

A Contribution from Volunteers

STEP – BY -- STEP PROCEDURE

USE OF EMPANELLED HOSPITAL (EH) FACILITIES

NON - EMERGENCY CONDITION – ROUTINE / PLANNED REFERRAL

09 Aug 2020 → 28 Dec 2020 → 22 May 2021 → 05 Aug 2021 → 03 OCT 2021
→ 28 OCT 2021 → 12 DEC 2021

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A) References

- i) Various Policy Letters issued by CO ECHS, FAQ 2018 and SOP 2018
- ii) CO ECHS letter B/49711-NSG/AG/ECHS dated 15 Jul 2021 & 23 Sep 21
- 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(PC). 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. 14 Questions are answered in this Procedure

C) ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

YOUR QUESTIONS?	ANSWERS IN
<i>What is an Empanelled Hospital (EH)?</i>	<i>SECTION 1</i>
<i>How to find EH near me?</i>	<i>SECTION 2</i>
<i>How do I get a Referral from my Parent Polyclinic?</i>	<i>SECTION 3</i>
<i>Can I get Referral to a Military Hospital or EH from my Parent Polyclinic to a MH or EH outside the Area Of Responsibility of Regional Centre of Parent PC ?</i>	<i>YES SECTION 4</i>
<i>Can I get Referral to a Military Hospital or EH directly from a Non-Parent Polyclinic to a MH or EH outside the Area Of Responsibility of Regional Centre of Parent PC ?</i>	<i>YES SECTION 5</i>
<i>What are Important features of a Referral that I should know?</i>	<i>SECTION 6</i>
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YOUR QUESTIONS?	ANSWERS IN
<i>How do I get Approval for Unlisted Procedure to be carried out in EH? (Under Non-Emergency Medical Condition)</i>	SECTION 9
<i>What should I do when Discharged from EH?</i>	SECTION 10
<i>Can I go to an EH for OPD (only) without a Referral?</i>	YES SECTION 11
<i>When can I get Follow-up Consultation / Investigation without Referral Revalidation?</i>	SECTION 12
<i>Can I go to an EH, get Treatment on own payment?</i>	YES SECTION 13
<i>Can I get Reimbursement for payment made by me for treatment at a EH ?</i>	SECTION 14

SECTION # I - 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

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SECTION # 2 - How to find Empanelled Hospital (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.

SECTION # 3 – How do I get a Referral to a EH from my Parent 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 in Web Portal “**HELPING HANDS FOR ECHS**”)
- iii. To obtain a Referral, ECHS Beneficiary shall report to the Parent 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.

➤ **Referral from NON-MILITARY – PC (NON – MIL- PC)**
- v. If your Parent PC is **Not A Military PC** (Non MIL-PC) , the beneficiary will be referred to an EH within the Area Of Responsibility (AOR) of the Regional Centre (RC).

(example @ Bangalore, PC MEG or PC Yelahanka will refer Beneficiaries directly to EH)
- vi. In the Referral form NO HOSPITAL NAME shall be specified.

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➤ **Referral from MILITARY - PC (MIL – PC)**

- vii. If the **Parent PC** is a **Military PC (MIL - PC)**, the Beneficiary will be referred to the affiliated Military Hospital or EH, based on following conditions: -
- ❖ Beneficiary will be referred to the affiliated Military Hospital
- If Specialist for the required medical condition is posted**
AND
Adequate capacity to accommodate the Beneficiary is available
- ❖ If any of the above **TWO conditions** are **NOT MET**, the Beneficiary will be referred to an EH by the PC
(For example, PC Urban, Bangalore is designated as MIL- PC and affiliated Military Hospital is CHAFB or AFDC).
(Ask your PC about the affiliated Military Hospital , if your Parent PC is a MIL – PC)
- viii. In case the beneficiary is referred to the affiliated Military Hospital and consults the Specialist, after examination, Specialist 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 to initiate a Referral.
- ix. 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 (optional only)
- x. 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. The Referral printed form **WILL NOT REQUIRE SIGNATURE or OFFICIAL SEAL/STAMP**
- xi. 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.
- xii. 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**)

