

Important Information about Medical Care if you have a Work-Related Injury or Illness

Initial Written Employee Notification Re: Medical Provider Network (Title 8, California Code of Regulations, section 9767.12)

California law requires your employer to provide and pay for medical treatment if you are injured at work. Stockton Unified School District (SUSD) has chosen to provide this medical care by using a Workers' Compensation physician network called a Medical Provider Network (MPN). This MPN is administered by San Joaquin MPN (SJMPN). The SUSD workers' compensation administrator is JT2 Integrated Resources. This notification tells you what you need to know about the MPN program and describes your rights in choosing medical care for work-related injuries and illnesses.

• What is an MPN?

A Medical Provider Network (MPN) is a group of health care providers (physicians and other medical providers) used by SUSD to treat workers injured on the job. Each MPN must include a mix of doctors specializing in work-related injuries and doctors with expertise in general areas of medicine.

MPNs must allow employees a choice of provider(s) in the network.

• How do I find out which doctors are in my MPN?

The contact for your MPN is: Karen Cravens, Claims Management Coordinator
55 South Madison St.
Stockton, CA 95203
(209) 933-7110, x2556
(800) 719-4833
kcravens@stockton.k12.ca.us

The MPN Contact listed in this notification will be able to answer questions about the MPN and provide you a complete listing of all doctors in the SJMPN. You may also obtain a complete listing of all doctors in the SJMPN at: www.stockton.k12.ca.us. Click on Departments; then Risk Management; then Workers' Compensation. From there, click Medical Provider Network.

• What happens if I get injured at work?

In case of an emergency, you should call 911 or go to the closest emergency room.

If you are injured at work, notify the MPN Contact or your supervisor as soon as possible. The MPN Contact or your supervisor will provide you with a DWC claim form. When you notify SUSD that you have had a work-related injury, the MPN Contact or your supervisor will make an initial appointment with a doctor in the MPN.

• How do I choose a provider?

After the first visit, you may continue to be treated by this doctor, or you may choose another doctor in the SJMPN. You may continue to choose doctors within SJMPN for all of your medical care for this injury. If appropriate, you may choose a specialist or ask your treating doctor for a referral to a specialist. If you need help in choosing a doctor, you may call the MPN Contact listed above.

- **Can I change providers?**

Yes. You can change providers within the MPN for any reason, but the providers you choose must be appropriate to treat your injury.

- **What standards does the MPN have to meet?**

SJMPN has providers in the following California counties: Sacramento, San Joaquin and Stanislaus.

The MPN must give you a regional list of providers that includes at least three physicians in each specialty commonly used to treat work-related injuries and illnesses in your industry. The MPN must provide access to primary physicians within 15 miles and specialists within 30 miles. If you live in a rural area there may be a different standard.

The MPN must provide initial treatment within 3 days. You must receive specialist treatment within 20 days of your request. If you have trouble getting an appointment, call the MPN Contact.

- **What if there are no MPN providers where I am located?**

If you are temporarily working or living outside the MPN service area or in a rural area, you may seek emergency treatment from any medical service or hospital provider equipped and able to provide treatment nearest to where the injury occurs, whether or not the provider is contracted with SJMPN. For non-emergency treatment outside the MPN service area, the Claims Administrator will give you a list of at least three physicians who can treat your condition and who are located within the access standards defined above. When you return to your regular worksite or residence, your care will be transferred to a medically and geographically appropriate provider(s) in SJMPN.

If you are in a situation where a particular specialist is not available in your area, please call the MPN Contact. In this case, you may be allowed to see a specialist outside of SJMPN. The MPN Contact will provide you assistance in finding a physician and providing additional information as needed.

- **What if I need a specialist not in the MPN?**

If your treating physician refers you to a type of specialist that is not available in the SJMPN, you have the right to see that type of specialist outside of the MPN.

- **What if I disagree with my doctor about medical treatment?**

If you disagree with your doctor or wish to change your doctor for any reason, you may choose another doctor within SJMPN.

If you disagree with either the *diagnosis or treatment* prescribed by your doctor, you may ask for a second opinion from another doctor within the MPN. If you want a second opinion, you must contact the MPN Contact and tell them you want a second opinion. The MPN Contact will give you a complete SJMPN provider list from which you can choose a second opinion doctor. To get a second opinion, you must choose a doctor from the MPN list and make an appointment within 60 days. You must tell the MPN Contact of your appointment date and the Claims Administrator will send the doctor a copy of your medical records. You also may request a copy of your medical records that will be sent to the second opinion doctor.

If you do not make an appointment within 60 days of receiving the SJMPN provider list, you will not be allowed to have a second or third opinion with regard to this disputed diagnosis or treatment of this treating physician.

If the second opinion doctor feels that your injury is outside of the type of injury he or she normally treats, the doctor's office will notify your employer or insurer. You will then be provided another list of SJMPN doctors or specialists so you can make another selection.

If you disagree with the second opinion, you may ask for a third opinion. If you request a third opinion, you will go through the same process you went through for the second opinion.

Remember that if you do not make an appointment within 60 days of obtaining another MPN provider list, then you will not be allowed to have a third opinion with regard to this disputed diagnosis or treatment of this treating physician.

