



PRACTICE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Vision, Mission, and Goals

Therefore, our mission (purpose) is to provide affordable, high quality, comprehensive health care services to improve the health of our patients and the community we serve.

We want to provide a positive patient experience with every visit or encounter with the provider and staff whether that be in person or over the phone. We want to be courteous and polite to our patients and address their health concerns in a timely and professional manner. We want to empower patients to advocate and improve their overall care. We want to be educators and inspire our patients to be actively involved their health care and wellness. We want to provide an excellent level of customer care. PHW wants to offer more convenient ways to access health care via telemedicine as well as aesthetics and medical weight loss. We provide this integrated and coordinated medical care through a patient care model.

Our vision is to empower our patients to innovate their health and wellness through education and accountability and to make an impact on an individual and community basis with consistent, quality integrated health care that is delivered in a convenient, affordable, and innovative manner.

Our values are the following:

- *Professionalism*
 - Be polite and courteous to patients and staff
 - Communicate and collaborate well with coworkers and patients
- *Customer Service*
 - Be responsive to patients' needs in a prompt and professional manner • *Excellence*
 - Strive to do your best regardless of the task assigned
- *Leadership & Teamwork*
 - Lead by example and help others
 - Ask questions or for assistance if needed
 - Share ideas, information, and concerns in a proactive and supportive manner
 - Share concerns and differences that allow for constructive change
- *Integrity & Quality*
 - Provide a level of service that is consistent and comprehensive every time for patients

Insurances Accepted

Our practice accepts all insurances except MediCal. We are contracted with Hills Physicians IPA and Sutter IPA (Sutter Independent Physicians).

Services Offered

Our practice offers a variety of medical services including:

- Health care maintenance including annual wellness and physicals
- VA Veteran service connection (compensation and pension) physical exams via QTc
- Immigration physicals
- Vaccinations
- Blood pressure checks
- Well woman exams (Pap Smear and pelvic exams, breast exam)
- Contraception and pre-contraception counseling
- Insertion and removal of IUDs and Nexplanon devices
- Minor office procedures like skin tag, skin biopsies, and nail matrix removal
- Referrals for imaging and mammograms
- Specific lab draws (inquire at the front desk)
- Aesthetic procedures such as chemical peels, Botox, and injectable fillers
- Medical weight management and counseling and education and referrals for bariatric surgery
- Chronic care and transitional care management including nursing home, assisted living, home health care, and hospice/palliative care

Cancellation/No Show Policy

At Phoenix Health & Wellness PC, we are dedicated to comprehensive, quality health care and services to our patients in a timely manner. No-shows, late shows, and cancellations inconvenience those individuals who need access to medical care. We understand that emergencies at work or school arise that may cause you to have to cancel or miss an appointment. In order to be respectful of the medical needs of other patients, call Dr. Hooks' office promptly at **(916) 299-6501** if you are unable to show up for an appointment. This time will be reallocated to someone who is in need of medical treatment. If it is necessary to cancel your scheduled appointment, we require that you call at least 24 hours in advance. Appointments are in high demand, and your early cancellation will allow another patient access to timely medical care. ***If you do not cancel within 24 hours, you will be charged a \$50 cancellation fee which is not covered by insurance.***

Scheduled Appointments

To schedule appointments, please call **(916) 299-6501**. Once our website is launched, you will also have the option to request to schedule appointments online as well.

Please arrive ***at least 15-20 minutes prior*** to **each** appointment to register or check-in and update any necessary demographic or insurance information. Most office appointments are on average of 30 minutes

so if you arrive ***15 minutes or later*** past your appointment, your appointment will need to be rescheduled. No show or late cancellations will be charged a fee.

We ask you to be courteous and quiet in the waiting area and to silence cell phones or electronic devices while in the waiting room and exam rooms. Anyone who is disruptive or disrespectful to other patients or office staff will be asked to leave and may be dismissed from the practice.

Account Balances/Billing

If you are a self-pay patient and have a balance, your balance will have to be paid to a zero balance before you can receive further services from our practice.

