



# Seaport Family Practice



## Our Policies & Procedures Overview

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## Welcome to Seaport Family Practice!

On behalf of everyone here, I would like to thank you for choosing us for your health care needs. Our practice has established a solid reputation in the community as an excellent source of health care, technology and information.

We are here to help you in any way we can and I am confident that by working with you, we will be able to meet all your health care needs and goals, and provide you with the best health care possible.

We would like to invite you to read the following pages carefully to familiarize yourself with our practice's procedures and services.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Karen Stearns  
Office Manager

# Goals, Services & Guidelines

## Goals:

Seaport Family Practice offers a team approach to medical care for the whole family. We will see you at the office, in hospital follow-up, through rehabilitation, and on nursing home or home visits. We will coordinate your care with visiting nurses, hospice volunteers, community educators, consultants, and alternative healers. We are especially privileged to care for patients at the beginning and end of life. Our success depends on the trust we build into our relationships.

## Services:

- Acute Care, with same-day appointments and weekend coverage.
- Well Person Visits, including pediatrics, gynecology, and health maintenance.
- Chronic Care Management for diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, asthma, depression, osteoporosis, kidney disease, etc.
- Mental Health Services- including individual, couples & family therapy.
- Minor Surgery of cysts, abscesses, skin cancers, ingrown nails.
- Skin Care- including rashes, warts, ulcers, burns, & lacerations.
- Addiction Medicine for narcotics (Suboxone), alcohol, & nicotine.
- Lifestyle Modification- including diet, exercise, and weight management
- Osteopathic Manipulation Therapy (OMT)
- Allergy Testing & Treatment
- Home & Nursing Home Visits
- Laboratory- blood draws, INR management, pregnancy tests, strep screens, urine testing, sedimentation rates, EKGs, and Pulmonary Function Tests (PFTs)

## Guidelines:

- Bring your medication or list of medications to every appointment.
- Allow 48 hours to refill a prescription; request it from your pharmacy.
- In bad weather, call ahead to see if we have cancelled or shortened our hours.
- We strive to keep your medical information confidential.
- Payment (including the co-pay) is due at time of service.
- Nonpayment may result in your release from our practice. See if you qualify for our sliding scale fee program.

WebView is an on-line program (patient portal) that allows you to read your medical record anytime, anywhere, as long as you have Internet access. For patients who do not have access to the Internet, we have set aside a computer at our office for your use. While traveling, you (or another doctor) can have instant and up-to-date access to your chart without toting a portfolio of records.

WebView is free. You may sign up by calling Michele Wyman at Seaport Family Practice ext. 207, or ask your provider the next time you are in the office. You will need to choose a username and password. The username must be lower case; the password is not case-sensitive. We have found Mozilla Firefox to be the most reliable web browser; you can also use newer versions of Safari or Internet Explorer.

WebView allows you to read your office notes, consultation letters, hospital reports, test results, vital signs, prescriptions, problem lists- all the medical information we keep for you. In addition, you can request appointments and correspond with your provider on-line. Soon, you will be able to provide us with your complete social, family, and past medical history on-line.

If you provide us with your **e-mail address**, we will send you the Seaport Family Practice e-Newsletter, published monthly as topics arise. It contains medical news, office announcements, and patient surveys to help us improve our services. You can unsubscribe by notifying Michele Wyman at Seaport Family Practice. If there is anything you would like to see in our future e-Newsletters, please send an e-mail to [sfp@roadrunner.com](mailto:sfp@roadrunner.com).

# Open Scheduling

Seaport Family Practice has adopted a new way of scheduling appointments. We are committed to seeing patients on the same day they call. If we cannot schedule you that day, we will find the next best suitable time. We reserve a majority of our appointment slots for same-day appointments.

Open Scheduling allows us to see patients when they need or want to be seen. It is good for you because we will see you on the day your need arises; it is good for us because we don't have to remind you to keep your appointment, and almost no one forgets their appointment if it was scheduled that day.

If all the appointment slots are taken by the time you call, one of our nurses will attempt to answer your question, direct you to the emergency department, or "work you in" with one of the day's providers. (You can always check to see who is in the office on any given day by checking the **PROVIDERS' SCHEDULE** on our website.

There are some appointments that may be scheduled in advance. Annual physical exams can be scheduled up to two weeks ahead. Likewise, the office schedules certain procedures and follow-up visits that require close monitoring. Finally, patients who rely upon public transportation will be offered a scheduled appointment.