If you disagree with the third opinion doctor, you may ask for an Independent Medical Review (IMR). The MPN Contact will give you information on requesting an Independent Medical Review and a form at the time you request a third opinion.

If either the second or third opinion doctor agrees with your need for a treatment or test, you will be allowed to receive that medical service from a provider inside the MPN, including the second or third opinion physician.

If the Independent Medical Reviewer supports your need for a treatment or test you may receive that care from a doctor inside or outside of the MPN.

• **What if I am already being treated for a work-related injury before the MPN begins?**

If your current treating doctor is a member of SJMPN, then you may continue to treat with this doctor and your treatment will be under SJMPN. If your current treating doctor is not a member of SJMPN, the SUSD “*Transfer of Care*” policy may allow you to continue being treated for an existing work-related injury by a physician outside of SJMPN for up to one year before your care is transferred into SJMPN.

If you have properly predesignated a primary treating physician, you cannot be transferred into SJMPN. If you have any questions about predesignation, call the MPN Contact.

If you meet certain conditions, you may qualify to continue treating with a non-MPN physician for up to a year before you are transferred into SJMPN. The qualifying conditions to postpone the transfer of your care into the MPN are described in the box below.

Can I Continue Being Treated By My Doctor?

You may qualify for continuing treatment with your non-MPN provider (through transfer of care or continuity of care) for up to a year if your injury or illness meets one of the following conditions:

- **(Acute)** The treatment for your injury or illness will be completed in less than 90 days;
- **(Serious or chronic)** Your injury or illness is one that is serious and continues for at least 90 days without full cure or worsens and requires ongoing treatment. You may be allowed to be treated by your current treating doctor for up to one year, until a safe transfer of care can be made.
- **(Terminal)** You have an incurable illness or irreversible condition that is likely to cause death within one year or less.
- **(Pending Surgery)** You already have a surgery or other procedure that has been authorized by your employer or insurer that will occur within 180 days of the MPN effective date, or the termination of contract date between the MPN and your doctor.

If you disagree with your employer's decision to transfer your care into SJMPN, you can ask your primary treating physician for a medical report on whether you have one of the four conditions stated above to qualify for a postponement of your transfer into SJMPN.

Your primary treating physician has 20 days from the date of your request to give you a copy of his/her report on your condition. If your primary treating physician does not give you the report within 20 days of your request, SUSD will transfer your care into SJMPN and you will be required to receive treatment from a SJMPN physician.

You will need to give a copy of your treating physician's report to the MPN Contact if you wish to postpone the transfer of your care. If you or your employer disagrees with your doctor's report on your condition, you or your employer can dispute it. See the complete transfer of care policy for more details on the dispute resolution process.

A copy of the entire Transfer of Care Policy may be obtained from the MPN Contact.

• What if I am being treated by a MPN doctor who decides to leave SJMPN?

The SUSD "*Continuity of Care*" policy may allow you to continue treatment for an existing work injury with your doctor if your doctor is no longer participating in the SJMPN.

If SUSD decides that you do not qualify for continuing your care with the non-SJMPN provider, you and your primary treating physician will receive a letter of notification.

If you meet certain conditions, you may qualify to continue treating with this doctor for up to one year before you must switch to a SJMPN physician. These conditions are set forth in the box above, "*Can I Continue Being Treated by My Doctor?*"

If you disagree with your employer's decision to deny further treatment with the non-SJMPN provider, you should ask your primary treating physician for a medical report on whether you have one of the four conditions stated in the box above to see if you qualify for continuing treatment with your current doctor.

Your primary treating physician has 20 days from the date of your request to give you a copy of his/her medical report on your condition. If your primary treating physician does not give you the report within 20 days of your request, SUSD will transfer your care into the SJMPN and you will be required to receive treatment from a SJMPN physician.

You will need to give a copy of the report to the MPN Contact if you wish to postpone the transfer of your care into SJMPN. If you or your employer disagrees with your doctor's report on your condition, you or your employer can dispute it. See the complete Continuity of Care policy for more details on the dispute resolution process.

A copy of the entire Continuity of Care policy may be obtained from the MPN Contact.

• **What if I have questions or need help?**

- **MPN Contact:** You may always contact the MPN Contact if you need help or an explanation about your medical treatment for your work-related injury or illness.

The contact for your MPN is: Karen Cravens, Workers' Compensation Coordinator
55 South Madison St.
Stockton, CA 95203
(209) 933-7110, x2556
(800) 719-4883
kcraven@stockton.k12.ca.us

- **Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC):** If you have concerns, complaints or questions regarding the MPN, the notification process, or your medical treatment after a work-related injury or illness, you can call DWC Information and Assistance at 1-800-736-7401. You can also go to the DWC website at www.dir.ca.gov/dwc and click on "medical provider networks" for more information about MPNs.

- **Independent Medical Review:** If you have questions about the Independent Medical Review process contact the Division of Workers' Compensation's Medical Unit at:

P.O. Box 71010
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 286-3700 or (800) 794-6900

Keep this information in case you have a work-related injury or illness.