



Sanchar Nigam Pensioners' Welfare Association

Reg. No: SOCIETY/WEST/2021/8902564

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SNPWA/ CHQ/ DG CGHS/3/24

Dated 16th Aug, 24

To

Madame Roli Singh,
DG CGHS, New Delhi

Subject: Revised CGHS Referral Process as per Office Memorandum No. Z 15025/19/2024/DIR/CGHS/EHS (Comp No.8281286) I/3687286/2024, dated 28.06.2024- Clarifications thereof

Respected Madame

While we wholeheartedly appreciate and welcome the aforementioned Office Memorandum (OM), several ambiguities require immediate clarification to ensure that the intended benefits reach the beneficiaries effectively, smoothly, without any hiccups.

1. Consultations with Specialists:

During the three-month validity period, beneficiaries are permitted to consult a maximum of six specialists, **if recommended by the primary specialist**. However, it is unclear how many times the primary specialist may refer a patient to a specialist. Moreover, it seems impractical that a patient would consult the same specialist six times within three months. This limitation may ultimately undermine the benefits intended for the beneficiaries.

2. Requirement for Specialist Referrals:

To consult another specialist within the three-month period, a referral from the primary specialist is required. This means that beneficiaries cannot directly consult a specialist such as a cardiologist, neurologist, or nephrologist without a prior referral. In urgent cases, this requirement could lead to increased consultation fees and delays, as the HCOs will charge for both the primary specialist's and the subsequent specialist's consultations.

3. Definition of "Primary Specialist":

It is unclear whether all general OPD doctors are considered primary specialists for the purpose of this OM. The term **primary specialist** needs a clear definition to avoid confusion.

4. Interpretation by Healthcare Organizations (HCOs):

There is a concern that HCOs may interpret the guidelines in their own way and may not adhere to the intended provisions, even if beneficiaries present the circular. This could lead to inconsistencies in the implementation of the policy.

5. Exemption for Septuagenarians and Above:

While beneficiaries aged 70 and above are exempt from obtaining referral letters for consulting doctors in hospitals, the OM states that **other conditions mentioned in the OM dated 29.05.2019 shall remain unchanged.** This includes the requirement for a referral to undergo diagnostic investigations. This limits the benefit for this age group, who should be allowed to undergo routine investigations costing up to ₹3,000 without needing another referral, similar to other beneficiaries.

6. Contradiction in Points 2 and 8:

There appears to be a contradiction or potential discrimination between points 2 and 8 of the OM, which needs to be addressed.

To ensure that these guidelines provide real relief to the beneficiaries, we urge you to consider the following modifications to the OM:

1. Routine Investigations for Beneficiaries Aged 70 and Above:

All beneficiaries aged 70 and above should be permitted to undergo routine investigations costing up to ₹3,000 if advised by consulting doctors, along with doctor consultation, without a referral from WC.

2. Simplified Referral Process:

The phrase "if recommended by a primary specialist" should be removed. All beneficiaries should be allowed to consult a primary doctor or specialist of their choice in a panel hospital up to six times within the three-month period with a single referral letter.

We hope these concerns will receive your immediate attention. Additionally, we request that you oversee the software upgrade to ensure that beneficiaries can fully benefit from these reforms without further delay.

Warm Regards
Sincerely yours



G. L. Jogi
General Secretary

Copy to

1. Dr Sateesh Y.H., Director/ CGHS, for immediate n/ a please.
2. Dr Manshi Kumar, Joint Secretary, MOH& FW, for immediate n/ a please.
3. ADDG HQs, for n/ a please.