

A Contribution from Volunteers

STEP – BY -- STEP PROCEDURE

USE OF EMPANELLED HOSPITAL (EH) FACILITIES

NON-EMERGENCY CONDITION – ROUTINE / PLANNED REFERRAL

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A) References

- i) Various Policy Letters issued by CO ECHS, FAQ 2018 and SOP 2018
- ii) *This Comprehensive Procedure is developed using the above*
- iii) ***This Procedure has attempted to Answer Questions you may have about use of Empanelled Hospital facilities.***

B) Introduction

- i. ECHS Beneficiaries have an option for treatment in Empanelled Hospitals (EH). The treatment can be under a Routine (planned) Referral from Polyclinic. In a Medical Emergency, treatment will be available by directly reaching an Empanelled Hospital.
- ii. ***This Step – By -Step Procedure details treatment at an EH, under a Routine Referral from the Polyclinic.***

C) SECTIONS

SECTION NUMBERS	YOUR QUESTION?
1	<i>What is an Empanelled Hospital (EH)?</i>
2	<i>How to find EH near me?</i>
3	<i>How do I get a Referral from a Polyclinic?</i>
4	<i>What are Important features of a Referral that I should know?</i>
5	<i>What actions should I take after receiving the Referral?</i>
6	<i>How do I get approval for Extension of Stay in EH?</i>
7	<i>How do I get Approval for Unlisted Procedure in EH?</i>
8	<i>What should I do when being Discharged from EH ?</i>
9	<i>Can I go to an EH for OPD (only) without a Referral?</i>
10	<i>When can I get Follow-up Consultation / Investigation without Referral Revalidation?</i>
11	<i>Can I go to an EH, get Treatment on own payment?</i>
12	<i>Can I get Reimbursement for payment made by me for treatment at a EH ?</i>

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SECTION # 1 - What is an Empanelled Hospital (EH) ?

- i. For ECHS Beneficiaries Medical treatment is provided through a chain of Polyclinics, Service Hospitals, Empanelled Hospitals (EH) and Govt Hospitals
- ii. Treatment at EH is possible **ONLY** when there is a **Referral** from the PC. (Exception to this is Emergency Life-Threatening medical condition, in which Beneficiaries can go to EH without Referral)
- iii. All Govt Hospitals are deemed Empanelled. The treatment can be cashless, if they sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the concerned ECHS Regional Centre (RC).
- iv. EH are the hospitals which have a **valid MoA** and they are **NOT** under the orders of **STOP REFERRAL**.
- v. EH covers Multi speciality Hospitals, Eye and Dental hospitals.
- vi. All EH shall provide **Cashless** medical facilities to ECHS Beneficiaries.
- vii. Beneficiaries, are advised to verify that the Hospital to which you are planning to utilise with a Referral has a **valid MoA** and is **NOT** under "**STOP REFERRAL**", so that you can get a cashless treatment. You can reach out to your PC for this information.
- viii. You can contact "**Helping Hands for ECHS**" WhatsApp group at Bangalore, for Help

SECTION # 2 - How to find EH near me?

- i) Beneficiaries can find out the list of EH with valid MoA in any City in India on their own using mobile or computer

*Open in browser - echs.gov.in → select **EMPANELMENT STATUS** → select **PAN INDIA EMP HOSPITAL WITH FACILITIES** → **SELECT REGION FROM DROP DOWN** → click **SUBMIT** → List of EH will be displayed*

- ii) EH list is published by Regional Centres regularly. A copy is also held with the PCs for reference by Beneficiaries.

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SECTION # 3 – How do I get a Referral from a Polyclinic?

