Navigating the HealthCare System

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Objectives

1. Describe the role of a Primary Care Physician and how to schedule an appointment
2. Learn how to arrange transportation to medical appointments
3. Investigate options for medication management and prescription assistance
4. Comprehend use of patient portal for communicating with medical providers
PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN
What does a Primary Care Physician Do?

- A primary care physician practices general healthcare, addressing a wide variety of health concerns for patients. They are typically the first person you talk to if you have a health concern. You might turn to them for:
  - Preventive care
  - Treatment of common illnesses
  - Early detection of illnesses or conditions
  - Management of chronic conditions
  - A referral to a medical specialist
  - Prescription refills
When to Contact PCP vs. Specialist

- **A Primary Care Physician** is your first point of contact in the health care system. They are trained to be able to diagnose a wide variety of medical conditions. They’re also the person you call when you are feeling ill. They can track your health over time and refer you to specialists. Contact your PCP with general health concerns.

- **Specialists** are doctors who have advanced training in a specific area of healthcare. For example, your physiatrist is a physician with advanced training in pain management and physical rehabilitation medicine. Contact a specialist for specific concerns relating to their area of expertise.
  
  - For example, contact your physiatrist with questions relating to therapy, musculoskeletal issues, pain management, mobility, and more.
Locating a PCP

- If you have a Medicaid Managed Care Plan you are assigned a primary care provider.
- This information can be found on the front of your insurance card.
- If you want to change your assigned primary care provider, call your insurance company’s member services number. This is found on the back of your card.
Locating a PCP

You can also find and schedule with a PCP on your own. A few major medical institutions in Chicago include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Northwestern</th>
<th>UI Health</th>
<th>RUSH</th>
<th>U of C</th>
<th>Loyola</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you'd like to establish care with a PCP within the Northwestern network, please call 312-926-8400.</td>
<td>If you'd like to establish care with a PCP within the UI Health network, please call 312-355-1700.</td>
<td>If you'd like to establish care with a PCP within the Rush network, please call 888-352-7874.</td>
<td>If you'd like to establish care with a PCP within the UofC network, please call 888-824-0200.</td>
<td>If you'd like to establish care with a PCP within the Loyola network, please call (888) 584-7888.</td>
<td>Alternately, you can establish care with anyone you choose in your community.</td>
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MAKING MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS
Making Medical Appointments

To make an appointment with your PCP or any specialist, you will call the office to make an appointment.

When making your appointment, have your ID, your insurance card, and your calendar with you.

Once you made an appointment if you need to cancel or reschedule, be sure to do it as soon as possible as some offices charge a fee for “no show”

Zoc Doc: Zocdoc can be a helpful website to locate in-network providers and make appointments online.
TRANSPORTATION
Transportation Options

• Within the city of Chicago and suburbs there are many options for transportation to and from medical appointments

• Options include:
  • CTA and Metra Public Transit
  • PACE Paratransit
  • Medicaid Managed Care Transportation Services
  • Taxi/WAV Taxi
  • Private Rides
CTA/PACE/Metra
Public Transit

• CTA/PACE/Metra
  • Chicagoland public transportation provides a high degree of accessibility to persons with disabilities
  • The RTA offers a training program for those who wish to learn how to ride the transit system
  • People with disabilities who use service animals are allowed to board with their service animals
  • Ventra App helpful for real-time arrivals for CTA buses, Metra ticket purchases
CTA / Metra / PACE Public Transit

• Reduced Fare and Ride Free Permits

  • Seniors
    • If you are 65 years or older and not enrolled in the Illinois Department on Aging's Benefit Access program, you are eligible for a reduced fare permit.
    • Apply in person, call 312-913-3110, or by mail
    • Visit RTAchicago.org

  • Persons with Disabilities
    • All persons with a qualifying disability who are not enrolled in the Illinois Department on Aging’s Benefit Access program are eligible for reduced fare permit.
    • To qualify, individuals must complete an application and submit proof of disability. If receiving disability payments from Social Security, a printout from Social Security dated this year with the word "disabled" is required.
    • If not receiving disability payments from Social Security, a doctor must attach a letter of diagnosis and must also fill out the proof of disability form located within the application.
**APPLICATION: RIDE FREE PERMIT**

All Applicants must complete this page:

- **Status (check one):**
  - New applicant
  - Renewal - Card
  - Replacement - Card
  - New or Replacement - Card (begins with a 0 or 1 on your card)

