AMBULANCE AND MEDICAL TRANSPORT

Policy

Ground Ambulance:

VCHCP covers ground ambulance transport in the following circumstances, subject to co-payments for certain Benefit Plans:

- To transport a person from the place where he/she is suddenly stricken by a disease or injury to the first hospital emergency room or hospital where treatment will be given. When patient circumstances permit, patient may be transported to a contracted hospital.

- To transport a patient from one hospital to another nearby hospital when the first hospital does not have the required services and/or facilities to treat the patient, when ordered by the Plan.

- To transport a patient from hospital to home, skilled nursing facility or nursing home when the patient cannot be safely or adequately transported in another way without endangering the individual’s health, whether or not such other transportation is actually available

- To transport a patient from home to hospital for medically necessary inpatient or outpatient treatment when a medical transport is required to safely and adequately transport the patient

Note: As a general rule, ground ambulance is covered only for transfer to the nearest facility (i.e., a hospital, a skilled nursing facility, a nursing home) which would ordinarily be expected to have the appropriate facilities for the treatment of the injury or illness involved. Coverage to the patient’s home requires prior Plan approval, and the home must be within the service area of the Plan. **Coverage of ground transportation requires prior Plan approval except in life threatening emergencies or when transportation follows a paramedic response to 911 call.**

**When transport is medically necessary, the Plan will provide the lowest level of transport appropriate for the condition of the member.**
Air and Water Ambulance:

**VCHCP covers air and water ambulance transport in the following circumstances, subject to co-payments for certain Benefit Plans:**

- Patient requires transport to a hospital or from one hospital to another because the first hospital does not have the required services and/or facilities to treat the patient; and

- Ground ambulance transportation is not medically appropriate because of the distance involved, or because the patient has an unstable condition requiring medical supervision and rapid transport

Note: Except in life threatening emergencies, coverage of Air and Water ambulance transport requires prior Plan approval.

**Non- Emergency Medical Transport:**

VCHCP covers non-emergency medical stretcher and wheelchair van transportation to and from medical facilities, private residences, nursing homes and retirement centers.

This transportation is provided by the Plan when deemed medically necessary and transportation cannot be safely provided by private means.

**PROCEDURE:**

Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) and retro TAR for ambulance transport will be submitted to the UR Department for review by the UR physician or Medical Director.

A. References:


A. Attachments: None

B. Reviewers: Sylvana Guidotti, MD, Richard Ashby, MD, QA Committee 07/02
Medical Policy: **Ambulance and Medical Transport**

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C. **Revised by:** Sheldon Haas, MD & David Chernof MD on 02-08-05; Albert Reeves, MD on 11/1/11, 2.16.12

**Reviewed/No Updates by:** Albert Reeves, MD on 01.28.13

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