

# Engagement and Outreach

Washington State Department of Corrections

## Information on Levels of Care

DOC's Chief Medical Officer keeps a list of health care services that fall into three categories called "Levels of Care." The list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but it is a guide to ensure more consistent healthcare decisions are made based on the evidence and experience collected by DOC.

### Level 1: Medically Necessary Care

Medically necessary care is defined by the Washington Administrative Code (WAC 137-91-010) and is listed on pages 6 and 7 of the DOC Health Plan.

- Medically necessary care meets one or more of the following for a patient:
  - Is essential to life or preservation of limb, OR
  - Reduces intractable pain, OR
  - Prevents significant deterioration of ADLs (Activities of Daily living), OR
  - Is of proven value to significantly reduce the risk of one of the three outcomes above (for example, certain immunizations), OR
  - Immediate intervention is not medically necessary, but delay of care would make future care or intervention for intractable pain or preservation of ADLs significantly more dangerous, complicated, or significantly less likely to succeed, OR
  - Reduces severe psychiatric symptoms to a degree that permits engagement in programming that advances correctional interests, OR
  - Is described as part of a Departmental policy or health care protocol or guideline and delivered according to such policy, protocol, or guideline, OR
  - From a public health perspective, is necessary for the health and safety of a community of individuals and is medically appropriate but may not be medically necessary for the individual (for example, treatment for head lice).

### Level 2: Medically Necessary Care under Certain Circumstances

Level 2 care is medically necessary under certain clinical circumstances as determined by the Care Review Committee, Chief Medical Officer or Facility Medical Director. For more information, see page 8 of the DOC Health Plan.

### Level 3: Not Medically Necessary. NOT Authorized to be Provided

Care that does not meet Level 1 or 2 criteria. For more information, see page 9 of the DOC Health Plan. Services in Level 3, even if medically appropriate, cannot be authorized by an individual practitioner. Incarcerated individuals may receive Level 3 health care under *DOC Policy 600.020 Offender Paid Health Care* at their own expense if certain conditions are met.

### For more information about DOC Health Services:

Send a kite to the health services unit at your facility with any questions or to request a copy of the DOC Health Plan or the Health Services Orientation Handbook.

Health Services – Information on Levels of Care

*This document will be reviewed yearly, current revision date 10/24*

600-GU015 (10/2024)