

# 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 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 California Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) access requirements. The results are used to monitor physician and other provider compliance including behavioral health, with timely access and after-hours regulations. They also 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) for PCPs and specialists.

### 2023 Provider Appointment Availability Survey results

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

The results of the 2023 PAAS survey for DMHC and CMS appointment access standards reflect a need for improvement in several areas. The following appointment access metrics **did not meet the performance goal** as indicated:

- **HMO/POS (DMHC-regulated) results = 70%**
  - Urgent care appointment with a specialist within 96 hours.
  - Non-urgent appointment with specialist within 15 business days.
  - Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist, that does not require prior authorization, within 48 hours
  - Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist, that requires prior authorization, within 96 hours
  - Contact on-call physician after hours (for urgent issues) – callback within 30 minutes

#### THIS UPDATE APPLIES TO CALIFORNIA PROVIDERS:

- Physicians
- Participating Physician Groups
- Ancillary Providers

#### LINES OF BUSINESS:

- IFP
  - Ambetter HMO
  - Ambetter PPO
- Employer Group
  - HMO/POS
  - PPO
- Medicare Advantage (HMO/PPO) (Wellcare By Health Net)

#### PROVIDER SERVICES

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#### Ambetter from Health Net IFP

**Ambetter PPO** – 844-463-8188

**Ambetter HMO** – 888-926-2164

**Health Net Employer Group HMO, POS & PPO** – 800-641-7761

**Medicare (individual & employer group) (Wellcare By Health Net)** – 800-929-9224

#### PROVIDER PORTAL

provider.healthnetcalifornia.com

#### PROVIDER COMMUNICATIONS

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- **Medicare Advantage (CMS-regulated) results = 70%**

- Urgent care appointment with a specialist within 96 hours.
- Non-urgent care appointment with a specialist within 15 business days.
- Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist, that does not require prior authorization, within 48 hours
- Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist, that requires prior authorization, within 96 hours
- Contact on-call physician after hours (for urgent issues) – callback within 30 minutes

- **PPO results = 70%**

- Urgent care appointment with PCP within 48 hours.
- Urgent care appointment with a specialist within 96 hours.
- Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist, that does not require prior authorization, within 48 hours
- Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist, that requires prior authorization, within 96 hours
- Contact on-call physician after hours (for urgent issues) – callback within 30 minutes

Refer to the tables on pages 4-9 for the overall results.

### **Corrective action plan**

DMHC regulations (28 CCR §1300.67.2.2(d)(3)) require that Health Net investigate and request corrective action when timely access to care standards are not met. A CAP will be issued to participating physician groups (PPGs) and physician or other provider offices who fail any of the urgent or non-urgent metrics.

PPGs and physician or other provider offices 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.
- Complete the Provider Noncompliant Notification Attestation.
- Attend an online provider training webinar, hosted online 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**

Physicians and other providers who 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 and other providers 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 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

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- 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 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.

### **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 Provider Services at the numbers listed on the right hand side of page 1.

**Measurement year (MY) 2023 and MY 2022 Provider Appointment Availability Results summary**

| Access measure   | Appointment standard (wait time) | Performance goal | MY 2023 rate (%) | MY 2022 rate (%) |
|--|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>HMO/POS (DMHC-regulated)</b>  |                                  |                  |                  |                  |
| <b>PCPs and specialists</b>  |                                  |                  |                  |                  |
| Urgent care appointment with PCP   | Within 48 hours                  | 70%              | 73.2             | 51.8             |
| Urgent care appointment with specialist  | Within 96 hours                  |                  | 61.9             | 38.5             |
| Non-urgent appointment with PCP  | Within 10 business days          |                  | 81.6             | 75.1             |
| Non-urgent appointment with specialist   | Within 15 business days          |                  | 63.3             | 74.7             |
| Non-urgent ancillary appointment for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), mammogram, physical therapy | Within 15 business days          |                  | 94.4             | 89.2             |
| <b>Behavioral health providers</b>   |                                  |                  |                  |                  |
| Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist that <b>does not</b> require prior authorization         | Within 48 hours                  | 70%              | 34.2             | N/A              |
| Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist that <b>requires</b> prior authorization                 | Within 96 hours                  |                  | 60.6             | 39.0             |
| Non-urgent appointment with psychiatrist   | Within 15 business days          |                  | 81.0             | 68.8             |
| Urgent care appointment with non-physician mental health provider (NPMH)                           | Within 96 hours                  |                  | 77.0             | 57.9             |
| Non-urgent appointment with NPMH provider  | Within 10 business days          |                  | 85.6             | 79.3             |
| Non-urgent follow-up appointment with NPMH provider  | Within 10 business days          | 80%              | 86.1             | N/A              |

