

# HOUSE CALL

KelseyCare Advantage

July 2015

## BE PREPARED!

The recent floods throughout Houston and other parts of Texas served as a painful reminder of how powerful and unpredictable the forces of nature can be. Now that hurricane season is upon us, it's especially important to be ready should dangerous weather threaten our area again.

You can deal with disaster better by preparing in advance, working as a team with relatives, neighbors and friends. Even if you have physical limitations, you can still protect and prepare yourself. By planning ahead, you can avoid waiting in long lines for critical supplies, such as food, water and medicine, and will already have essential items on hand.

Here are the basic steps for hurricane preparedness:

### 1. Make a Plan

- Discuss preparations with family and friends.
- Arrange for someone to check on you at the time of a disaster. Be sure to include any caregivers in your planning efforts.
- Carry family contact information in your wallet.
- Choose an out-of-town contact person. After a disaster, it is often easier to make a long-distance call than a local call from a disaster area.

- Determine escape routes out of your home and neighborhood as well as meeting places outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home.
- Take your pets with you if you evacuate. However, be aware that pets (except service animals) are not permitted in emergency public shelters for health reasons.
- Keep copies of vital family records and other important documents such as birth and marriage certificates, social security cards, passports, wills, deeds, and financial, insurance and immunizations records in a safe location, like a fire safe or safe-deposit box.

### 2. Prepare a Survival Kit

- Assemble enough supplies to last for at least three days and keep them in a kit that is packed and ready in one place before a disaster strikes. Flashlights, batteries (including for hearing aids and other devices), and bottled water are essentials.
- Store your supplies in one or more easy-to-carry containers, such as a backpack, duffel bag, or container on wheels.
- Be sure your bag has an ID tag.

- Label any equipment, such as wheelchairs, canes or walkers, that you would need with your name, address and phone numbers.
- Keep your kit up-to-date by reviewing the contents at least every six months or as your needs change. Check expiration dates and replace food, water, and batteries, and refresh medications and other perishable items.

Hurricane season runs from June 1 through November 30. Begin planning now! Listen for information on the radio and TV about hazardous weather and other events, and heed the advice of local officials. Leave right away if told to do so. In some communities, people who need help or transportation during an evacuation are asked to register that need with their local government. Call your local emergency management office for information about what to do during an evacuation. It is important to have alternate plans in case circumstances change.

For more information about disaster preparedness for seniors, including helpful emergency checklists, please see <http://rdcrss.org/1bBunA1>.

KelseyCare Advantage urges you to be prepared and keep safe this hurricane season and throughout the year.

# EMERGENCY ROOM VISIT ALERT

You have probably seen the signs and billboards or heard commercials advertising free-standing emergency rooms. There may even be several in or around your neighborhood. These facilities have similar equipment to hospital emergency rooms, but may be miles from a hospital. They may look like urgent care centers, but they provide emergency care for more severe health issues.

Free-standing emergency rooms are not owned by any of the local hospital chains. Usually they have agreements with hospitals close to their locations in case you need hospitalization or other services they

cannot provide. An emergency room associated with a hospital usually will have the hospital name listed on their emergency room sign.

Free-standing emergency rooms cannot refuse to provide you with emergency care, but KelseyCare Advantage wants members to be aware of potential billing issues. These free-standing facilities are NOT licensed by Medicare and do NOT have to accept Medicare payment rates.

Recently, some of our members have been required to pay emergency room charges at the time of the visit and were charged

more than Medicare. Free-standing emergency rooms are not required to bill your plan for services they provide, and both the facility and the treating physician can bill you more than Medicare since they do not have an agreement with Medicare to accept payment rates. Most hospital-based emergency rooms throughout the U.S. will bill your plan directly for services.

KelseyCare Advantage pays 100% of Medicare rates less any copayment for emergency room care at out of network locations. A recent payment request that a member submitted to us for reimbursement showed that she paid over \$1,200 on her credit card before leaving the emergency room. However, the Medicare-allowed payment rate was under \$300.

KelseyCare Advantage cannot stop these facilities from billing you more than Medicare, nor can we prevent you from facing higher out-of-pocket costs.

If you seek emergency care at one of these facilities, you should ask up front if they accept Medicare payment rates. Often they will post this information on their website. Emergency care is ALWAYS covered under your plan.