You can request an office appointment online through Webview. We check these appointment requests at the beginning of each workday. Or you can call for an appointment: our phones open at 7:30 AM. Please note that we are no longer reminding patients of their appointment time, except for the annual exam.

You will be given an **orange reminder card** when you leave the office. It suggests the approximate date that you should return. Of course, you can come back anytime that there is a change in your health. If you lose the orange card, or we forgot to give you one, you can call the office or check your last office note on-line (a suggested follow-up date is noted at the bottom).

When you notice that you are low on medication and have no more refills, call your local pharmacy. They will initiate a refill request to our office; we can then very easily refill your prescription with the push of a button. Soon this direct refill service will be available for mail order pharmacies. Until then, you can contact either your mail order pharmacy or our office to obtain these refills.

**The best time to request refills is while you are at the doctor's office. Please check your prescriptions before coming for an appointment or- better yet- bring your medications with you!**

Sometimes we will not honor the pharmacy's request for a refill. This is because too much time has gone by since the last time we saw you. Patients who take several medications on a regular basis should be seen at least twice a year. Patients on pain, anxiety, ADHD, or psychiatric medication, or who have unstable health, should be seen more often. We often write for medications to run out in three to six months as a reminder to make an appointment.

**We prefer to see patients who take daily medication at least once a year, and will not prescribe antibiotics unless a patient has been seen for the problem that requires it.**

We prescribe generic medication whenever a quality generic product is available. This can save you a substantial amount of money. Most generic plans charge \$4 for a month supply or \$11 for a 90-day supply. Name-brand drugs that require a prior approval (PA) are sometimes necessary, but they take up a lot of our time to approve. Therefore, we ask you to be flexible and open-minded when it comes to the medication your provider prescribes. We will always support you if your insurance plan's preferred drug has been shown to cause a side effect or does not work for you.

**Though we send prescriptions instantly, it takes your pharmacy a few hours to fill them. If you need a new prescription quickly, we will print it for you; if you requested a refill, give the pharmacy 48 hours to fill it.**

# Reaching the Doctor

**Seaport Family Practice offers a number of ways to reach the doctor:**

**Morning Call Hour** is available Monday through Friday, 7:00 to 7:45 AM. One of the providers is always available to take your call. The number is **207-322-6503**. This line does not accept recorded messages. Please use this number for clinical questions, not appointments or prescription refills.

**After Hours Call** allows you to reach a provider on evenings, weekends, and holidays. The Belfast Answering Service will answer the main office number 207-338-6900 and contact the on-call provider. He or she can offer advice over the telephone, agree to meet you at the office under certain circumstances, or refer you to the emergency department when necessary. The provider on-call is listed in the Providers Schedule on our website.

**Calling the Office:** We will try to answer every telephone call with a human voice. If you need to talk to a doctor, the receptionist will redirect your call to your provider's extension. If you are asked to leave a recorded message, please be reassured that we will return your call **THAT DAY**.

**E-Mail:** You can e-mail your provider directly by logging onto Webview and clicking "New Message." This screen looks like any e-mail program. Click on "To" and select your provider. Double-click on the desired name so that it shows up in the box at the upper right. Hit "OK" and click in the big box, where you will write your message. Finally, hit "Send" at the bottom of the screen. If your provider is on vacation or not in the office, it may take a few days to receive a reply. Only your provider checks these e-mails.

Patient Centered Medical Home is the name for a new style of medical practice, one that uses information technology, innovative scheduling, teamwork, and regular self-assessment to provide the best possible medical care for the patients it serves.

Seaport Family Practice was chosen as one of 36 practices nationwide to be included in the National Demonstration Project, a two-year study on practice transformation toward the patient-centered medical home. During that time, we have adopted most of the features of a PCMH, including:

<b>Open Scheduling</b>	Most patients are seen on the day they call.
<b>Group Office Visits</b>	Group visits for those who are elderly or diabetic.
<b>Teams</b>	Providers and nurses working together for you.
<b>Electronic Medical Record</b>	An electronic record that is neat, legible, shared.
<b>Patient Portals</b>	Patients can access their record on-line.
<b>e Prescribing</b>	Fast, legible, safe way of sending prescriptions.
<b>Practice Guidelines</b>	Using the best, proven treatments in medicine.
<b>Self-Assessment</b>	Checking our work thru chart reviews & surveys.

