

# PROVIDER Update



NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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7 PAGES

## 2023 Provider Appointment Availability and After-Hours Access Survey Results

### See how results compared to the previous year

The 2023 annual Provider Appointment Availability Survey (PAAS) and Provider After-Hours Access Survey (PAHAS) results are in. The Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) PAAS 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 2023 through December 2023.

The surveys comply with the DMHC's and the Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS') access requirements. The results are used to monitor physician and other provider compliance with timely access and after-hours regulations, and to 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).

### 2023 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 2023 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 70% for provider availability:

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

Refer to tables on pages 4–7 for the overall results and by county. Overall rates reported are represented of all counties in Health Net's network in 2023.

### Corrective action plan

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.

#### THIS UPDATE APPLIES TO CALIFORNIA PROVIDERS:

- Physicians
- Participating Physician Groups
- Ancillary Providers

#### LINES OF BUSINESS:

- Medi-Cal
  - Los Angeles
  - Stanislaus
  - Tulare
  - Sacramento
  - San Joaquin

#### PROVIDER SERVICES

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A CAP will be issued to participating physician groups (PPGs) and provider offices who fail any of the urgent or non-urgent metrics.

PPGs and other providers who receive a CAP are required to:

- Submit a written improvement plan (IP) within 30 calendar days and include the actions taken to correct each deficiency.
- PPG attestation for not meeting access to care standards for appointment availability and/or after-hours and have notified the providers of the survey results.
- Attend an online provider training webinar, hosted by Health Net, as part of their IP.
- Upon review of the IP, Health Net may require additional information to validate that corrective action steps were taken.

Please contact Health Net via email at [DMHC\\_AccessIP@healthnet.com](mailto:DMHC_AccessIP@healthnet.com) if you have questions or concerns about meeting these standards.

### **MY 2023 Provider Appointment Availability Survey Champions**

Providers that met the performance goals for the 2023 Provider Appointment Availability Survey are recognized and appreciated by Health Net for their dedication and commitment to their patients in making time available to see them when they need it most. To view the list of physicians who achieved excellence in 2023, please go to Health Net's dedicated *2023 Provider Appointment Availability Survey Champions* webpage at <https://bit.ly/AfterHoursAvailabilitySurvey>.

### **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
- Prior Authorization

You can access the toolkit directly at <https://bit.ly/ImproveHealthOutcomesGuideForProviders>.

### **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 under *Forms and References* at <https://bit.ly/FormsAndReferences>. The scripts are available in a variety of languages.

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### **Do you have PCP offices offering same-day scheduling?**

If yes, let us know. You may not have to respond to Health Net's DMHC 2025 annual PAAS survey just by completing a few easy steps. Health Net recently launched an Advanced Access program that focuses on the PAAS survey. Refer to *24-241m, Improve Patient Satisfaction with Advance Access* at <https://bit.ly/24241m> for information about how to get in touch with us and let us know about your same-day scheduling processes. Once your PCPs are eligible as Health Net qualified advanced access providers, they will be automatically compliant for urgent and non-urgent appointment timeliness for the next three years.

### **Additional information**

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

**Measurement year (MY) 2023 – MY 2022 Medi-Cal Provider Appointment Availability Survey results – overall**

Access measure	Appointment standard (wait time)	Performance goal	MY 2023 rate (%)	MY 2022 rate (%)
<b>PCPs and specialists</b>				
Urgent care appointment with primary care physician (PCP)	48 hours	70%	78.4↑	56.3
Urgent care appointment with specialist that requires prior authorization	96 hours		66.0↑	42.2
Non-urgent appointment with PCP	10 business days		86.2↑	81.3
Non-urgent appointment with specialist	15 business days		68.3↑	62.3
Preventive health or well-child appointment with PCP <sup>1</sup>	10 business days		70.7	73.8
Physical exam/wellness check appointment with PCP <sup>1</sup>	30 calendar days		87.1	86.8
Initial prenatal appointment with PCP <sup>1</sup>	2 weeks		80.4	84.1
Initial prenatal appointment with specialist <sup>1</sup>	2 weeks		73.8	67.6
<b>Ancillary providers</b>				
Non-urgent ancillary appointment for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), mammogram, physical therapy	15 business days	70%	96.3↑	89.2
<b>Behavioral health providers</b>				
Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist	96 hours	70%	62.0↑	36.9
Non-urgent appointment with psychiatrist	15 business days		82.5↑	65.3
Urgent care appointment with non-physician mental health provider (NPMH)	96 hours		76.2	61.6
Non-urgent appointment with NPMH provider	10 business days		84.3	83.2
Non-urgent follow-up appointment with NPMH provider	10 business days	80%	88.0	NR

↑↓ Statistically significant difference between MY 2023 vs MY 2022.

