

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Referrals for Outside Healthcare Services

Policy Number: 507.04.11

Effective Date: 7/28/2020

Page Number: 1 of 4

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Health Services Division
(Physical Health)

Access Listing:
Level I: All Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

The primary care provider will make a referral for a subspecialty consultation, diagnostic test or therapeutic intervention only after in-house resources have been exhausted without reaching a satisfactory resolution. This procedure is applicable to all facilities that house Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) offenders to include private and county prisons.

II. Authority:

- A. Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 125-4-4-.04 (2);
- B. GDC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): 507.04.13 Continuity of Care for Ambulatory Services, 507.04.10 Consultations and Procedures, and 507.04.09 Hospital & Specialized Ambulatory Services;
- C. NCCHC Adult Standards: P-D-05 and P-E-08;
- D. NCCHC Juvenile Standards: Y-D-05 and Y-E-0844;
- E. ACA Standards: 5-ACI-6A-04 (ref. 4-4347), 5-ACI-6A-05 (ref. 4-4348), 5-ACI-6D-06 (ref. 4-4414), 4-ALDF-4C-04 and 4-ALDF-4C-05.

III. Definitions:

Referral Services - A sub-specialty, diagnostic test or therapeutic intervention (non-hospitalization) provided on-site or outside of GDC facilities. These services are typically office visits, diagnostic tests, medical evaluations or therapeutic interventions that are not available within a GDC facility or if available, cannot be obtained within a defined time period. Outpatient referrals include subspecialty consults, physical therapy, prosthetics, diagnostic tests or specialized medical care.

IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedure:

A. Identifying the Need for Referral Services:

1. The responsible physician will determine the need for referral for medical

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Referrals for Outside Healthcare Services

Policy Number: 507.04.11

Effective Date: 7/28/2020

Page Number: 2 of 4

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Health Services Division
(Physical Health)

Access Listing:
Level I: All Access

services.

2. Determination of need for an outside referral requires an evaluation of the offender, including:
 - a. Interpretation of subjective complaints;
 - b. Physical examination of the appropriate anatomical area or functional system;
 - c. Diagnostic testing to the highest level available within the facility as indicated; and
 - d. An assessment that documents the need for an outside referral based on subjective and objective findings.
3. The assessment that an outside referral is indicated will follow the GDC Summary of Healthcare Benefits.

B. The goals of the Constitutional Healthcare delivery system are:

1. Support health maintenance;
2. Preserve an adequate level of function;
3. Prevent disease and disability;
4. Prevent deterioration; and
5. Provide relief from pain and suffering.

C. Eligible healthcare services include:

1. Medically necessary;
2. Ordered by a clinician;

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Referrals for Outside Healthcare Services

Policy Number: 507.04.11

Effective Date: 7/28/2020

Page Number: 3 of 4

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Health Services Division
(Physical Health)

Access Listing:
Level I: All Access

3. Within the framework of Constitutional Healthcare;
4. Diagnostic evaluations and procedures; and
5. Procedures and treatment of potential/actual communicable disease.

D. Seeking Referrals Within the GDC Provider Network:

1. Every reasonable attempt will be made to identify a subspecialty physician or service provider available within the GDC Provider Network.
2. If the indicated sub-specialist or medical service is not within the GDC network or cannot be obtained in a defined period of time, the health care provider may then seek referral outside the GDC.
3. The facility will have access and use the list of contracted providers unless the service or referral must be obtained on an emergency basis in accordance with SOP 507.04.09, Hospital and Specialized Ambulatory Care.
4. Vendor initiated contracts with community providers or medical service agencies will contain up-to-date information about the cost of services and billing must not exceed the contract cost listed.

E. Accepted Time Frames for Subspecialty Referrals or Medical Services:

1. The GDC Medical Director will determine the acceptable time frames for non-urgent or emergent referrals, including but not limited to the listing as described in the Medical Records Manual. The Contract Vendor will ensure that subspecialty referrals will be completed within the accepted time frame defined by the GDC Medical Director.
2. The Responsible Health Authority in each facility will review all consults and referrals once each month to determine how long it has been since the referral was requested. This review will also determine whether or not a date has been

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Referrals for Outside Healthcare Services

Policy Number: 507.04.11

Effective Date: 7/28/2020

Page Number: 4 of 4

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Health Services Division
(Physical Health)

Access Listing:
Level I: All Access

set for the referral and if a date has been set, whether the referral is still scheduled.

3. If the offender's condition has changed or there has been some deterioration in function, the health care provider will need to assess whether more urgent attention is indicated.

V. **Attachments:** None.

VI. **Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:** None.