

TODAY'S MESSAGE

PCPs: HELP EDUCATE PATIENTS ABOUT USING URGENT CARE CENTERS-RETAIL CLINICS FOR AFTER-HOURS NON-EMERGENCIES

When your office is closed, some patients who have a health care need may choose to visit a hospital emergency room even if the situation isn't a true medical emergency. Doing so will most often result in them paying higher out-of-pocket expenses, not to mention burdening emergency room staff with treating non-emergencies.

For such patients, visiting an urgent care center or retail clinic when your office is closed is a viable option, and it can save them money in the long run. To help you educate patients in this regard, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield West Virginia has created a general educational letter to patients that you can customize, print on your letterhead and distribute to patients at your convenience. To download this letter template and begin using it in your practice, visit the Resource Center's *Provider Forms* link, and then click on *Miscellaneous Forms*. Lastly, look for the link titled *PCP Template Letter to Patients Concerning Urgent Care Centers-Retail Clinics vs. ER*.