POLICY | PURPOSE STATEMENT:
It is the policy of TTUHSC SON Larry Combest Community Health and Wellness Center to provide clinical advice for patient phone calls in a timely manner. The purpose of this policy is to define the process for timely response to phone calls and the documentation requirements.

SCOPE:
This policy applies to all clinic staff and all patients of Larry Combest Community Health and Wellness Center.

PROCEDURE:
1. Calls are answered by front desk Patient Service Specialist Monday through Friday from 0800 – 1930 for Larry Combest Community Health and Wellness Center and 0800 – 1700 for Senior House Calls, Combest Central Community Health Center, and Abilene Community Health Center. Calls are answered by a designated answering service 24 hours daily, 7 days a week during the remaining hours.
2. Calls from patients requiring clinical advice are directed to the RN via message communication or to RN phone.
3. The RN will evaluate concerns and give clinical advice within their defined scope of practice. The RN will document this and any questions/needs in the EMR in a message communication to the patient's Provider. The RN will call patient and communicate any further instructions from the Provider, and document this in the electronic medical record as an addendum. Patient will receive notification of advice and/or plan of care within 24 hours.
4. Calls outside of 0800 – 1930, Monday – Friday will be answered by the designated answering service:
   a. Larry Combest Health and Wellness Center – At Larry Combest Community Health and Wellness Center, patient call are answered by a designated
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answering service after 1930, Monday – Friday and throughout the weekend.

b. Senior House Calls – At Senior House Calls, patient calls are answered by a designated answering service between the hours of 1200 – 1300 and after 1700, Monday – Friday and throughout the weekend.

c. Combest Central Community Health Center – At Combest Central Community Health Center, patient calls are answered by a designated answering service between the hours of 1200 – 1300 and after 1700, Monday – Friday and throughout the weekend.

d. Abilene Community Health Center – At Abilene Community Health Center, patient calls are answered by a designated answering service between the hours of 1200 – 1300 and after 1700, Monday-Friday and throughout the weekend.

5. Calls for clinical advice will be communicated by the designated answering service to the Provider on-call. Answering service will contact the on-call Provider at the first number designated on the on-call schedule. If there is not contact with the Provider within 10 minutes, the designated answering service will call again at 10 minute intervals times 2. If after 30 minutes the designated answering service has not made contact with the on-call Provider, then they will contact the on-call administrative staff member. Administrative staff will contact an available Provider to answer the patient’s call.

6. The Provider will document the communication, advice given and/or actions taken in the electronic medical record in a communication message to the primary care provider (PCP) by the next business day. Access to electronic medical record will be available to the Provider 24 hours daily, and from outside the clinic, through web based access.

7. Critical results will be assessed and addressed with the patient or the Primary Care Provider when they are received.

8. Designated answering service will send a log by email of all calls received to all management staff at 0800 and 1300 daily for review. Logs will be reviewed daily by the Nurse Manager, Program Directors and Executive Director to validate timely follow up by on-call Provider, and that electronic medical record documentation was completed.

9. Designated answer service logs will be emailed by the Nurse Manager to the on-call Provider as a reference for follow up.
10. Patient electronic medical record portal access is available 24 hours daily to patients that have enrolled for portal access. The Provider on-call may communicate with the patient through the electronic medical record portal if this is agreeable with the patient and on-call Provider. NOTE: Electronic medical record portal messages are monitored and responded to by the RN during office hours, and will receive a response from the RN by the next business day.

11. Patients requiring translation services other than Spanish or English will be transferred to translation services via Certified Languages @ 1-800-225-5254.

RESPONSIBILITIES | REVIEW | REVISIONS:
It is the responsibility of the Policy & Procedures Committee to review and initiate necessary revisions based on collaboration and input by Policy and Procedure committee and through Administrative management of this policy, including the review and revisions will be the responsibility of the Clinical Services Director.

RIGHT TO CHANGE POLICY:
TTUHSC SON Combest reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, amend, or rescind this policy in whole or in part at any time to reflect changes in policy and/or law.