

## 2021 Provider Appointment Availability and After-Hours Access Survey Results

### See how results compared to the previous year

The 2021 annual Provider Appointment Availability Survey (PAAS) and Provider After-Hours Access Survey (PAHAS) results are in. The results are from a random sample of participating primary care physicians (PCPs), specialty care providers (SCPs), ancillary providers, and non-physician mental health providers (NPMH) surveyed from August 2021 through December 2021.

The surveys comply with timely access regulations issued by the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) and the Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS) access requirements. The survey results are used to monitor physician and other provider compliance with timely appointment availability and after-hours access standards and evaluate the effectiveness of the network to meet the needs and preferences of Health Net\* members.

Failure to meet one or more timely appointment and after-hours access standards, as indicated, will result in a corrective action plan (CAP).

### 2021 Provider Appointment Availability Survey results

Availability and access requirements are designed to ensure that health care appointments are provided to patients in a timely manner appropriate for the nature of the patient's condition and consistent with good professional practice.

The results of the 2021 PAAS survey for DMHC and DHCS appointment access standards reflect a need for improvement in several areas. The following appointment access metrics did not meet the performance goal of 80%:

- Urgent care appointment with PCP within 48 hours.
- Urgent care appointment with a specialist within 96 hours.
- Non-urgent care appointment with a specialist within 15 business days.

Refer to tables on pages 2-4 for the overall results and by county.

#### THIS UPDATE APPLIES TO CALIFORNIA PROVIDERS:

- Physicians
- Participating Physician Groups
- Hospitals
- Ancillary Providers

#### LINES OF BUSINESS:

- HMO/POS/HSP
- PPO
- EPO
- Medicare Advantage (HMO)
- Cal MediConnect (Los Angeles/San Diego)
- Medi-Cal
  - Kern
  - Los Angeles
    - Molina
  - Riverside
  - Sacramento
  - San Bernardino
  - San Diego
  - San Joaquin
  - Stanislaus
  - Tulare

#### PROVIDER SERVICES

800-675-6110

[provider.healthnet.com](http://provider.healthnet.com)

#### PROVIDER COMMUNICATIONS

[provider.communications@healthnet.com](mailto:provider.communications@healthnet.com)

### Go to the online COVID-19 alerts page for info about COVID-19 vaccines!

At [provider.healthnet.com](http://provider.healthnet.com) > *COVID-19 Updates* > *Health Net Alerts*, you will find information about COVID-19 vaccines. This includes COVID-19 vaccine coverage details, how to enroll to administer the COVID-19 vaccine, and COVID-19 vaccine reporting and coding requirements. Also, access key tips you can use to help talk with and answer questions from your patients about the COVID-19 vaccine, especially those who are hesitant to receive it.

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**Measurement year (MY) 2021 – MY 2020 Medi-Cal provider appointment availability results – overall**

<b>Access measure</b>	<b>Appointment standard (wait time)</b>	<b>Performance goal</b>	<b>MY 2021 rate (%)</b>	<b>MY 2020 rate (%)</b>
<b>PCPs and specialists</b>				
Urgent care appointment with PCP	48 hours	80%	64.5↑	58.0
Urgent care appointment with specialist that requires prior authorization	96 hours		42.9↓	56.6
Non-urgent appointment with PCP	10 business days		89.6	94.1
Non-urgent appointment with specialist	15 business days		67.1	83.6
Preventive health or well-child appointment with PCP	10 business days		78.9↓	84.4
Physical exam/wellness check appointment with PCP	30 calendar days		91.2	94.5
Initial prenatal appointment with PCP	2 weeks		82.1	95.3
Initial prenatal appointment with specialist	2 weeks		76.3	86.3
<b>Ancillary providers</b>				
Non-urgent ancillary appointment for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), mammogram, physical therapy	15 business days	80%	97.6	99.1
<b>Behavioral health providers</b>				
Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist	96 hours	90%	46.0↓	49.7
Non-urgent appointment with psychiatrist	15 business days		79.1↓	86.2
Urgent care appointment with non-physician mental health provider (NPMH)	96 hours		54.2↓	69.0
Non-urgent appointment with NPMH provider	10 business days		70.1↓	87.1

↑↓ Statistically significant difference between MY 2021 vs MY 2020.