Applying for (check one):
- Free Fare Permit (I am enrolled in the Benefit Access Program)
- Reduced Fare Permit (I am not enrolled in the Benefit Access Program)

**PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY IN CAPITAL LETTERS AND COMPLETE ALL INFORMATION:**

- Legal Name: FIRST
- MIDDLE
- LAST
- (Suffix)
- Email Address:
- Mailing Address: (Include all information required for mail delivery)
- STREET ADDRESS or PO BOX:
- APARTMENT:
- CITY:
- STATE:
- ZIP CODE:
- Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy):
- Telephone:
- Fax:

Be sure to include all of the following items:
- 2” by 2” color photo (clearly shows face)
- Proof of disability (for persons with Disabilities Reduced Fare Permit)
- Clear copy of both sides of current government-issued ID card
- If applying for ride free, please include a copy of your Benefit Access eligibility certificate

Sample: Front side of one of the following: Driver’s License, Resident’s State issued ID, Chicago or other U.S. government-issued ID card, or any other official government

**TO BE COMPLETED BY A LICENSED MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL**

Only applicants applying for a Persons with Disabilities Reduced Fare permit, using a doctor’s statement as proof of disability, must complete this page:

- Applicant is eligible for a Reduced Fare Permit if one of the following criteria listed below applies:
  - A physical disability, including but not limited to: respiratory, cardiac, or neurological disabilities
  - A person receiving disabilty, living with AIDS, MS or a chronic progressive debilitating disease
  - A disability that affects mobility, including but not limited to: being non-ambulatory, using a mobility aid, have arthritis or amputation
  - A person who is blind or visually impaired
  - A person who is deaf or has a hearing disability (Audiological approval only)

**ATTENTION MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS:** If applicant meets the eligibility criteria, please attach a statement on your professional letterhead or prescription form (please type or print) noting the diagnosis of the applicant and describing in detail why they meet the eligibility criteria. Photocopies and form letters are not acceptable. This statement is required in order to process this application.

- Physician
- Psychiatrist
- Optometrist
- Audiologist
- Psychologist
- Physician Assistant
- Nurse Practitioner
- Ophthalmologist

Please print legibly in capital letters and complete all information:

- **FIRST NAME:**
- **LAST NAME:**
- **BUSINESS ADDRESS:**
- **CITY:**
- **STATE:**
- **ZIP CODE:**
- **PATIENT’S NAME (FIRST):**
- **PATIENT’S D.O.B.:**
- **LAST:**
- Write your license number:

This number will be verified by your State Department of Professional Regulation. Please note temporary numbers are not accepted. Information further protected under Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 1972. Any individual who discloses information on this form may be subject to penalties for violation, upon request, repor or other disclosures. The Patient is hereby notified that if this form contains protected information, (I) under the right to inspect the form held by the professional or (2) information held by the RITA Reduced Fare Permit and (3) have an applicant state and a social security number which are medical professionals hold by the RITA.

Encyclopedia at the back of this knowledge the information on this application form is true and correct.
PACE Para-Transit Services

• ADA Paratransit Service is provided for riders whose disability or health prevents them from using the CTA or fixed route services for travel. Para-Transit is an application-based program.

• Types of Eligibility – There are 3 types of eligibility which you will be evaluated for:
  
  • **Unconditional Eligibility** - Your disability/health condition always prevents you from using the fixed route buses/elevated trains and you qualify for Paratransit service for all of your trips.
  
  • **Conditional Eligibility** - You are able to use the fixed route buses or elevated trains for some of your trips, but qualify for Paratransit service for other trips when your disability or environmental barriers prevent the use of fixed route transit service.
  
  • **Temporary Eligibility** - You have a health condition or disability that temporarily prevents you from using the fixed route buses or elevated trains.
PACE Para-Transit Services

To apply:

1. To initiate the application process, call the RTA's ADA Paratransit Certification program at 312-663-HELP (4357 voice) to request an application between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

2. Once you have filled out as much of the application as you can, call RTA's ADA Paratransit Certification program at 312-663-HELP (4357 voice) to schedule an in-person interview. If needed, you can request Paratransit to provide transportation to the interview.

3. On your interview day, bring the application and a photo ID with you to the appointment. During the interview, Paratransit staff will review your application form and/or help you complete it. The staff will also discuss your travel abilities and limitations in more detail. You may be asked to take a "mock" bus trip. This will take about 30 to 45 minutes. It can give the evaluator a better idea of your travel abilities and limitations. Please dress for the weather.

