

NeurologySolutions CONSULTANTS

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Greetings!

Dear Patients and Families,

We welcome you to our clinic and thank you for choosing us as your resource for neurological care. We want you to have a good experience with us while we make every reasonable effort to best manage your healthcare and future well-being.

Neurology has become a most fascinating and growing area of knowledge and technology in medicine. We are often challenged with complex diseases which can be difficult to manage. In recent decades our field has matured, and we now have more therapeutic options than ever. Some treatments can even alter the course of disease. We promise to do our very best to identify your signs and symptoms, define the possible diagnoses, and with great hope, manage your healthcare effectively. With perseverance, we wish to reduce or relieve your symptoms whenever humanly possible.

Again, thanks for choosing us for your care and we look forward to developing an honest and effective relationship with you over the long-term.

Best wishes,

Dr. Rob Izor, M.D., M.S.
Director, **NSC** Movement Disorders Specialist

NSC Policy Statement:

We must live and work in a healthcare system complicated by many factors including: skyrocketing costs; a mixed private and socialized insurance system which fails to cover much of the population; highly commercialized pharmaceutical and medical equipment industries; and an aging population with only partial government-regulated insurance. Busy doctors have had limited capacity to protect themselves or their patients from powerful interests which disrupt the doctor/patient relationship. In the past, patients and families were physically and financially connected to their family doctor and specialists. In recent decades, doctors have been gradually constricted by managed/HMO care, government regulations, corporate, insurance, legal and pharmaceutical interests. Such interests often profit at the expense of a diminishing doctor/patient relationship.

A solo practice can spend around \$200,000 per year or more on overhead expenses. Therefore, a doctor will need to earn about \$125 per hour for a clinic to operate, all before earning a living. Additionally, doctors are generally expected to cover hospital emergencies which often represent overtime which is poorly reimbursed by most insurers. Up to 30% of hospital and ER cases are left unpaid by the uninsured without any charitable tax benefits. These costs partly illustrate why providing basic and emergency care to patients has become so difficult for doctors, and why many doctors avoid hospital and ER coverage altogether.

Studies demonstrate that patients and families typically remember about 20% of the clinical information provided during an office visit. However, insurers reimburse doctors for complete care based on the office visit alone, which is assumed to include all documentation and any number of telephone encounters. Insurers do not adequately compensate physicians for complicated cases, even with extensive documentation. Procedures on the other hand are better reimbursed, but those payments are also shrinking. Reduced reimbursements prompt doctors to increase the number of patients seen per day, work longer hours, and rely on less experienced physician extenders. It is difficult for patients and families to understand the meaning of a complex diagnosis and management plan when office visits are brief and often far between.

All these factors make practicing medicine more difficult, risky, and less satisfying for patients, families, and doctors. We intend to find ways of providing the best quality of neurological healthcare possible. We hope you, your family, and caregivers will help us in our effort. We want to take excellent care of all our patients, so we will create some guidelines to help streamline and hopefully improve the doctor/patient relationship.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dr. Rob Izor, M.D., M.S.
Director, **NSC** Movement Disorders Specialist

NSC Appointment Guidelines:

- 1) Please help us prepare for your visit by completing the new **Patient History Questionnaire (PHQ)** included in this packet **before the appointment.**
- 2) Please be on time. Patients more than 15 minutes late may need to reschedule their appointment. **Accidentally missed appointments will result in a charge of \$35 to your account if not excused by contacting the office at least 24 hours before the appointment time.**
- 3) **Copays & Deductibles will be collected at the time of your appointment.**
- 4) Each clinic room will have a large clock, and the time will be recorded when the doctor enters the room.
- 5) A thorough neurological exam will be performed followed by a brief discussion. New patient consults may last 30-40 minutes.
- 6) Follow-ups may last 15-20 minutes. Additional follow-ups will be offered until the diagnosis and management plan are fully understood.
- 7) Dictation and documentation may occur during the visit.
- 8) Patients may be video recorded to capture their neurological status as part of the visit. These recordings may be shown to other medical professionals for diagnostic or educational purposes.
- 9) **NSC physicians and staff are not usually available for emergencies at night or on weekends. Emergencies after hours must be referred to the emergency room, preferably North Austin Medical Center ER.**
- 10) In order to limit the risk of emergencies on weekends, **please do not start any medication changes on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, or Sunday.**

I have read and agree to follow all guidelines and policies described,

PATIENT SIGNATURE

GUARDIAN/FAMILY MEMBER

GUARDIAN/FAMILY MEMBER

Optional Services:

(Payments for optional services will be the financial responsibility of the patient and family and are not covered by your insurer.)

- 1) Optional phone counseling appointments may be scheduled during normal business hours at a fee of \$75 every 15 minutes.
- 2) Optional after-hours and weekend counseling by phone and eventually encrypted email may be made available directly with NSC doctors and nurse practitioners. Access to this service will require a non-refundable \$200 yearly administration fee, and a refundable deposit of \$300. The deposit will be deducted at \$5.00 per minute of message review plus counseling time. The deposit must be fully replenished when exhausted. **NSC** reserves the right to respond to emails by telephone. **NSC** reserves the right to terminate optional phone counseling services at any time for any reason. Patients and families may also terminate optional phone counseling services at any time for any reason. Any remaining deposit balance will be refunded promptly.

Optional services do not constitute immediate or priority call coverage for emergencies! If an emergency occurs and **NSC** staff are unavailable for whatever reason, you or your family must call 911 and go directly to the emergency room at NAMC, or the nearest hospital facility. It is often impossible to predict the cause of a neurological deterioration over the phone. **Actual hands-on examination, observation and stabilization by a physician in the emergency room, with appropriate neurological consultation if necessary, is required.** All other urgent calls and/or any discussions which suggest a need for major medical management changes may be referred for an actual clinic visit as soon as possible. If an emergent deterioration is in progress, patients will be referred to the NAMC emergency center, or the nearest ER, for physical examination by an ER physician, appropriate diagnostic tests, and intensive care stabilization when necessary. The ER physician may consult another on-call neurologist if necessary, especially in cases where **NSC** staff are not immediately available.

These guidelines and optional services should allow for increased physician access for all patients, and will help patients and families achieve a better understanding of neurological disease and the management plan. Ultimately this should result in more realistic expectations and better outcomes over the long-term.

We will also make efforts to sponsor and/or encourage free support groups. Whenever possible, patients and families will be notified of free local seminars and invited to participate. Any patients or family members who would like to volunteer their time organizing and/or participating in local support groups should please identify themselves to our staff.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to your next visit.

Best wishes,

Dr. Rob Izor, M.D., M.S.
Director, **NSC** Movement Disorders Specialist