

## after hours / telephone care



*Children's Medical Group, S.C.*

Children's Medical Group is committed to providing our patients and families access to quality medical care every day and every hour of the day. Telephone care is just one way that we meet this commitment.

Telephone Care is the delivery of meaningful medical care over the telephone and often may replace and prevent an office visit. It includes physician management or consultation related to immediate medical needs, adjustment of medications, treatment of chronic illness or assistance with normal growth, development and behavioral concerns.

Telephone care can be delivered during or after regular office hours by any one of our physicians. It involves physician time, expertise and documentation of the medical care delivered and is therefore recognized as patient care. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) supports charging for telephone care under specific, well-defined circumstances.

Children's Medical Group will bill your health plan for specific types of phone calls between you and a physician. You may be responsible for all or part of this fee depending on your individual health plan coverage. While there is no legal mandate requiring insurance carriers to adhere to AAP recommendations, it is considered a 'good faith' gesture for them to do so, given that these guidelines and recommendations are the current standard within organized medicine. The specific circumstances for which you may be billed for telephone care are as follows:

- 1) *Calls for physician management of a new problem, including counseling, medical management, and coordination of care not resulting in an office visit within 24 hours*
- 2) *Calls for physician management about an existing problem for which the patient was not seen in a face-to-face encounter in the previous 7 days and will not result in a visit within 24 hours*
- 3) *Calls related to care plan oversight for patients with special needs in residential settings and/or those with a chronic disease who require physician supervision over a period of time during a calendar month*

Rest assured we will continue to provide the services of our office-hours nurse telephone line at no cost. We also provide answers to the most commonly asked questions on our website at [www.childrensmedicalhome.com](http://www.childrensmedicalhome.com) and in our informational handouts you may receive during your office visits. And of course, you are welcome to call for an office appointment for your child to be seen in person at any time during our business hours. You always have the option to make an office appointment rather than receiving telephone care.

We hope you appreciate the convenience of telephone care and the professional expertise required to safely deliver this care. Our primary goal is to provide excellent pediatric care, and we believe this option gives us the flexibility to do just that. We look forward to continuing our relationship with you and your family, both in person and on the telephone.