NR Not reported

<sup>1</sup>First prenatal visits, well-child and wellness visits are health plan standards. Appointment scheduled through the provider for a preventive checkup will be dependent on the type of service and a provider may recommend a different schedule depending on the need.

**MY 2023 – MY 2022 Medi-Cal Provider Appointment Availability Survey results – by county**

Standards	County									
	Los Angeles		Sacramento		San Joaquin		Stanislaus		Tulare	
	2023 rate (%)	2022 rate (%)	2023 rate (%)	2022 rate (%)	2023 rate (%)	2022 rate (%)	2023 rate (%)	2022 rate (%)	2023 rate (%)	2022 rate (%)
<b>PCPs and specialists</b>										
Urgent care visit with PCP within 48 hours	81.3	60.6	72.0	52.1	0.0	45.1	0.0	35.1	70.0	52.2
Urgent care visit with specialist that requires prior authorization within 96 hours	50.0	47.5	51.6	22.0	64.0	37.5	78.9	38.4	68.4	36.4
Non-urgent appointment with PCP within 10 business days	95.2	86.0	85.2	70.7	0.0	66.7	0.0	64.5	90.0	82.6
Non-urgent appointment with specialist within 15 business days	85.9	69.7	65.7	42.6	72.4	62.4	61.9	40.9	84.2	64.8
Well-child visit with PCP within 10 business days <sup>1</sup>	80.7	81.0	70.0	58.1	52.6	58.6	63.2	39.4	75.0	72.0
Physician exam/wellness checks with PCP within 30 calendar days <sup>1</sup>	92.8	92.2	88.9	75.0	76.5	83.1	69.2	48.4	94.1	88.8
Initial prenatal visit with PCP within 2 weeks <sup>1</sup>	75.0	91.0	83.3	64.3	0.0	75.0	100.0	81.8	100.0	70.3
Initial prenatal visit with specialty care provider (SCP) within 2 weeks <sup>1</sup>	66.7	76.9	66.7	40.0	100.0	66.7	100.0	42.9	75.0	100.0

<sup>1</sup>First prenatal visits, well-child and wellness visits are health plan standards. Appointment scheduled through the provider for a preventive checkup will be dependent on the type of service and a provider may recommend a different schedule depending on the need.

## MY 2023 – MY 2022 Provider After-hours Access Survey results

Overall results for MY 2023 PAHAS indicate only the *After-hours emergency instructions* metric met the 90% performance goal. There is a statistically significant increase in the performance score compared to MY 2022. 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 2022. The following tables display the after-hours results overall and by county.

### MY 2023 – MY 2022 Medi-Cal Provider After-hours Access Survey results – overall

Access measure	Appointment standard (wait time)	Performance goal	MY 2023 rate (%)	MY 2022 rate (%)
After-hours emergency instructions	Appropriate instructions for emergency issues	90%	95.7↑	93.9
Contact on-call physician after hours (for urgent issues)	Callback within 30 minutes		78.4↓	83.7

↑↓ Statistically significant difference between MY 2023 vs MY 2022.

### MY 2023 – MY 2022 Medi-Cal Provider After-hours Access Survey results – by county

Standards	County									
	Los Angeles		Sacramento		San Joaquin		Stanislaus		Tulare	
	2022 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2022 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2022 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2022 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)	2022 rate (%)	2021 rate (%)
Appropriate after-hours emergency instructions	95.2	96.8	87.9	76.3	95.5	85.0	99.2	99.3	99.0	98.0
Ability to contact physician after-hours within 30 minutes	81.6	89.5	62.6	79.4	49.3	27.6	92.9	91.9	89.3	87.1

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## MY 2023 Telephone Access Survey

To monitor telephone access, the Medi-Cal Telephone Access Survey was administered in 2023. A random sample of PCPs were selected and contacted to assess performance for two metrics: (1) Appropriate answer time: percent provider offices were able to answer phone calls within 60 seconds, and (2) ability to call back members back for non-urgent issues within one business day.

Access measure	Standards	Performance goal	MY 2023 rate (%)
Telephone answer time	Within 60 seconds	90%	100.0
Provider call-back for non-urgent issues during normal business hours	Within one business day		19.7

## MY 2023 member in-office wait time

In 2023, the plan monitored members' in-office wait time during an appointment at PCPs' and specialists' offices through a provider survey. The standard for this access survey is for members' wait time to not exceed 30 minutes upon arrival when waiting for a scheduled appointment. Survey results for PCPs exceeded the plan's performance goal of 70%.

Access measure	Standards	Performance goal	MY 2023 rate (%)	MY 2022 rate (%)
In-office wait time at PCPs' office	Wait time upon arrival after set appointment time not to exceed 30 minutes	70%	100.0	98.7