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SECTION # 4 – Can I get Referral to a Military Hospital or EH from my **Parent Polyclinic to a MH or EH outside the Area Of Responsibility of Regional Centre of Parent PC ?**

- i) A Beneficiary may require to take treatment in a Military Hospital or EH which is not under the Regional Centre of their Parent PC. (Example – Your Parent PC is under Regional Centre Mumbai & you wish to take treatment in Military Hospital / EH at Chennai.)
- ii) Beneficiary will meet the MO at the Parent PC and request for a Referral to the new location outside Regional Centre, as explained above.
- iii) If treatment is needed in a Military Hospital, the Beneficiary will identify the MIL – PC affiliated with the identified Military Hospital
- iv) The Parent PC MO will generate a Referral as required and digitally signed Referral will be handed over to the Beneficiary.
- v) The above Referral will now be visible to the OIC of the Outstation Polyclinic in the computer system. The Referral will be approved by the OIC for either the MH or EH depending on the conditions as explained in the preceding Section
- vi) Beneficiary can directly go to the identified Military Hospital for treatment or to EH as approved without reporting to the outstation PC.
- vii) At the new location if there is any requirement for Extension of stay or Unlisted procedure approval, these will be handled by the PC at the new location (not by your parent PC) & associated Regional Centre

SECTION # 5 – Can I get Referral to a Military Hospital or EH directly from a **Non-Parent Polyclinic to a MH or EH within the Area of Responsibility of the Regional Centre of the Non-Parent PC? (called Outstation ECHS beneficiary)**

- i. A Beneficiary may require to take treatment in a Military Hospital or EH from a Non-Parent PC under the Area of Responsibility of the Regional Centre of the Non-Parent PC. (Example – Your parent PC is in Bangalore, you travelled to Kochi and situation is such that you need to take treatment in a MH or EH in Kochi)
- ii. Beneficiary will meet the MO at the Non-Parent PC and request for a Referral to a MH or EH in the Area of Responsibility of the Regional Centre of the Non Parent PC.

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iii. Two possibilities are as below

✓ If the **Non-Parent PC** is a **Military PC (MIL - PC)** :-

❖ Beneficiary will be referred to the affiliated Military Hospital

If Specialist for the required medical condition is posted

AND

Adequate capacity to accommodate the Beneficiary is available

If **ANY** of the above **TWO conditions** are **NOT MET**, the Beneficiary will be referred to an EH by the Non-Parent PC

(Ask Non-Parent PC about the affiliated Military Hospital)

iv. If the **Non-Parent PC** is **Not a Military PC (Non MIL-PC)** :-

The beneficiary will be **referred to an EH** within the Area Of Responsibility (AOR) of the Regional Centre (RC) of the Non-Parent PC.

v. The Non-Parent PC MO will generate a Referral as required above & digitally signed by the OIC of Non-Parent PC

vi. The above Referral will be now visible to your Parent Polyclinic OIC in the computer system for Approval.

vii. Once the Referral is approved by your Parent PC OIC using digital signature, the Non-Parent PC will print the Referral & hand it over to you.

viii. You can obtain cashless treatment in any EH under the AOR of Regional Centre of the Non-Parent PC

SECTION # 6 – 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)

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- 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. Advice 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.
- ix. The treatment is under “**PACKAGE RATES**” concept. This means it will cover In-Patient treatment, Day care & Diagnostic procedure for which Beneficiary has been permitted (a referral) or under Emergency. These will be “**FROM TIME OF ADMISSION TO TIME OF DISCHARGE including (but not limited)**” to the following :-
 - Registration & Admission Charges
 - Accommodation Charges
 - Diet Charges
 - Operation charges
 - Dressing charges
 - Injection charges
 - Doctor/Consultant visit charges
 - ICU/ICCU charges
 - Monitoring charges
 - Transfusion charges
 - Anaesthesia charges
 - Operation Theatre charges
 - Procedure charges
 - Surgeon's fee
 - Cost of Surgical disposables and all sundries used during hospitalisation
 - Cost of medicines
 - Related routine & essential Investigations
 - Physiotherapy charges
 - Nursing care charges

