AFTER HOURS SAMPLE SCRIPT

One of the following scripts may be used by physicians and medical groups as a template to ensure members have access to timely medical care after business hours or when your offices are closed.

IMPORTANT: Effective telephone service after business hours ensures callers are able to reach a live voice or answering machine within 30 seconds.

I. CALLS ANSWERED BY A LIVE VOICE (such as an answering service or centralized triage):

If the caller believes that he or she is experiencing a medical emergency, advise the caller to hang up and call 911 immediately or proceed to the nearest emergency room/medical facility.

If the caller believes the situation is urgent or indicates a need to speak with a physician, facilitate contact with the physician by doing one or more of the following:
- Put the caller on hold momentarily and then connect the caller to the on-call physician
- Get the caller's number and advise him or her that a physician will return the call within 30 minutes (immediately send a message to physician)
- Give the caller the pager number for the on-call physician and advise the caller that the physician will call the member within 30 minutes, or direct the caller to the nearest urgent care center location
- If a caller indicates a need for interpreter services, facilitate the contact by accessing interpreter services

Examples:
Hello, you have reached the <answering service/centralized triage> for Dr. <Last Name>. If this is a medical emergency, please hang up and dial 911 immediately or go to the nearest emergency room. If you wish to speak with the on-call physician, please stay on the line and I will connect you.

Hello, you have reached the <answering service/centralized triage> for Dr. <Last name>. If this is a medical emergency, please hang up and dial 911 immediately or go to the nearest emergency room. If you wish to speak with the on-call physician, Dr. <Last Name> can assist you. Please <page/call> him/her at <telephone number>. You may expect a call back within 30 minutes.

II. CALLS ANSWERED BY AN ANSWERING MACHINE:

Hello, you have reached <insert Name of Doctor/Medical Group>. If this is a medical emergency, please hang up and dial 911 immediately or go to the nearest emergency room. If you wish to speak with the physician on call (select appropriate option):
- *Please hold and you will be connected to Dr. <Last Name>*
- *You may reach the physician on call directly by calling <telephone number>*
- *Press <number> to transfer to our urgent care center. Our urgent care center is located at <urgent care center address> (Appropriate language options should be provided for the location.)*
- *Press <number> to page the physician on call. You may expect a return call within 30 minutes*

Examples:
Hello, you have reached the <Name of Doctor/Medical Group> for Dr. <Last Name>. If this is a medical emergency, please hang up and dial 911 immediately or go to the nearest emergency room. If you wish to speak with the physician on call, please leave a message with your name, telephone number and reason for calling, and you may expect a call back within 30 minutes.

Hello, you have reached <Name of Doctor/Medical Group>. If this is a medical emergency, please hang up and dial 911 immediately or go to the nearest emergency room. If you wish to speak with the physician on call, you may reach him/her directly by calling <telephone number> or press <number> to page the physician on call. You may expect a call back within 30 minutes.