



KAISER PERMANENTE®

**SAN DIEGO  
CONTINUING CARE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

**TRANSFERRING TO A  
NURSING FACILITY  
FOR KAISER MEMBERS**



**You are going to a skilled nursing facility for further care.  
This booklet gives you information about skilled nursing facility care and  
explains what to expect at the skilled nursing facility.**

***<http://continuingcare-sandiego.kp.org>***

## **What is a Skilled Nursing Facility? (Nursing Home or Convalescent Home)**

A Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) is a health care facility, licensed by the state that provides 24-hour care. SNF care is for patients who do not need (or no longer need) the intense care provided in an acute care hospital. A SNF has Registered Nurses (RNs) or Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs) on site 24-hours-per-day. Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and other staff assist them. Physical Therapists, Occupational and Speech Therapists and Registered Dieticians are available for residents who need them. Physicians and Nurse Practitioners visit as needed.

Most SNFs provide two levels of care: **Skilled Nursing and Custodial Care**

## **What is Skilled Nursing Care?**

In order to qualify for skilled care, the following three factors must be met: a physician determines these factors:

1. The care **requires the skills** of a licensed nurse or therapist.
2. The skilled care is required on a **daily** basis.
3. The skilled care **cannot be provided reasonably safely at a lower level of care**, such as through Home Health Services or in an Outpatient Clinic.

If a patient does not meet all three criteria, then he or she is at a custodial level of care, even though he/she may require some skilled services. In most cases, the patient's condition must also make improvement in response to care. Excluded from this are patients with certain chronic conditions, where there is no potential for improvement.

## **Examples of skilled care are:**

1. Injections or intravenous medications (IV), such as antibiotics when given at least daily and require monitoring.
2. Tube feedings
3. Tracheal (windpipe) suctioning, during the initial phase which requires frequent evaluation and monitoring.
4. Daily complex rehabilitative services.
5. Complex wound care, which requires sterile dressing changes at least 3 times per day.

## **What is Custodial Care?**

The primary goal is to assist with personal hygiene and daily activities. This does not require the daily skills and services of licensed health care professionals. Sometimes custodial care is needed after skilled care, when a person is not yet strong enough to manage on their own. Sometimes, people who can no longer live independently need custodial care. Neither Kaiser nor Medicare pays for custodial care.

**Examples of custodial care are:**

1. Assistance with bathing, dressing, eating, or using the toilet.
2. Managing incontinence.
3. Assistance with taking medications.
4. Assistance with walking and/or transferring from a bed to a chair.
5. Routine catheter care (such as urinary catheter).
6. Routine exercises to maintain or improve strength and function.
7. Routine injections.

**Does Kaiser or Medicare pay for custodial care in a SNF?**

Neither Kaiser nor Medicare pays for custodial care in a SNF.

**When does payment by Kaiser or Medicare stop?**

1. Payment by Kaiser or Medicare stops when you no longer meet the requirements for skilled care coverage.
2. Payment by Kaiser or Medicare stops when you have used all of your allowable days of paid care.

**What if I have used all of my paid care days in the benefit period, but I continue to need skilled care at a SNF?**

1. Medi-Cal is a federal and state funded program that pays for both skilled and custodial care in a SNF for people with limited financial resources. To qualify for Medi-Cal you must meet their financial and medical eligibility requirements. Contact the Department of Social Services. Please see page 9 for phone numbers.
2. Other private insurance may assist with payment.
3. It is often the responsibility of the patient and/or responsible party to pay for additional SNF care.

**How is a benefit period determined?**

1. A benefit period begins with an admission to the hospital or SNF. For each day you receive skilled nursing care in a SNF that is ordered by a Kaiser Permanente physician, one day is subtracted from the total days allowed by your health plan benefit. If you are in the hospital prior to going to a SNF, the hospital days are not subtracted from your SNF benefit days.
3. For detailed information about benefit periods, please speak with a Hospital Case Manager, Kaiser Member Services Representative or Nurse Care Coordinator.

## **Who decides when the skilled nursing care benefit ends and how is that decision made?**

1. A team of Kaiser and SNF staff makes the decision based on established guidelines.
2. A written and verbal notice of the decision is given to the patient or responsible party.

## **What options are available for me for payment of custodial care in a SNF?**

1. Medi-Cal pays for custodial care in a SNF. However, you must meet their financial and medical eligibility requirements. See page 9 for a list of Medi-Cal offices in San Diego County.
2. Supplemental Insurance programs with a benefit for long term custodial care will assist in paying for custodial care. Generally, these insurance programs are called "Long Term Care Insurance." These policies can usually be purchased only before you need nursing home care.
3. It is often the responsibility of the patient/responsible party to pay for custodial care in a SNF.

