



Aliados Health Network eConsult Guidelines

October 2025 – September 2026

Background and Introduction

The Aliados Health Network aims to improve access to specialty care, enhance Primary Care Provider (PCP) knowledge and satisfaction, reduce unnecessary referrals, and provide patients with more convenient services through the implementation of eConsult guidelines. Over the last few years health systems in Sonoma County have encountered challenges regarding specialty care access. At the same time health centers have had increased referral volumes. This has led to extended wait times for in-person specialty care appointments. These guidelines aim to support health centers in standardizing the use of eConsult prior to in-person and telehealth specialty referrals.

Network Goals

- Improve access to specialty care
- Enhance primary care provider knowledge and satisfaction
- Reduce unnecessary referrals
- Provide patients more timely and convenient service

Specialties for eConsult

Based on membership referral data from the Partnership Health Plan of California's Aliados Health Network, as well as wait time analytics, usage trends, and input from health center clinical leadership, the following specialties have been identified as requiring an eConsult prior to in-person referral:

1. Rheumatology
2. Endocrinology
3. Neurology
4. Gastroenterology

Other commonly referred and high-wait specialties may also be considered for eConsult first implementation, depending on network capacity and patient needs.

Guideline for eConsult Use

- eConsult is required prior to in-person referral for the selected specialties unless exceptions apply (see below).
- PCPs should utilize eConsult to seek specialist input for diagnosis, management, or confirmation of the need for face-to-face care.
- Specialty pathways should be established for expedited in-person visits and procedures when eConsult is used.
- Any eConsult platform is acceptable to use. Health centers should be able to share eConsult results at the time of escalation to in-person care.

Exceptions to the eConsult-First Model

- Emergencies, unstable or rapidly worsening conditions
- Urgent referrals requiring in-person assessment
- Conditions requiring immediate physical examination or surgery
- Complex multi-system issues needing comprehensive in-person evaluation
- Cases with a known need for immediate procedure
- Already established patient-specialist relationships
- Patient refusal of eConsult

eConsult Recommendations

- Providers and other health center staff should obtain informed consent and maintain transparency with patients regarding eConsult use.
- Health centers should consider scheduling follow-up appointments to review eConsult results with patients. This ensures that clinicians have sufficient time to review, act upon, and discuss eConsult results with patients.
- Health centers should integrate decision support for providers and staff to drive the eConsult-first approach.
- Health centers and/or Aliados Health staff should gather provider feedback on the eConsult-first approach.
- Health center Chief Medical Officers or their appointees should conduct regular case review of eConsults for quality assurance.