic retinal screening.
13	PCP	Oral & Maxillofacial	Orthopantogram (panoramic x-ray)
14	PCP, ER, Urgent Care, Neurology, Neurosurgery, Pain Management, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	Orthopedics	Office Procedures: arthrocentesis, steroid injections, fracture care including fracture reduction, treatment of dislocations, casting and immobilization, administration of Hyaluronate derivative injections. Can dispense selected prefabricated orthotics.

	REFERRED BY	SPECIALTY	SERVICES
15	PCP, Neurology, Neurosurgery, Orthopedics, Pain Management, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	Pain Management and Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	Office Procedures: trigger point injections, joint aspiration/injection, carpal tunnel injection, nerve block, EMG-NCV, EEG, chemodenervation, facet injection, epidural injection, all with or without image guidance.
16	PCP	Plastic Surgery	Biopsies; Steroid injections for trigger finger, scar management and finger joint pathology
17	PCP	Podiatry	Office Procedures: Toenail/nail plate removal; trimming of toenails for diabetic patient; local nerve, tendon sheath and ligament injections of anesthetic and/or steroid; paring/cutting hyperkeratotic lesions; nail debridement; arthrocentesis, aspiration, and injection of joint/bursa.  Can dispense selected foot orthotics for diagnosis of diabetes
18	PCP	Pulmonology	Office Procedures: pulmonary function test, office spirometry, office oximetry.
19	PCP	Rheumatology	Office Procedures: joint aspiration/injection
20	PCP	Thoracic Surgery/Vascular Surgery	
21	PCP	Urology	Office Procedures: cystoscopy for hematuria, prostate ultrasound/biopsy, urethral dilations for stricture, bladder scan/ultrasound for post void residual.
22	PCP, Hand/Plastic Surgery, Neurosurgery, Neurology, Orthopedics, Pain Management, Podiatry, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Rheumatology	Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy	Initial evaluation and additional 7 visits up to a total of 8 visits. Effective 1/1/19, For PT providers, only: Additional 16 physical therapy visits beyond the initial eight (8) direct referral visits will <b>NO LONGER</b> require prior authorization. Requests for additional therapy beyond the 24 visits will require prior authorization with a submission of a TAR form including the initial therapy evaluation and treatment notes. Effective 1/1/19, For OT providers, only: Additional 16 occupational therapy visits beyond the initial eight (8) direct referral visits will <b>NO LONGER</b> require prior authorization. Requests for additional therapy beyond the 24 visits will require