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SECTION # 7 – 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 and obtain Cashless treatment as per Referral.
- 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 on the above factors)
- v. As this is a Planned / 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.
- vii. The EH will access the UTI-ITSL site and generate a Claim ID. Once this ID is generated, the Referral cannot be used in any other EH.
- viii. The necessary consultation and treatment shall be provided to the Beneficiary by the EH on a **CASHLESS BASIS** for both **as Out-Patient or In-Patient**, as advised by the EH Specialist. Scope of treatment will be as per Referral document.
- ix. The Referral to EH is a Package and hence all requirements to treat the patient by EH shall be carried out.
- x. 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
- xi. 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 # 8 –How do I get approval for Extension of Stay in EH?

- i) **Duration of Stay as In -Patient details are given below**

<i>DURATION OF STAY AS IN-PATIENT</i>	<i>APPROVAL BY</i>
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. EH will initiate the request in Appx B form.
- 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**. NOK may co-ordinate

SECTION # 9 – How do I get Approval for Unlisted Procedure to be carried out in EH? ***(Refer CO ECHS letter dated 09 Dec 2021)***

- 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 has 04 Parts that are required to be completed by various agencies.**
- iv. Part 1 - The EH will generate Appx A form on the BPA portal and all necessary details including name & digital signature of the Doctor are to be completed. This action is Part 1 of Appx A form and is submitted by EH in the BPA portal to the Nodal PC.
- v. Part 2 - A Pop up will appear in the BPA portal of the Nodal PC. PC will complete Part 2 of the Appx A form and OIC PC will affix digital signature.
- vi. PC will take a printout of the signed Appx A and obtain Approval of Specialist in Service Hospital.

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- vii. Part 3 & 4 - The Service Hospital Specialists / SEMO doctors will fill up Part 3 & 4 of and affix signature / stamp.
- viii. The approved Appx A signed hard copy will sent to OIC PC by OIC Stn HQ / OIC Stats
- ix. OIC PC will scan and upload the approved Appx A on the BPA portal duly filled & signed by EH shall be sent to PC.
- x. **The total time expected to be taken from Initiation of Appx A to receiving the Approval by EH is approx. 2 days / 48 Hrs.**
- xi. ECHS Beneficiary can contact the EH for receipt of Approval of the Unlisted Procedure. A SMS to the registered mobile number may also be received about the approval status.
- xii. The Appx A flow is **partially automated to-date**, as below (11 stages !!)
Initiated by EH on BPA Portal → Pop Up in BPA portal of Nodal → Print out by PC → Part 1 signed digitally by OIC PC → Signed copy sent to OIC Stn HQ / OIC Stats → Goes for Opinion of Service Specialist & Signature → Approval & Signature by SEMO → OIC Stn HQ / OIC Stats send approved copy to OIC PC → OIC PC uploads a copy in BPA portal → Beneficiary contacts OIC PC of upload of Approved Appx A --. Beneficiary contacts EH for getting the Unlisted Procedure done
- xiii. NOK **should NOT** be made to **run around** for this **Approval**
- xiv. In **Emergency Cases**, the **Unlisted Procedure** shall be carried out by EH, **without waiting for Appx A approval.**
- xv. **APPX A NOT REQUIRED Condition** – If the Service specialist of any AFMS hospital has advised any Unlisted Investigation on Hospital Investigation form countersigned by CO/COMDT/ SEMO/SMO/PMO/CMO, THERE WILL BE NO REQUIREMENT by Empanelled Hospital or BPA to ask for APPX A to carry out the Investigation or to process the claim respectively. **(Authy – CO ECHS letter B/49770/ECHS/Treat/policy/2021 dated 26 Oct 2021)**

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SECTION # 10 - What should I do when 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 # 11 – 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 # 12 – 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 Unlisted 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 Unlisted Investigation / Procedure.

SECTION # 13 – 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 # 14 – 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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