## **Admission to a Skilled Nursing Facility:**

1. If possible, have a family member or friend assist you with the admission process. You will need to bring your Kaiser Health Plan card and all other insurance cards including Medicare and Medi-Cal cards. At the time of admission to the SNF, you should have a family member or friend bring a copy of your Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care or an Advanced Directive if you have one.
2. The SNF admission process can be lengthy. The state requires each SNF to provide extensive verbal and written information and to have you sign an admission agreement. Often the SNF will ask for a responsible family member to sign the patient into the SNF.

## **What should I bring to the SNF?**

You are encouraged to have clothing that is comfortable and easy to take off and put on such as button front shirt, and loose slacks. You will need non-skid shoes, such as sneakers or tennis/athletic shoes. You are responsible for supplying your own toiletries, such as a brush, comb, toothbrush, toothpaste, electric razor, shaving cream, deodorant and shampoo. It is important that all items are clearly marked with your name. This includes eyeglass cases, denture containers and each article of clothing.

**Is laundry service available?**

Bed and bath linens are provided and laundered by the SNF. For an additional charge, you can arrange to have your personal clothing laundered by the SNF. If you plan to have the SNF launder your clothing, be sure that it is marked with your name. You will need to provide a small covered hamper labeled with your name to place in the bathroom. A family member or friend can also do your laundry for you.

**Are beauty or barber services available?**

Hair salon services are usually available on site. There is an additional charge for this service.

**What dietary services are available?**

1. Balanced nutritious meals are included in the cost of your stay. If you medically require a special diet, a Kaiser Permanente physician will order it for you.
2. If your family or a friend would like to bring food to you, please have them check with the nursing staff.

**Should I have someone bring my medications from home? No.**

1. SNFs cannot use medications brought from home in opened containers.
2. If you are going to a SNF for skilled care, medications will be provided by the SNF. This includes over-the-counter medications such as cold medicines, antacids, Tylenol, aspirin, and previously prescribed medications. The nursing facility can only administer medications that have been ordered by the hospital or SNF physician.
3. If you are going to a SNF for custodial care, a physician needs to write prescriptions for your medications. This includes new medications and medications you are already taking. You should have a family member or friend get the prescriptions filled at a Kaiser pharmacy, bring medication to the SNF, and give them to the nursing staff. The nursing staff will give you your medications as prescribed by your physician.

**Will a telephone, radio and television be provided in my room?**

1. Telephones and telephone service may be available for an additional cost to you. You or a family member or friend may contact the telephone company to make arrangements. Public telephones are available within the nursing facility.
2. Please contact the SNF if you would like to bring your own small television or radio. Television is available in the common area within the SNF.

**Will equipment be provided if I need any?**

Hospital beds (manual or semi-electric), standard wheelchairs, standard walkers, bedside commodes, and canes will be provided by the SNF for use during your stay if you need them. Occasionally, a patient will need other special equipment. When needed, a Kaiser Permanente physician orders it. Payment for this special equipment depends on your Kaiser Permanente Plan. Medicare generally pays for medically necessary special equipment in a SNF.

**Physician Care:****Will my primary care physician be visiting me in the Skilled Nursing Facility?**

Your primary care physician at the Kaiser Medical Offices will not be visiting you at the SNF. Kaiser has a team of dedicated physicians and nurse practitioners who provide care for our members in SNFs. They are available to see you whenever medically indicated. Physician and nurse practitioner visits are in full compliance with all state regulations for both skilled and custodial SNF patients. In addition, a Kaiser Permanente SNF Nurse Care Coordinator is assigned to SNFs to coordinate care and services for skilled level patients.

**Do the SNF physicians communicate with my primary physician?**

When needed, the SNF physician will consult directly with your primary physician.

**How often will I see a physician?**

The SNF physician visits you in the SNF as often as medically needed. You should not expect to see your SNF physician daily.

**How does the SNF contact the physician?**

1. The Kaiser SNF physicians, nurse practitioners, and Nurse Care Coordinators are available by pager or telephone during regular business hours Monday through Friday. Kaiser physicians are available by pager and telephone to the nursing facilities staff 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.
2. The Skilled Nursing Facility nursing staff will notify the Kaiser Permanente physician or nurse practitioner of any change in your condition that may require a visit or change in your medical orders.

## **How will the SNF physician and/or nurse practitioner know where I am and what I need?**

Orders are written by your current physician prior to your admission to the SNF. At the time of your admission to a SNF, the SNF physician and/or nurse practitioner and the SNF Nurse Care coordinator assigned to the SNF are informed of your medical history, care needed and admission to the SNF.