If you have questions or concerns about your bill, you can speak with our billing department. The billing department can also arrange a payment plan option.

Patients with balances over \$100 must make payment arrangements prior to future appointments being made.

Patient Access

We understand our patients have busy schedules that make access to health care difficult. We provide same-day and walk-in appointments for sick visits only and not well visits or annual exams. When you call or arrive for a sick visit, they will be triaged prior to seeing the physician and the office staff (nurse or medical assistant) will ask pertinent questions and review medical history prior to you seeing the physician. The medical assistant or nurse may instruct you on the advice of the physician to have preliminary labs or radiologic studies done prior to your appointment to assist the physician in determining an appropriate diagnosis and treatment plan as well as follow up. The medical assistant may call you for additional information prior to the appointment to assist with that process. We also offer telemedicine (video and/or voice virtual visits) where we can address your health concerns.

Cell Phone and Electronic Device Policies

We ask patients to be courteous and quiet in the waiting room area and to silence and not answer cell phones and electronic devices while in the triage and exam rooms. Anyone who is disruptive or disrespectful to other patients or office staff will be asked to leave and may be dismissed from the practice.

Prescription Request Policies

Prescription requests can be made via phone or via pharmacy who can call or fax our office. Dr. Hooks prescribes medications electronically (eprescribe) including controlled substances via the electronic medical record. We ask that you allow 48-72 hours for prescription requests to be processed. We also ask that since Dr. Hooks prescribes the medication in 90 day allotments with refills that you do not wait until you have run out of medication to request a medication refill.

If you are a capitated (assigned or HMO) Sutter patient and have not established care, Dr Hooks is willing to give a 30 day supply of medically necessary medications (hypertensive, diabetic, cholesterol, and thyroid) but not controlled substances if a patient makes an appointment within a 2 week window. If you are **not** a capitated Sutter patient, you will need to establish care before any medications can be refilled.

Lab and Imaging Request Policies

Lab and imaging requests are done at in office appointments only. Dr. Hooks usually orders labs electronically via Quest Diagnostics, LabCorp, or Sutter Lab services via the practice's electronic health care record. Patients do not need a lab slip to have lab work or imaging done since it is submitted electronically. Patients do need to know what lab and imaging facility they are contracted with through their medical insurance. It is the patient's responsibility to know their insurance benefits and which imaging and lab facilities they are contracted with. Labs and imaging are usually ordered after an visit and are expected to be completed 1 week prior to the next appointment or a telephone appointment will be arranged to discuss results at the physician's and patient's convenience. Labs and imaging are under the physician's clinical discretion and if they are warranted medically and often warrant an in office evaluation first. Imaging and labs will not be ordered via telephone appointments or patient request unless the physician feels it is warranted.

Referral Request Policies

Referral requests are electronically entered via the electronic medical record as well so no paperwork will be given to patients. Referral requests are sent mostly via Sutter Specialty Network which can be contacted via the following number: **1-(888) 834-1788**.

Referrals for disease management or chronic care management will be sent via either Sutter or Salusive. *Chronic disease management* is for patients with chronic medical conditions such as: hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, or congestive heart disease where a team of nurses, pharmacists, midlevels (nurse practioners or physician assistants) assist the primary care physician with management of those medical conditions to ensure compliance and disease control.

Sutter Disease Management:

1-855-421-6831, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday – Friday

Email: DiseaseManagement3@sutterhealth.org

Salusive:

5901 Vallejo Street, Suite D
Emeryville, CA 94608
Phone: (415) 295-5195
Fax: (415) 520-5222
Email: nurse@salusive.com

Referrals can take 7-10 business days to be processed if they are routine since they are subject to insurance verification and approval as well as utilization management review. These requests can be delayed based on prior authorization being warranted or the availability of the consultant to see the patient. Once a referral has been submitted, we follow up within 24-48 hours to make sure the referral has been received; however, we do not have any control of the process after that point. If you have further questions about the referral status, please contact Sutter Specialty Network at **1-(888) 834-1788**.