- i. ECHS Polyclinics (PC) are the primary treatment centres for ECHS Beneficiaries.
- ii. **Treatment at EH** is possible **ONLY** when there is a **Referral from the PC**.
(Exception is - Emergency Life-Threatening Medical condition, in which Beneficiaries can go to EH without Referral. Refer **STEP – BY STEP PROCEDURE** for use of EH under **Emergency** , dated 17 May 2021 published by “**HELPING HANDS FOR ECHS**” Bangalore
- iii. To obtain a Referral, ECHS Beneficiary shall report to the PC for treatment and meet the Medical Officer / Doctor.
- iv. Once the PC Medical Officer (MO) decides that the treatment required is beyond the capacity of the PC resources, a Referral to EH will be initiated by the MO. This criterion is also applied for Laboratory, Diagnostic, Eye, Physiotherapy & Dental treatment.
- v. If the **PC is a MIL-PC**, (Military - PC), first the **Referral** will be done to the **Service Hospital Specialists only**. (For example, PC Urban, Bangalore is designated as MIL-PC and Service Hospital is CHAFB or AFDC).
- vi. If the PC is a **Non - MIL PC**, (example @ Bangalore, PC MEG or PC Yelahanka), the MO may initiate a Referral to EH directly, if the treatment is beyond the PC resources.
- vii. Service Hospital Specialist after examination, may decide to refer the patient to EH. Under this case, the patient will report back to the PC with the Specialist prescription, for the PC MO initiate a Referral.
(Refer Flow Chart for **MIL PC Referral** published on 22 Sep 2020 by **Helping Hands for ECHS**)
- viii. Beneficiary shall carry the following documents to the PC, in order that Referral is generated quickly at the PC:
 - i. Original ECHS Card or valid Ty Slip with 02 Photo Copies each
 - ii. Service Hospital Specialists Referral Prescription (if applicable) with 02 photo copies.
 - iii. ECHS treatment book
 - iv. Valid Dependent Certificate with OIC PC counter signature with a Photo Copy (if applicable)
 - v. PAN Number and Aadhar Number (advise only)

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- ix. The Referral is generated online by PC MO, digitally signed by OIC PC and a Referral hard copy will be handed over to the Beneficiary.
- x. Beneficiaries are advised to verify the Referral document before leaving the PC, to ensure that the details are accurate & in line with the medical requirements.
- xi. With the 64 kB ECHS card & ECHS Mobile App, the record of Referrals issued can be accessed 'any time - anywhere'
(Refer **Step-By-Step Procedure 'How to Use ECHS Mobile App'** published by **Helping Hands For ECHS** Bangalore on 30 Apr 2021)

SECTION # 4 – What are Important features of a Referral that I should know?

- i. **Validity Period** of a Referral in the same EH is as below:

TYPE OF REFERRAL	VALIDITY
NORMAL	30 days from date of Issue
DENTAL	60 days from date of Issue
Dialysis, Cancer (Radiotherapy, Chemotherapy etc.), Diabetes, Hypertension & for other cardiac patients	180 days from the date of issue

(If in doubt, speak to your PC Staff)

- ii. **Two (02)** Referrals at "**One time Per Day**" can be given by the PC, based on the Medical condition (Normally 01 Referral is given)
- iii. The Referral can be used for consultation up to **03 times** in the **same EH**, within 30 days.
- iv. The Referral will be valid for consultation with **03 different Specialists**, if required, during a single visit in EH
- v. If admitted against a Referral in a EH, the maximum **duration of admission** allowed is **Twelve (12)** days. Refer Section below for Extension of Stay
- vi. Advise of PC MO or ECHS Specialist for **Listed Investigations** shall be valid for **30 Days**
- vii. Advice of PC MO or ECHS Specialist for **Listed Treatment Procedure** shall be valid for **03 Months**
- viii. For any Listed Investigation advised by the Specialist of EH and is required as a **Medical Emergency** (and as certified by the specialist doctor) may be undertaken in the same EH.

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SECTION # 5 – What actions should I take after receiving the Referral?