## **Transportation:**

### **What if I need transportation to the hospital or to a Kaiser Permanente medical office? How is it arranged and who pays for it?**

1. Emergency medical transportation will be arranged by the nursing facility through a call to Kaiser Emergency Department or via 911. Emergency transportation is a covered benefit if authorized by a Kaiser representative.
2. Non-emergency transportation is usually at your expense. Non-emergency transportation includes private car, taxi, gurney vans, wheelchair vans, and other non-ambulance transportation.
3. Other, non-emergent ambulance transportation is paid by Kaiser or Medicare only if it meets medical necessity criteria, which is determined by your condition.
4. SNF staff can assist you to arrange transportation.

### **What if I have concerns about the care I am receiving at the SNF?**

Most SNFs want to resolve problems as quickly as possible. The written agreement you sign on admission, usually explains the process the facility uses for concerns. This is the best place to start. If you are unsure what the process is, here are possible suggestions:

1. Ask the SNF staff for the name of the person assigned to coordinate your care. Talk to this person first. If the problem concerns Kaiser services, rather than services provided by the SNF staff, the person assigned to coordinate your care should refer you to the appropriate person to talk with at Kaiser.
2. If the problem concerns SNF staff or operations of the SNF and the person assigned to coordinate your care does not resolve the problem, ask to speak with the Nursing Supervisor, the Director of Nursing, or the SNF Administrator, in that order.
3. If the situation is still unsatisfactory, most facilities have the name and phone number of their parent organization posted for the residents who want to resolve their problems. You can also call the Kaiser SNF Program (619) 528-1245 at Continuing Care for assistance.

Significant unresolved problems can be taken to the Long Term Care Ombudsman (a government funded organization with non-professional

volunteers who investigate complaints and assist residents) or the Licensing and Certification Division of the State Department of Health Services. Their phone numbers should be posted in the facility and are also listed at the end of this brochure under *Resources* on the next page.

### **What do I do when I'm ready to leave the SNF?**

1. The SNF staff will help you plan your discharge. If you are returning to a private home or other residential setting, you should re-establish contact with your Kaiser primary care physician for on-going care. Prior to leaving the SNF, you should ask a staff member when you need to have a follow-up appointment with your physician. You should call your primary care physician's office to make this appointment.
2. If you need equipment ordered for home, the SNF discharge planner will order it for you prior to your discharge.
3. If you need brief skilled services at home by a Home Health nurse or therapist, the SNF discharge planner will make arrangements for these services.

### **Resources:**

**If you need to reach the Kaiser Permanente Nursing Home Physician or the Nurse Practitioner, call the Kaiser Permanente Long Term Care Office at 619-528-1245. If you have an emergency, have the SNF contact the Kaiser Permanente Nursing Home Physician on call 24 hours a day.**

### **Other Resources:**

- Aging and Independence Services for information and referral services:  
1-800-510-2020
- Kaiser Permanente Durable Medical Equipment Department:  
855-805-7363
- Kaiser Permanente Home Health Agency: 619-641-4663
- Kaiser Permanente Hospice & Palliative Care: 619-641-4673
- Kaiser Permanente Member Services: 1-800-464-4000
- Kaiser Permanente Nurse Care Coordinator: 619-641-4456
- Kaiser Permanente Placement Case Managers: 619-641-4452
- Kaiser Permanente Senior Services: 619-641-4027
- Licensing and Certification Division, California Department Services:  
1-800-824-0613
- Meals on Wheels: 619-295-9501
- San Diego County Long Term Care Medi-Cal:  
1-866-262-9881 – (County of San Diego ACCESS)
- San Diego Long Term Care Ombudsman's office: 1-800-640-4661

# Medi-Cal District Offices

Apply in person for faster processing

ACCESS Customer Service Center for County of San Diego Family Resource  
Centers: 866-262-9881

For information or to apply on line - [www.benefitscalwin.org](http://www.benefitscalwin.org)

<b>Office</b>	<b>Address</b>
<b>Centre City (Trolley Towers)</b>	<b>1255 Imperial Ave, 92101</b>
<b>El Cajon</b>	<b>220 S. 1st St., 92019</b>
<b>Escondido</b>	<b>649 West Mission Ave., 92025</b>
<b>Fallbrook</b>	<b>202 West College St., 92028</b>
<b>Kearny Mesa</b>	<b>5055 Ruffin Rd., 92123</b>
<b>Lemon Grove</b>	<b>7065 Broadway, 91945</b>
<b>National City</b>	<b>401 Mile of Cars Way, 91950</b>
<b>North East</b>	<b>5001 73<sup>rd</sup> St., 92115</b>
<b>Oceanside</b>	<b>1315 Union Plaza Ct., 92054</b>
<b>Ramona</b>	<b>1521 Main St., 92065</b>
<b>San Diego Metro</b>	<b>1130-10<sup>th</sup> Ave, 92101</b>
<b>South (Chula Vista)</b>	<b>690 Oxford St., 91911</b>
<b>South East</b>	<b>4588 Market St., 92102</b>