Sutter Anticoagulation Program
Phone 1-800-544-1808

Sutter Diabetes Education
Phone 1-887-899-8766

Sutter Home Health
Routine (Customer Service) Phone 1-866-961-8521

Durable Medical Equipment Sutter VNA/Timberlake:
Phone 1-800-281-1764

Sutter Advice Nurse Line: 1-866-868-1320

High Deductible Plans and Self Pay Policies

For high deductible plans, we require \$150 for the initial visit if you have not met your deductible and \$75 for each subsequent visit where you have not met your deductible. For our self pay or private pay patients who do not have insurance benefits, we offer discounted rates for office visits and procedures depending on the level of service. We have an account with Lab Corp where our private pay patients can get their labs drawn for a discounted rate (5-10%). The fee for the labs will be due at the time of the appointment with the physician.

Administrative Paperwork Fees

If you have administrative paperwork that you request to have done (e.g short term disability, FMLA), we ask that you fill out the majority of the paperwork with your personal information and drop the paperwork to the office for the physician to fill out. In order to expedite the process, we ask that patients drop off the paperwork and allow us 48-72 hours to complete the paperwork. There will be a \$20 administrative fee for any paperwork that needs to be completed by the physician and that fee is due at the receipt of the completed documentation.

Controlled Substances Policies

Dr. Hooks is very conservative when prescribing controlled substances including narcotics and sedatives in an effort to prevent patients from unintentional harm or chemical dependence. She is board certified in internal medicine and has extensive experience with palliative care and chronic pain management.

Chronic pain is not difficult to manage but it often involves a multidisciplinary approach and not just with medications alone so patients need to be open to trying alternatives that may be effective as well as having realistic expectations for pain control. We will work with you to provide effective pain management.

Consequently, our practice is very judicious in prescription of controlled substances. Alternative choices for pain control including acupuncture, neuropathic pain medications, epidural injections or blocks as well as physical therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy will always be suggested and recommended for chronic pain. The lowest dose of controlled substance possible that will effectively address pain will always be the goal of our practice because it is in the best interest of the patient and poses the least risk.

Phoenix Health & Wellness PC does not offer chronic pain management and will not dispense chronic pain medication (for example, chronic daily narcotics). We will provide you with a referral to a pain management center if you need this specialized form of care after evaluation by our physician.

If the physician decides to prescribe controlled substances, it is only for acute pain issues after a surgical procedure.

Any patient who establishes care with Phoenix Health & Wellness PC will be subject to a medical evaluation and discussion to determine if controlled substances are necessary and there will be direct communication about weaning or discontinuing controlled substances that are unnecessary or if there is any concern about chemical dependency. As a physician, Dr. Hooks has the power to choose what she is comfortable prescribing and what is in the best interest of the patient since she took the Hippocratic Oath as a clinician.

Any patient who is deemed appropriate to be on controlled substances for a medical condition will have to sign a controlled substance contract as well as complete an urine drug screen. In addition, a CURES report will be checked by our office. If the patient's urine drug screen is positive for any illegal or inappropriate along with a suspicious CURES report, this will be a violation of the pain contract and no more controlled substances will be prescribed. Alternatives to controlled substances will also be offered.

Dismissal Policies

A strong patient-physician rapport is developed over time and with trust, communication, and respect. Any violation of that relationship that involves disrespect, violence, or violation of policies interferes with our practice's ability to deliver quality care and will result in dismissal to the practice.

Any patients who violate the following may be asked to be dismissed from the practice:

- Violent, disruptive, or disrespectful to other patients and/or office staff
- Violates the pain contract by either failing screening per Medical Board of California guidelines or diverts controlled substances for personal use or financial gain
- History of late cancellations or no show appointments more than 2 times in a calendar year
- Failure to adhere to payment plan options or non payment for medical services

If you are dismissed from the practice, you will receive a certified letter informing you of the decision to dismiss from the practice and notifying you that you have 30 days to find another physician. Patients who are dismissed from the practice can obtain access to their medical records.