- i. The Referral document will have only the name of the 'Station/City' and will **NOT** indicate the Name of the EH.
- ii. With a Referral, ECHS beneficiary can go to **ANY EH** in the selected station/city.
- iii. ECHS beneficiary can also go to any station under respective Regional Centre (RC). For Travelling Allowance, if any, to reach the EH, certain conditions exist. Check with the PC before you select & proceed to a particular EH
- iv. Before deciding the EH where you wish to take the treatment, confirm
 - a. that the EH has a valid MoA & is NOT under STOP REFERRAL.
 - b. the treatment required is covered under the MoA.

(Speak to ECHS staff for Help or with EH staff)
- v. As this is a Routine Referral, it is advised that you contact the selected EH and check availability of specialists / beds / etc., This may save time.
- vi. On reaching the EH, contact the ECHS counter or designated counter, handover the valid ECHS Card (or Valid Temp Slip), valid Dependent certificate (if applicable) & the Referral document. You will be registered and appointment fixed with Specialist. They may request photo copies of these.
- vii. The necessary consultation and treatment shall be provided to the Beneficiary by the EH on a **Cashless basis** for both **Out-Patient or In-Patient**, as advised by the EH Specialist. Scope will be as per Referral document.
- viii. The Referral to EH is a Package and hence all requirements to treat the patient by EH shall be carried out.
- ix. If the patient is to be Admitted and Bed is not available, **the EH shall send the patient to other EH under its own coordination**. The EH will ensure that relevant treatment is provided to stabilise the patient. The Beneficiary in this case can seek help, if required, from the OIC PC and Director Regional Centre
- x. In case the Beneficiary has **NOT Utilised the Referral**, it shall be **returned to the PC MO** well before the Validity period. An endorsement of having NOT utilised the Referral will be made in the ECHS Treatment book / On Line system.

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SECTION # 6 –How do I get approval for Extension of Stay in EH?

- i. Extension of Stay details are given below

DURATION OF STAY AS IN-PATIENT	APPROVAL BY
Up to 12 days	Referral from PC is sufficient
13 to 30 days Extension	OIC Polyclinic
31 to 60 days Extension	Director Regional centre
61 to 120 days Extension	Managing Director (MD), ECHS

- ii. In case the In-Patient treatment is required to be extended beyond 12 days, it is the **responsibility of the EH** to get the hospital extension completed well on time in coordination with the PC (Appx B is initiated)
- iii. It is also the responsibility of the **concerned PC** to accord **Approval** well on time.
- iv. Next Of Kin (NOK) of the patient **should not be made to run around by EH or PC**, but may co-ordinate

SECTION # 7 – How do I get Approval for Unlisted Procedure in EH ?

- i. The Approval for Unlisted Procedure under **Non-Emergency Medical condition** is necessary and required to be obtained by the EH.
- ii. The **onus of obtaining the approval rests with the EH**.
- iii. The Appx A form for the above, shall be initiated well on time by the EH along with the **Case Summary**
- iv. EH Specialist will also clearly bring out the necessity for the Unlisted procedure/test/Implant, including the fact that no alternate Listed procedure is available.
- v. The Appx A duly filled & signed by EH shall be sent to PC.
- vi. The Appx A flow is **cumbersome & manual to-date**, as below

Initiated by EH → Goes to PC → Endorsement by OIC PC → Goes to SEMO Rep for signature → Goes for Opinion of Service Specialist & Signature → Approval & Signature by SEMO → Received by EH

- vii. NOK **should NOT be made to run around for this Approval (!!???)**
- viii. In **Emergency Cases**, the **Unlisted Procedure** shall be carried out by EH, without waiting for Appx A approval.

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SECTION # 8 - What should I do when being Discharged from EH?