Seaport Family Practice has applied for **NCQA Certification** as a Patient-Centered Medical Home. We are among the first in the country to be achieve this distinction. More importantly, we are committed to self-improvement so that we can offer the best medical care while taking the time to know you personally and remain excited about the work we do.

# Hospital Care

Seaport Family Practice uses the **Hospitalist Service** at Waldo County General Hospital for its primary care admissions. Our doctors make social rounds, but let doctors who only work in the hospital manage your hospital care (just like emergency visits are handled by doctors who only work in the ER).

More complicated or specialized care is referred to Eastern Maine Medical Center (EMMC) in Bangor or the Maine Medical Center (MMC) in Portland. We are very familiar with most of the specialists in these larger institutions, and will do our best to link you with the right doctor for your particular medical needs.

The **Hospital Service** consists of providers whose sole concern is the care of hospitalized patients. They have access to the electronic medical record at Seaport Family Practice in order to provide continuity and the best possible care. We are notified of your admission and discharge, and receive copies of all documents from your hospital stay. We are available to answer any questions from the attending physician, and we will see you in follow-up immediately after your hospital discharge.

Many (especially older) patients who leave Waldo County General Hospital will spend a few weeks in rehabilitation at one of the local nursing homes, Tallpines or Harbor Hill. Here, we will guide your care and try to promote a speedy recovery and return home. Dr. Carol Kuhn is Medical Director at Tallpines and visits several times a week at both nursing homes.

A big part of the anxiety of being sick comes from not knowing who to call, when to call, or when you will be called back. At Seaport Family Practice, we pledge that we will call or see you within the following time frames:

<b>Return your phone call</b>	Same Day
<b>See you for an urgent visit</b>	Within 1 business day
<b>See you for a non-urgent office visit</b>	Within 2 business days
<b>Refill a prescription</b>	Within 2 business days
<b>Schedule a consultation or test</b>	Within 2 business days
<b>Finish our office notes</b>	Within 2 days
<b>See you for an annual physical</b>	Within 2 weeks
<b>Provide test results*</b>	Within 2 weeks
<b>Provider office records*</b>	Within 2 weeks
<b>Respond to a Webview e-mail**</b>	As soon as possible

\* You can always check Webview, where you can see results and records as soon as we can. You can print them directly from Webview.

\*\* Since e-mail is sent confidentially to its intended recipient, only the person you sent it to will respond. Response time may be delayed by vacation or the overwhelming demands of the work day.

# Cost Savings

Health care is expensive, even for those who have “good” insurance. It is made all the more confusing by co-pays, deductibles, preferred providers & drugs, secondary insurance, and donut holes that vary from plan to plan. Here are a few suggestions for saving money that still allow you to receive the best medical care.

## Generic Drugs:

Following Walmart’s lead, all major pharmacy chains- including Hannaford and Rite Aid- offer generic drug plans. It usually costs \$4.00 for a 30-day prescription and \$10.99 for a 90-day prescription. Generic drugs are safe and effective; major studies comparing them with brand-name drugs have found no significant clinical difference. Ask your provider if there is a generic equivalent for your most expensive medications.

## Sliding Scale:

Our office offers reduced fees for qualified patients. The “sliding scale” can save you 25% or 50% of the office fee as long as you 1) pay in full at the time of service and 2) have no health insurance. Applicants for the sliding scale discount should speak with Kathryn Clark, our financial manager. She will determine your eligibility based on last year’s tax return.

We use WIC guidelines to determine eligibility. You will likely qualify if your household annual income is under \$19,240.00 (single), \$25,900.00 (household of two), and \$39,220.00 (family of four). See: [www.usda.gov/wic/howtoapply/incomeguidelines.htm](http://www.usda.gov/wic/howtoapply/incomeguidelines.htm).

## Comparing Prices:

It pays to compare prices. If you are required to pay for some or all of your laboratory or X-ray expense, it’s worth it to shop around. A mammogram, colonoscopy, or blood test can cost twice as much in one hospital compared to another. We keep a list, updated twice a year, on the prices of the most common tests at various facilities.

**SEAPORT FAMILY PRACTICE**

41 Wight Street

Belfast, ME 04915

**Main Number: 207.338.6900**

**Morning Call Number: 207.322.6503**

**Regular Hours:**

7:30 am - 5:00 pm | Monday-Friday

**[www.seaportfamilypractice.com](http://www.seaportfamilypractice.com)**