4. The Paratransit Service Office will notify you by letter within 21 days of the completion of the interview and assessment. If you are determined to be eligible for ADA Paratransit service for some or all of your trips, you will receive a Certification Letter, a Customer Guide with information about how to use the service and a photo ID card.
Medicaid Managed Care Plans

- If you have a Medicaid Managed Care Plan you have access to transportation services through your insurance provider.
- In order to access this service, you must contact your insurance provider.
- Some insurance companies require forms to be completed by your medical team in order to verify your need for transportation.
  - Should this be requested, notify your outpatient team as soon as possible to complete.
  - These forms may include a “Standing Order for Transportation”, “Certification of Transportation Services”, or “Physician Certification.”
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insurance Company</th>
<th>Transportation Service</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</table>
| County Care or IL Medicaid| First Transit 1-877-725-0569| • Must schedule ride 72 hours in advance of your appointment  
• Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm  
• Transport available on weekends and holidays |
| Aetna Better Health       | Member Services 1-866-600-2139 | • Must schedule ride 72 hours in advance of appointment  
• Monday- Saturday 8am-6pm  
• Transport available on weekends and holidays |
| Blue Cross Community      | Logisticare 1-877-831-3148  | • Must schedule ride 72 hours in advance of your appointment  
• Monday – Friday 8am – 8pm  
• Transport available on weekends and holidays |
| Meridian                  | Member Services 1-866-796-1165 | • Must schedule ride 72 hours in advance of your appointment  
• Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm  
• Transport available on weekends and holidays |
| Molina                    | Member Services 1-844-644-6354 | • Must schedule ride 72 hours in advance of your appointment  
• Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm  
• Transport available on weekends and holidays |
Accessible Taxi Services

• Many taxi companies provide transportation services for those needing accessible taxis. This service is usually private pay.

• You can call Curb Taxis at 888-928-2227 or use Curb app for central dispatch for all taxi companies and ask for an accessible/WAV taxi.

• Wait times will vary.

• In addition to confirming that they have accessible vehicles, you should specify what accommodations you will need, such as a ramp, wheelchair fasteners and safety belts.
Medication Refills

- It is extremely important to stay up to date on your medications and watch for when refills are due.

- When it is time for a refill, contact your doctor to send an updated prescription to your pharmacy. **Do this about 7 days before you run out!** This also gives your medical team time to get insurance authorization if needed.

- If taking multiple medications, use of a pill box can be helpful for organization and help you realize when refills are due.
Medication Assistance Programs

If your insurance does not cover a medication, these resources might be helpful:

- **Needy Meds**
  
  - Search by medication for patient assistance programs, coupons and generic assistance programs. Usually there is an application for patient assistance programs that will give low cost or no cost to patient. This will take some time to apply and receive meds, thus start sooner than later: [http://www.needymeds.org/](http://www.needymeds.org/)

- **Good Rx**
  
  - Searches by medication to find nearby pharmacies with discounted coupons or programs: [http://www.goodrx.com/](http://www.goodrx.com/)

- **Walmart**
  
  - $4 Generic medications. Talk to your pharmacist or doctor about changing to medications on this list to save money. List of medications can be printed at: [https://www.walmart.com/cp/1078664](https://www.walmart.com/cp/1078664)

- **Meijer**
  
  - The Meijer pharmacy helps lower your health care costs with select free prescriptions. The following are free with your doctor's prescription, regardless of insurance or co-pay: Antibiotics, Diabetic medication and prenatal medications: [https://www.meijer.com/services/pharmacy/free-prescriptions.html](https://www.meijer.com/services/pharmacy/free-prescriptions.html)

- **Community Clinics**
  
  - Research community clinics in your area- these often provide low cost or no cost meds or contacting the public health department in your County.
PATIENT PORTAL
Patient Portal

• The Patient Portal is a tool that can be accessed via your computer or phone
• It is an online way to stay up to date on your health information
• At Shirley Ryan Ability Lab, all patients who are 18 years of age or older and do not currently have access to the portal can visit https://ric.iqhealth.com/self-enroll/ to enroll.
# How to Use the Patient Portal

## Health Record
Here you can update your allergies, medications, and current health problems.
You can also view test results and clinical MD notes.

## Messaging
On the portal you can securely message your medical team or request a prescription refill.

## Appointments
In the portal you can view all your scheduled and previous appointments.

## Consent Forms
Lastly you can view and download any consent forms you have completed.
Examples of Using the Portal

QUESTIONS?

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