Managing Medication:
The Role of a Nurse Coordinator

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Changes in clinic

- All outpatient appointments have been either rescheduled or moved to telehealth visits
- Appointments were transitioned to telehealth starting March 16
- In-person visits are assessed on a case-by-case basis
- Transitions from phone calls to electronic messaging such as a patient portal
Nurse Coordinator Role

• For the most part the same as prior to COVID-19
• Most working from home with limited access to the office
  • Secure login to hospital system remotely
  • Able to electronically send scripts to pharmacies
  • Secure patient portal communications with families
• Transitioning from in-person visits to telehealth visits
  • Instructing families how to do a telehealth visit
Medication refills

• Count the number of days you have left on the prescription
• Check with your pharmacy to see when the first day your insurance will allow the prescription to be filled again
• Check to see if you can get more than a 30-day supply
• Ask for the refill to be placed on automatic refill so that it is available as soon as the insurance allows it (this will also allow for a renewal request to come to the physician office sooner if it is needed)
• Get notification when the medications are ready for pick-up at the pharmacy
Medication refills

• Call your physician’s office at least 2 business days before you need the medication refill
  • Pharmacies are super busy right now
  • Medical staff working from home, delay in getting message request
  • Balancing own children at home and work responsibilities

• Alternative ways to get your refills
  • Use drive thru at the pharmacy
  • Home delivery
  • Switch to mail order
  • Ask a friend or neighbor (in advance) to help pick up medications
  • Some pharmacies are offering pay ahead on store apps so that it is contactless pickup
• Request a tracking number if possible
• Allow at least 4-5 days before the home supply is out
• Ask the pharmacy what is the fastest method of shipping that they can send the medication
• Contact the prescribing office to determine if there is another medication that a local pharmacy has that can help until med arrives
Specialty medications

• Does your medication require prior authorization (PA)?
  • Know your PA dates – when the approval starts and when it ends
  • Insurance company decisions or approval or denials are taking a little longer for responses
  • Notify the prescriber’s office on the day that the previous PA expires
  • Don’t wait for your pharmacy to initiate it – they will wait until the refill is due again; this might cause a delay in your medication and increase stress and anxiety
  • PA renewals can’t start until the previous one expires
Communicating with your clinic

- Gather your questions and group your request together if possible
- Use patient portal (online messaging) system for all non-urgent questions
- If a true emergency- same as prior to COVID-19, contact the office the way you normally would or call 911