If you think you have a life-threatening condition, call 9-1-1 for immediate transportation to a hospital emergency room. If you're not sure if you need emergency care, call Kelsey-Seybold Clinic at 713-442-0000. The 24-hour nurse hotline is available to help you decide what care you need or schedule an urgent office visit appointment for you. If you have a non-life threatening condition, you may also consider using an urgent care center.

## KelseyCare Advantage Urgent Care Centers

Next Level Urgent Care <i>Cinco Ranch</i>	10705 Spring Green Blvd. Ste 600 Katy, TX 77479 281-907-9646
Next Level Urgent Care <i>Sienna Plantation</i>	8720 Highway 6 Ste 400 Missouri City, TX 77459 832-342-9204
Next Level Urgent Care <i>Long Meadow</i>	7101 W Grand Parkway S Ste 180 Richmond, TX 77407 832-304-2309
Next Level Urgent Care <i>Sugar Land</i>	16902 Southwest Fwy Ste 108 Sugar Land, TX 77479 832-342-9205
Next Level Urgent Care <i>Clear Lake</i>	2323 Clear Lake City Blvd. Ste 130 Houston, TX 77062 281-907-9669
Next Level Urgent Care <i>Copperfield</i>	8100 Highway 6 N Ste E Houston, TX 77095 832-304-2314
Next Level Urgent Care <i>Memorial Park</i>	5535 Memorial Dr. Ste E Houston, TX 77007 713-391-8533
Next Level Urgent Care <i>Meyerland</i>	4936 Beechnut St. Houston, TX 77096 713-893-1223
Next Level Urgent Care <i>Champions</i>	15882 Champion Forest Dr. Spring, TX 77379 281-809-6615

# BEWARE OF FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE

KelseyCare Advantage needs your help to prevent Medicare fraud, waste and abuse, which could threaten your health and unnecessarily drive up medical costs!

Kelsey-Seybold doctors have noticed an increase in the number of faxes requesting doctor authorization or signatures for medical supplies and services that members like you may not have actually ordered or received. These include what's called Durable Medical Equipment or DME (such as walkers, wheelchairs, oxygen tanks, nebulizers, etc.), diabetic supplies or drug prescriptions from non-contracted companies.

Several KelseyCare Advantage members have reported getting phone calls from representatives of companies they don't know or have never before dealt with that have aggressively tried to get an agreement to send out supplies or contact doctors for orders.

KelseyCare Advantage's own investigations turned up similar complaints from doctors and patients nationwide, claiming that members are being targeted by Medicare-approved companies that aggressively market medical

supplies that patients do not want or need or should be supplied by a contracted company.

KelseyCare Advantage has reported these companies to Medicare's Fraud, Waste and Abuse division. Some of these businesses may be billing your insurance company or pharmacy benefits plan without delivering the drugs or supplies. Be sure to check any claims statements you get to make sure they are for services you requested and received.

The most recent examples received by your network physicians included pharmacy requests for compounds for scar conditions or chronic pain where claims are processed through your Part D benefits and costs count toward your drug spend amounts. There have also been investigations on questionable diabetic supply requests and orders for back or knee braces.

Here are some suggestions for protecting your Medicare benefits:

- Be on the lookout for telephone calls from companies you do not recognize that request personal information, such as a Medicare number or credit card information.

- Hang-up if person on the phone becomes aggressive or unprofessional.
- Check with KelseyCare Advantage Member Services to verify an authorization or company name if you are waiting for medical supplies.
- Refuse mailed prescriptions, medical supplies or diabetic supplies you did not order.
- Return unordered items shipped to your home.
- Report companies that send you these items.

To report any suspected fraud, please call Health Integrity at 1-877-7SAFERX (1-877-772-3379). Health Integrity is the Medicare Part C and Part D program integrity contractor for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Or you may call the KelseyCare Advantage Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Hotline at 713-442-9595. If you prefer, you may email us directly at [MedicareFraudHotline@KelseyCareAdvantage.com](mailto:MedicareFraudHotline@KelseyCareAdvantage.com).

Together, we can eliminate fraud, waste and abuse.



## Our Mission...

We firmly embrace the values of:

- Customer Satisfaction
- Honesty
- Creativity
- Mutual Respect
- Enthusiasm

# IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS TO REMEMBER

For personalized assistance with physician selection, benefits issues, billing questions, please call  
**KelseyCare Advantage Concierge**  
**713-442-9540**

To speak with a **pharmacist** on the KelseyCare Advantage team, please call: **713-442-4820**.  
The pharmacy team can review all of your medications and help you identify cost saving opportunities.

Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline: **713-442-9595**

