

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: MEDICAL CLINIC

1. How do I **indicate I'm ready for a new patient**?

General rule of thumb, if the door is open you are ready for a new patient, if it's closed you're not. However, it's always helpful to communicate with the person who is monitoring the waiting area. Open the door and step out to say you're ready for the next patient. If the waiting area monitor is not available, invite the person in the first position of the line for your service area into your suite. Remember to lock your door and put the door hanger on the outside when you leave on break, head to lunch or are done for the day so we know that suite is not in operation.

2. What does it mean if I have a **teal "Patient Waiting with Results" door hanger**?

It means a patient you saw earlier in the day has returned with results from lab or diagnostic imaging. See the waiting area monitor to find the patient and admit them prior to taking a new patient.

3. How do I **call for a consult or request an in-suite service, including interpretation**?

Tell the person who is monitoring the waiting area, or someone with a radio, what you need and s/he will make the request. Please remember that there may be a high demand for services and response time may not be immediate.

If interpretation is needed and will involve medical descriptions, it is recommended that you request an InDemand Interpreting unit to speak with medically certified interpreters rather than onsite volunteers. Please return the InDemand Interpreting unit after use and DO NOT keep it in your suite.

4. How can I **issue a prescription** if I don't have my own prescription pad?

Go to Medical Exit to check out a prescription pad. Follow the instructions on the envelope and be sure to return it to Medical Exit at the end of the day, even if you plan to return on a subsequent day. Please do not pre-sign the entire prescription pad, sign each prescription as it is issued. It is Clinic policy NOT to prescribe narcotics or write new prescriptions for behavioral health medications. Remember, many patients are low income and may struggle to afford medications. Talk to them about what medication coverage they may have. When possible, please prescribe generic medications that are more likely to be in discount prescription programs at local pharmacies. Review the DISCOUNT MEDICATION INFORMATION sheet in the medical suite binders for further recommendations.

5. How can I **refer a patient for follow-up care or resource information**?

Complete the appropriate side of the REFERRAL FORM available in the suite. Give the form to the patient. Encourage them to visit the onsite resource areas that can assist them in pursuing your recommendations during their time at SKCC. If you would like to see the patient in your own practice, notify the Medical Exit Lead and they will arrange a direct referral of the patient to your practice. If you feel the need for follow-up care is an emergency, contact one of the Medical or Primary Care Directors to discuss what referrals might be possible.

6. What if I think the patient needs to be seen for **continued care on another day at Seattle/King County Clinic?**

Clinic policy is that if a patient received service(s) and wants additional service(s) on another day, they must wait in line again to get a ticket. Usually patients are only authorized to return for care (and skip the ticket line) if they were admitted and registered at the Clinic but did not receive ANY service, or a service was started and not able to be completed in the time available (i.e. lab work was ordered as part of a physical exam and was not completed). If a provider feels it's important a patient return for continued care, they must consult with the Medical or Primary Care Director for authorization. Without the appropriate return for care authorization or ticket, a patient will not be admitted to the Clinic on a subsequent day.

7. What if **patients need food or water?**

Water bottles are available at Medical Exit for patients and volunteers. Cups are also available in the suites and tap water is safe to drink. Snacks specifically selected for patients to provide sustaining nutritional value and to not detrimentally impact blood glucose are available at the snack stands on the main concourse by Medical Triage and Vision Triage. Patients may temporarily have their place in line held to go get a snack or someone may go and get a snack on their behalf. Please do not take food from volunteer areas to distribute to patients.

8. What goes in the **red biohazard bag?**

Medical waste and potentially infectious material including:

- Visibly bloody gloves, plastic tubing, or personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Gauze, bandages or other items saturated with blood
- Surgery tissue also known as pathological wastes
- Surgical wastes (e.g., soiled dressings, sponges, drapes, lavage tubes, drainage sets, underpads, and surgical gloves) that were in contact with infectious agents
- Cultures or stocks of any virus, bacterium or other organism including discarded live attenuated vaccines and the items used to transfer, inoculate or mix cultures
- Laboratory wastes that have been in contact with infectious wastes, including gloves, coats and aprons

These DON'T go in the biohazard red bag:

- Medications
- Loose sharps (they go in sharps containers)
- Fixatives and preservatives
- Non-biohazardous medical waste
- Other trash