First Available Appointment Policy  
Effective Date: 08/01/2012

I: Purpose
To offer new patients the soonest available appointment, minimizing wait times maximize access to appropriate healthcare and increase patient satisfaction.

II: Definitions
Scheduler – A member of the Pediatrics central scheduling pool.
Peds Scheduling – Central scheduling pool in the Department of Pediatrics.

III: Policy
1) New patients will be scheduled in the division’s first available appointment slot(s), unless they are being referred to a specific provider.

2) Schedulers must always consider diagnosis. Many divisions have specialists within the subspecialty (EP, Neuromuscular, Marfans, Epilepsy, Asthma, etc.) Depending on the diagnosis and division, patients will be scheduled with appropriate provider(s).

3) Division chiefs or managers will provide schedulers with a list of diagnoses that a subspecialty provider may or may not be scheduled with.

4) In divisions where provider cross-over is appropriate, the following scripting would apply.

   **Standard new patient first available appointment script:**

   “It looks like you are being referred to {division} for {Dx}. Our first available appointment is {date} at {time} with {doctor}, at {location}. However you could also be seen at {location} by {doctor} on {date} at {time}. Which works best for you?”

5) Schedulers should assume that a patient may be scheduled with any provider in the division unless restricted by III.3.

6) If a referring provider notifies one of our Pediatric subspecialty providers of a patient and our provider personally agrees to see the patient, it is that provider’s responsibility to message log Peds Scheduling with that request.

Approved: Physician Advisory Committee 06/07/2012

Department of Pediatrics