



PO Box 21267  
Seattle, WA 98111

June 15, 2012

<MEMBER NAME>  
«Address\_1», «Address\_2»  
«City», «State» «Zip9»

Dear <MEMBER NAME>:

At Asuris Northwest Health, we strive to provide you with the information you need to make the best health care decisions for yourself and your family. As part of that commitment, we want to let you know about a change in the network participation status of a group of emergency room (ER) physicians who practice at several hospitals throughout the state, including facilities in your area.

### **What's happening**

Effective July 1, 2012, emergency room physicians will no longer be in the Asuris network at the following hospitals:

- Cascade Valley Hospital – Arlington
- St. Elizabeth Hospital – Enumclaw
- Island Hospital – Anacortes
- St. Anthony Hospital – Gig Harbor
- St. Clare Hospital – Lakewood
- St. Francis Hospital – Federal Way
- St. Joseph Medical Center – Tacoma

The ER physicians at these facilities are affiliated with an independent group, Northwest Emergency Physicians, separate from the hospitals at which they practice.

Northwest Emergency Physicians has asked for a significant increase in their reimbursement rates, well above the rates received by comparable network providers. While we value our relationship with these emergency room physicians, we cannot accept the higher costs they have requested, which would need to be passed on to our customers and members. Asuris will continue to work with this group in an effort to bring them back into the network at reasonable rates that are comparable to other network providers. In the event we reach agreement with Northwest Emergency Physicians we will notify you.

### **How this affects you**

You may seek emergency services at any emergency room, including the facilities listed above; however if you receive care at one of the hospitals at which Northwest Emergency Physicians doctors practice, you may be responsible for higher out-of-pocket costs. Your financial responsibility will be lower when you seek care from participating network providers at other facilities.

If you seek care from Northwest Emergency Physicians, you will receive two bills – one from the hospital and a separate bill from the ER physician group. Because the hospitals at which Northwest Emergency Physicians practice are still participating in the Asuris network, they will accept our agreed upon rate as payment in full. However, because the physicians will no longer be in the network, they can bill you for any charges above our allowed amount, for which you will be responsible.

In addition, because we cannot reimburse non-contracted providers directly, if you receive services from a Northwest Emergency Physicians doctor, we will send you a copayee check (made out to you and the ER physician group) for the amount of the bill your plan covers. You will be responsible for using that check to pay Northwest Emergency Physicians, along with any other expense your plan requires, such as

deductibles, coinsurance and/or copayments. **As previously noted, Northwest Emergency Physicians can bill you for amounts above what is covered by the copayee check.**

### **What you can do**


We know that you may not be able to choose the emergency care provider in a true emergency. However, when possible, you can ensure that you pay the lowest out-of-pocket costs by choosing a hospital or provider that participates in the Asuris network. A list of hospitals that offer in-network facility and emergency physician services is included below.

You also have additional options when you are in need of non-emergency care, including:

- Urgent care – you can search for urgent care centers and other ER alternatives by visiting myAsuris.com
- Your primary care physician – some doctors offer extended hours and weekend appointments for urgent needs

We regret any inconvenience that this situation may cause. We want to make sure that you understand the impact and options available to you. Please call Customer Service at the number on the back of your Asuris member identification card with any questions or to discuss available care options.

Sincerely,



Penny Garrett  
Director, Customer Service  
Asuris Northwest Health

### **Alternate Hospitals with in-network emergency physicians**

#### **South Sound:**

**Harrison Medical Center;** 2520 Cherry Ave., Bremerton, WA 98310

**Valley Medical Center;** 400 South 43rd St., Renton, WA 98055

**Highline Medical Center;** 16251 Sylvester Rd. SW, Burien, WA 98166

**Auburn Regional Medical Center;** 202 North Division St., Auburn, WA 98001

**Good Samaritan Hospital;** 407 14th Ave. SE, Puyallup, WA 98372

**Allenmore Hospital;** 1901 S. Union Ave., Tacoma, WA 98405

**Tacoma General Hospital;** 315 Martin Luther King Jr. Wy., Tacoma, WA 98405

**Mary Bridge Children's Hospital;** 317 Martin Luther King Jr. Wy, Tacoma, WA 98405

**Providence St. Peter Hospital;** 413 Lilly Rd. NE, Olympia, WA 98506

**Capital Medical Center;** 3900 Capital Mall Dr. S.W., Olympia, WA 98502

#### **North Sound:**

**United General Hospital;** 2000 Hospital Dr., Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

**Skagit Valley Hospital;** 1415 East Kincaid St., Mount Vernon, WA 98273

**Valley General Hospital;** 14701 179th Ave. SE, Monroe, WA 98272