**2021 – MY 2020 Medi-Cal provider appointment availability results – by county**

Standards	County													
	Kern		Los Angeles		Sacramento		San Diego		San Joaquin		Stanislaus		Tulare	
	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)
<b>PCPs and specialists</b>														
Urgent Care Visit with PCP within 48 hours	47.5	50.9	68.7	57.5	61.1	55.8	64.8	72.9	48.9	42.0	51.2	55.9	61.8	56.0
Urgent Care Visit with Specialist That Requires Prior Authorization within 96 hours	41.4	37.7	45.0	60.5	33.8	42.3	41.4	55.1	44.1	60.2	46.4	58.9	31.0	50.6
Non-urgent Appointment with PCP within 10 business days	67.8	84.3	89.6	94.1	66.9	96.1	84.6	97.7	84.8	87.4	70.3	91.5	90.5	95.7
Non-urgent Appointment with specialist within 15 business days	71.6	79.7	70.1	86.4	60.9	78.0	58.1	79.1	68.9	86.8	55.3	80.0	77.8	78.3
Well-Child Visit with PCP within 10 business days	64.0	76.1	84.6	83.8	67.6	86.7	76.0	91.0	68.8	81.4	45.0	67.3	85.3	91.9
Physician Exam/Wellness Checks with PCP within 30 calendar days	85.1	92.1	93.8	95.0	79.7	97.8	89.7	94.7	94.4	100.0	66.7	82.0	96.7	95.4
Initial Prenatal Visit with PCP within 2 weeks	81.5	96.8	85.2	94.3	63.0	87.5	76.7	98.1	65.2	100.0	66.7	88.9	92.9	97.8
Initial Prenatal Visit with SCP within 2 weeks	58.3	87.5	93.3	89.8	60.0	66.7	53.3	100.0	33.3	83.3	38.5	33.3	100.0	85.7

**2021 – MY 2020 after-hours access survey results**

Overall results for MY 2021 PAHAS indicate only the After-Hours Emergency Instructions metric met the 90% performance goal. The Contact on-call physician after hours (for urgent issues) metric was not met. There is a statistically significant decrease in the performance score compared to MY 2019. The following tables display the after-hours results overall and by county.

**MY 2021 – MY 2020 Medi-Cal provider after-hours availability results – overall**

Access measure	Appointment standard (wait time)	Performance goal	MY 2021 rate (%)	MY 2020 rate (%)
After-hours emergency instructions	Appropriate instructions for emergency issues	90%	96.2	90.8
Contact on-call physician after hours (for urgent issues)	Callback within 30 minutes		79.8	75.4

**MY 2021 – MY 2020 Medi-Cal provider after-hours availability results – by county**

Standards	County													
	Kern		Los Angeles		Sacramento		San Diego		San Joaquin		Stanislaus		Tulare	
	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2020 rate (%)
Appropriate after-hours emergency instructions	85.5	100.0	97.6	91.8	84.8	83.2	95.0	93.7	95.2	95.8	99.4	92.4	96.4	83.0
Ability to contact physician after-hours within 30 minutes	23.6	75.0	86.4	77.4	74.2	59.4	81.4	69.9	41.6	62.5	84.7	83.3	86.5	77.6

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## Corrective action plan (CAP)

DMHC regulations (28 CCR §1300.67.2.2(d)(3)) require that health plans investigate and request corrective action when timely access to care standards are not met. To comply with these requirements and meet the plan's compliance requirements as delineated by Health Net's Accessibility of Providers and Practitioners policy, a CAP will be issued to contracted participating physician groups (PPGs) and provider offices who fail any of the urgent or non-urgent metrics.

PPGs and providers who receive a CAP are required to:

- Submit a written improvement plan (IP) within 30 calendar days, including the actions taken to correct each deficiency.
- Attend an online provider training webinar, hosted online by Health Net, as part of their IP.
- Upon review of IP, Health Net may require additional information to validate that corrective action steps were taken.

Physicians and other providers with questions or concerns regarding their ability to meet these standards may contact Health Net by email at [DMHC\\_AccessIP@healthnet.com](mailto:DMHC_AccessIP@healthnet.com).

## Improve Health Outcomes: A Guide for Providers toolkit

Included with the CAP packets is the *Improve Health Outcomes: A Guide for Providers* toolkit. The toolkit includes information, support tools and resources that focus on drivers of patient satisfaction:

- Health Care Performance Measurement Systems.
- Quality Improvement Activities.
- Timely Appointment Access.
- Advance Access.

The toolkit is available online at [provider.healthnet.com](http://provider.healthnet.com), under Provider Quality Improvement, select *Quality Improvement*, the *Improve Health Outcomes: A Guide for Providers – Health Net Statewide (all LOBs) (PDF)* under Provider Resources.

## Maintaining access standards

The goal of reasonable access to care is essential for member safety and is monitored annually. Take the below actions to ensure your office meets standards:

- Review current office scheduling practices and after-hours protocol periodically to make sure they are accurate and meet current guidelines.
- Include the appointment access standards and after-hours procedures and scripts in the orientation for new staff, office staff and answering service staff.
- Test office appointment scheduling and after-hours practices by scheduling self-audits or secret shopper calls. This allows offices to verify appointment standards are being met and after-hours outbound messaging is appropriate and take steps to correct any issues identified.

For help in complying with appointment access standards, refer to the resources online in the Provider Library at [providerlibrary.healthnetcalifornia.com](http://providerlibrary.healthnetcalifornia.com). You can also find after-hours script templates in the Provider Library. The scripts are available in a variety of languages.

## Additional information

If you have questions regarding the information contained in this update, you may contact the Access and Availability Unit by email at [DMHCAccess\\_IP@healthnet.com](mailto:DMHCAccess_IP@healthnet.com) or Health Net Medi-Cal Provider Services at 800-675-6110.