



ANNUAL ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT

Our company contracts with a NCQA certified survey vendor to conduct an annual appointment and after-hours accessibility audit of primary care and specialist practices to determine if practices are adhering to established access standards related to the timeliness of our members to receive care.

- **Appointment Access Audit:** Includes phone interviews with your office’s scheduling staff, during business hours, to assess the wait time for members to schedule appointments with your practice site.
- **After-hours Access Audit:** Includes phone calls to your office, during non-business hours, to assess if your practice site’s after-hours protocol provides members with appropriate instruction on receiving care for an emergent or urgent medical condition in a timely manner.

Please take a few minutes to review the below Medicaid and Medicare standards and share with your staff that schedule member appointments. The standards and other Accessibility resource information can also be found on our provider website at [Accessibility to Care Standards](#).

Medicaid Accessibility Standards

Your practice site has contractually agreed to provide timely access to care for our members. Please review the below access standards related to appointment wait times/protocol:

PROVIDER TYPE	APPOINTMENT TYPE /PROTOCOL	ACCESS STANDARD
PCP, Specialist	Emergent Care	Immediately seen or referred to an emergency facility Practice sites will be able to schedule an appointment immediately or refer the member to an emergency facility.
PCP, Specialist	Urgent Care	Within 24 hours Practice sites will be able to schedule an appointment within 24 hours of being contacted by member.

Specialist (Specialties): Dermatology Orthopedic Surgery Otolaryngology and pediatric specialties; Allergy & Immunology Endocrinology Gastroenterology General Surgery Hematology Infectious Disease Nephrology Neurology Oncology Pulmonology Rehab Medicine Rheumatology Urology	Routine Care	Within 15 business days Practice sites will be able to schedule an appointment within 15 business days from the date of referral.
PCP, Specialist For all other specialist types not listed above.	Routine Care	Within 10 business days Practice sites will be able to schedule an appointment within 10 business day of being contacted by member.
PCP	Health Assessment/ General Physical Examinations and First Examinations	Within 3 weeks of enrollment Practice sites will be able to schedule an appointment within 3 weeks.
PCPs who treat members under the age of twenty-one (21)	New Member EPSDT screen	Within forty-five (45) days from the effective date of enrollment, unless the child is already under the care of a PCP and is current with screen and immunizations
PCP, Specialist	First time appointment with Persons known to be HIV positive or diagnosed with AIDS	Within seven (7) days from the effective date of enrollment, unless a member is already in active care with a PCP or Specialist
PCP, Specialist	First time appointment with member who is a Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or SSI related consumer	Within forty-five (45) days from the effective date of enrollment, unless a member is already in active care with a PCP or Specialist
PCPs and Specialists who provide prenatal care	First (1st) trimester visit	Within ten (10) business days of the member being identified as being pregnant
PCPs and Specialists who provide prenatal care	Second (2nd) trimester visit	Within five (5) business days of the member being identified as being pregnant
PCPs and Specialists who provide prenatal care	Third (3rd) trimester visit	Within four (4) business days of the member being identified as being pregnant
PCPs and Specialists who provide prenatal care	High-risk pregnancies	Within twenty-four (24) hours of being identified as high risk or immediately if an emergency.

PCP, Specialist	Missed Appointment	<p>Conduct outreach whenever a member misses an appointment and document in the medical record.</p> <p>Practice sites must make three (3) attempts to reach the member with at least one attempt to include a phone call.</p>
PCP, Specialist	Wait Time in the Waiting Room and exam room for routine care appointment	<p>Average office wait time is no more than thirty (30) minutes or at any time no more than up to (1) hour when the physician encounters an unanticipated urgent medical condition visit or is treating a member with a difficult medical condition need.</p>
PCP	After-hours Care	<p>After hours calls from members with an emergent or urgent medical condition will be handled within one hour of the member contacting the practice site – through immediate instruction or member receives call back from practice site with instruction, within one (1) hour.</p> <p><u>Instructions provided by the practice will include one or more of the following options:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Call 911 or go to nearest emergency room *Direct patient to go to an urgent care center *See patient same day *See patient at another location same day <p>Important reminders: Practice sites must be accessible to members 24 hours a day/7 days a week.</p> <p>Our members must be instructed to call 911 or go directly to the emergency room in the case of a true emergency.</p> <p>Answering services or machines must instruct members on how to reach an on call physician. The member must receive a phone call within one hour with instructions.</p>

Medicare Accessibility Standards

Your practice site has contractually agreed to provide timely access to care for our members. Please review the below access standards related to appointment wait times/protocol:

PROVIDER TYPE	APPOINTMENT TYPE /PROTOCOL	ACCESS STANDARD
PCP, Specialist, Behavioral Health (BH)	Emergent Care	<p>Immediately seen or referred to an emergency facility</p> <p>Practice sites will be able to schedule an appointment immediately or refer the member to an emergency facility.</p>
Behavioral Health (BH)	Non-Life Threatening Emergency Care	<p>Within 6 hours</p> <p>Practice sites will be able to schedule an appointment within 6 hours of being contacted by member or will direct member to go to the emergency room or a behavioral health crisis unit.</p>
PCP, Specialist Behavioral Health (BH)	Urgent Care	<p>Within 24 hours</p> <p>Practice sites will be able to schedule an appointment within 24 hours of being contacted by member.</p> <p>Within 48 hours</p> <p>Behavioral health practice sites will be able to schedule an appointment within 48 hours of being contacted by member.</p>
PCP	Non-Urgent, but in need of medical attention	<p>Within 1 week</p> <p>Practice sites will be able to schedule an appointment within 1 week of being contacted by member.</p>
PCP, Specialist Behavioral Health (BH)	Routine or Preventative Care Initial Routine Care (BH) Follow up Routine Care (BH)	<p>Within 30 days</p> <p>Practice sites will be able to schedule an appointment within 30 days of being contacted by member.</p> <p>Within 10 business days (BH) Within 15 business days (BH)</p>
PCP, Specialist	Wait Time in the Waiting Room and exam room for routine care appointment	<p>Average office wait time is no more than thirty (30) minutes or at any time no more than up to (1) hour when the physician encounters an unanticipated urgent medical condition visit or is treating a member with a difficult medical condition need.</p>

PCP	After-hours Care	<p>After hours calls from members with an emergent or urgent medical condition will be handled within one hour of the member contacting the practice site – through immediate instruction or member receives call back from practice site with instruction, within one (1) hour.</p> <p><u><i>Instructions provided by the practice will include one or more of the following options:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>*Call 911 or go to nearest emergency room</i> <i>*Direct patient to go to an urgent care center</i> <i>*See patient same day</i> <i>*See patient at another location same day</i> <p>Important reminders: Practice sites must be accessible to members 24 hours a day/7 days a week.</p> <p>Our members must be instructed to call 911 or go directly to the emergency room in the case of a true emergency.</p> <p>Answering services or machines must instruct members on how to reach an on call physician. The member must receive a phone call within one hour with instructions.</p>
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Health benefits or health benefit administration may be provided by or through Highmark Wholecare, coverage by Gateway Health Plan, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association (“Highmark Wholecare”).