Allen Family Medicine

Getting medical care can be expensive and confusing, can't it?

Dr. Tim and Dr. Nikki agree, and we want to do everything we can to keep you and your family healthy while providing the best medical care we can at reasonable prices. If we could do this for free, we would! However, we are also a business that needs to pay our employees, pay rent, pay utilities, and take care of our own family.

We areindependent because we want to do as much as we can to be transparent about costs while maintaining our primary value system – what is best for the patient - but we are not completely independent and do not have control over every issue. If you appreciate the care we give you, please help us continue to remain here!!

INSURANCE – We know many of you spend a good deal of money paying for your insurance coverage and still have a high deductible. Insurance companies are for-profit, so they are inherently motivated to make it as hard as possible for us to get paid for caring for you, as any unpaid money is profit for them. They also seem amazingly good at making information hard to get at times! We have tried VERY HARD to try to communicate with insurance companies and to update our information, but they are sometimes slow to update their own systems. You can help us by the following:

- PLEASE check with your insurance company to ensure we are covered so that you can be assured your insurance covers your visit here. You can do that by verifying they work with the Allen Family Medicine, SC Tax ID (39-2428376).
- PLEASE bring your insurance card to every visit. If we don't have the correct information, then we need to pay our coworkers to spend time looking it up.
- PLEASE notify us of any concerns that arise about billing issues, and please help

us to resolve any issues that require your help. For example, sometimes insurances will not pay for the visit until you fill out a form clarifying if the issue was related to an injury or until you clarify if you have other insurance.

- PLEASE remember that we offer cash prices! Insurance companies have contracts that require us to bill them if we know you have insurance, but for patients who do not have insurance or whose insurance does not cover us, cash prices can make your care reasonably priced. We have also negotiated lower prices for labs and imaging –ask us!!

BILLING – We ARE the billing department. If you have any questions or issues with the bills you are receiving from us, PLEASE let us know. We want to work with you to figure out how to make your health care affordable, and we understand that in the midst of the chaos of the world many of us are struggling to pay our monthly bills. The last thing we want is for anyone to have to choose between paying for food and shelter OR medical care. That said, if we don't get paid for the work we are doing we can't stay in business and won't be able to continue to care for you or your family.

VISITS – Our business depends on seeing patients. We also really LIKE seeing our patients, and we try to focus on addressing your concerns during the visit as completely as possible given the time constraints. There are only two of us, and we only have so many visit slots. Please understand that if you have an appointment and do not show up or you come late that means we are going to be paying our coworkers before we pay ourselves, we will not be getting paid for that time, and other patients are going to have to wait to be seen or are missing out on the opportunity to be seen sooner. We ask that you help us -

- PLEASE sign up for the Portal so you can get the automatic reminders of visits
- PLEASE be here on time for your visit (with your insurance card and ID!!)
- PLEASE call and let us know as soon as possible if you cannot make it to your appointment. We are not like the big health care companies who will charge you for all missed appointments, but if you continue to cancel less than 2 hours before your visit we will need to talk about whether or not this is the right clinic for you.

PHONE CALLS AND PORTAL MESSAGES – Life is busy, and in this high-tech world it is often so much easier to just send a message or make a call than to schedule an appointment. We get it!! At the same time, we are also busy trying to care for our patients and manage the ins and outs of running a business, so time spent addressing phone calls and portal messages is time that is not available for seeing patients. Please understand that we DO want to address your concerns, but we may not be able to do so as quickly as you would hope, and there are going to be times when doing a virtual visit would be a better option. These are currently still covered under most insurance companies, and they allow us to be reimbursed for the time spent addressing your concerns without the inconvenience of you having to come in for an in-person visit. If our co-workers ask if you would be willing to do a virtual visit, please consider saying yes!! This helps us ensure your issue gets addressed the same day and allows us to afford to stay here long term.

QUALITY METRICS – We want to be GREAT physicians, but the government and insurance companies grade the "goodness" of a doctor by how compliant their patients are, and they pay doctors who do not meet these metrics less than those who do. We value YOUR INDEPENDENCE and, unlike other health care organizations, will never withhold medical care until you complete the quality metrics. However, we are asking you to help us to meet these metrics by completing your labs (like for diabetes or cholesterol) on time and by coming in for your physical or Medicare Wellness Visit each year.

FEEDBACK OR SUGGESTIONS? We value each of you and welcome your feedback. If we are doing things right, we would love to hear that! If you have concerns about any of your interactions or care here, we would love to hear that, too! If you have ideas about how we might better meet your needs or the needs of others, please let us know.

THANK YOU FOR TRUSTING US WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE!!