- i. The entire treatment shall be **Cashless & No Payment** will be required to be made.
- ii. EH shall provide the patient free of cost, one set of entire treatment documents including DVD/X-Ray, etc.
- iii. The Discharge Summary shall have, along with clinical notes/advise/remarks, precautions, or any other routine that the patient needs to follow post treatment / operation.
- iv. On discharge as an In-Patient, EH will issue **medicines** for up to Seven (**07**) **days**, subject to the value **not being more than Rs 2000.00**. Medicines beyond this cost, will be issued by the PC.
- v. If the EH has included in Discharge Summary a need for Review, the patients can go directly at that point in time for review, without any Referral from PC.
- vi. If the review is not included in Discharge Summary, a separate Referral from the PC is required to be obtained.

SECTION # 9 – Can I go to an EH for OPD (only) without a Referral?

- i) ECHS Beneficiaries **75 years and above** can directly seek Direct **OPD Consultation only, from Specialists** of EH
- ii) **No REFERRAL** is required from ECHS Polyclinic
- iii) This **OPD** will be **Cashless**.
- iv) At EH, if any Investigation or Procedure is required based on Specialist advice after OPD which are under Listed categories, the patient need not get any authorisation / referral and the same may be undertaken.
- v) At EH, if any Unlisted Investigation or Procedure is required based on Specialist advice after OPD, under "**Non-Emergency**" condition, **Referral from the Polyclinic** will be **required**.
- vi) Medicines prescribed by the Specialist of EH after OPD, shall be **collected** only from the PC

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SECTION # 10 – When can I get Follow-up Consultation / Investigation without Referral Revalidation?

- i) Certain Post-Operative Follow-Up treatment, requiring frequent consultation from Specialists of Empanelled Hospital (EH), do NOT require Referral revalidation on each occasion.
- ii) Beneficiaries are advised to get the Referral revalidated at PC once in Six (06) months
- iii) Below **Follow-Up cases** are covered by the above for Consultation & Investigation
 - a) *Post Cardiac Surgery including Coronary Angioplasty*
 - b) *Post Organ Transplant (Liver, Kidney, Heart, and such) cases*
 - c) *Post Neuro Surgery*
 - d) *Post Brain Stroke*
 - e) *Cancer Treatment*
 - f) *End Stage Renal Failure/ follow-up cases of Liver failure*
 - g) *Liver Failure*
 - h) *Auto Immune disorder like Rheumatoid Arthritis*
 - i) *Neurological disorder - Dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinsonism, etc*
- iv) Medicines prescribed will be provided by the PC
- v) During the Follow-Up and in a **Non-Emergency** condition, Referral / Approval is to be obtained, for any Un-Listed Investigation or Procedure
- vi) During the Follow-Up, if there is an **Emergency** condition for an Investigation / Procedure, No Referral is needed, even if these are Un-Listed Investigation / Procedure.

SECTION # 11 – Can I go to an EH, get Treatment on own payment?

- i. Any EH can offer consultation/investigation/ treatment in routine cases at CGHS rates.
- ii. The ECHS beneficiary must disclose his/her identity and must be willing to make payment voluntarily.
- iii. Such expenditures cannot be claimed from ECHS on any ground, as they are neither Referral based nor Emergency Medical condition cases.
- iv. This arrangement is between **ECHS patients and EH exclusively**, based on **willingness of both** and is purely voluntarily.

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- v. No ECHS beneficiary will insist for this, if EH is unwilling for the said support.
- vi. No medicines prescribed by EH can be demanded from PCs based on this voluntary treatment
- vii. Any resultant prescription for any tests will not be valid , unless approved by the PC MO.

SECTION # 12 – Can I get Reimbursement for payment made by me for treatment at a Hospital as below?

- i) If an EH does **NOT** have a **valid MoA** or the EH is under **STOP Referral** and Beneficiary has taken treatment under Medical Emergency conditions and makes payment, the amount will be reimbursed as per CGHS rates.
- ii) If an EH does **NOT** have a **valid MoA** or the EH is under **STOP Referral**, and Beneficiary with a valid Referral from the PC chooses to take treatment in this hospital, due to having taken treatment earlier in the same hospital, the payment made for the treatment will be reimbursed as per CGHS rates.

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