**MY 2023 and MY 2022 Provider Appointment Availability Results summary, *continued***

| Access measure   | Appointment standard (wait time) | Performance goal | MY 2023 rate (%) | MY 2022 rate (%) |
|--|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Medicare Advantage (CMS-regulated)</b>  |                                  |                  |                  |                  |
| <b>PCPs and specialists</b>  |                                  |                  |                  |                  |
| Urgent care appointment with PCP   | Within 48 hours                  | 70%              | 61.2             | 55.5             |
| Urgent care appointment with specialist  | Within 96 hours                  |                  | 49.9             | 42.4             |
| Non-urgent appointment with PCP  | Within 10 business days          |                  | 78.2             | 79.5             |
| Non-urgent appointment with specialist   | Within 15 business days          |                  | 68.9             | 66.1             |
| Non-urgent ancillary appointment for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), mammogram, physical therapy | Within 15 business days          |                  | N/A              | N/A              |
| <b>Behavioral health providers</b>   |                                  |                  |                  |                  |
| Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist that <b>does not</b> require prior authorization         | Within 48 hours                  | 70%              | 32.3             | 32.5             |
| Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist that <b>requires</b> prior authorization                 | Within 96 hours                  |                  | 57.8             | 37.3             |
| Non-urgent appointment with psychiatrist   | Within 15 business days          |                  | 77.8             | 61.8             |
| Urgent care appointment with non-physician mental health provider (NPMH)                           | Within 96 hours                  |                  | 74.4             | 56.7             |
| Non-urgent appointment with NPMH provider  | Within 10 business days          |                  | 82.1             | 79.0             |
| Non-urgent follow-up appointment with NPMH provider  | Within 10 business days          | 80%              | 82.0             | 77.5             |

**MY 2023 and MY 2022 Provider Appointment Availability Results summary, *continued***

| <b>Access measure</b>  | <b>Appointment standard (wait time)</b> | <b>Performance goal</b> | <b>MY 2023 rate (%)</b> | <b>MY 2022 rate (%)</b> |
|--|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>PPO</b>   |   |                         |                         |                         |
| Urgent care appointment with PCP   | Within 48 hours                         | 70%                     | 66.6                    | 50.3                    |
| Urgent care appointment with specialist  | Within 96 hours                         |                         | 54.2                    | 36.6                    |
| Non-urgent appointment with PCP  | Within 10 business days                 |                         | 81.0                    | 78.5                    |
| Non-urgent appointment with specialist   | Within 15 business days                 |                         | 71.4                    | 59.0                    |
| Non-urgent ancillary appointment for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), mammogram, physical therapy | Within 15 business days                 |                         | 93.0                    | 90.4                    |
| <b>Behavioral health providers</b>   |   |                         |                         |                         |
| Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist that does not require prior authorization                | Within 48 hours                         | 70%                     | 33.4                    | N/A                     |
| Urgent care appointment with psychiatrist that requires prior authorization                        | Within 96 hours                         |                         | 60.0                    | N/A                     |
| Non-urgent appointment with psychiatrist   | Within 15 business days                 |                         | 80.5                    | N/A                     |
| Urgent care appointment with non-physician mental health provider (NPMH)                           | Within 96 hours                         |                         | 77.1                    | N/A                     |
| Non-urgent appointment with NPMH provider  | Within 10 business days                 |                         | 85.7                    | N/A                     |
| Non-urgent follow-up appointment with NPMH provider  | Within 10 business days                 | 80%                     | 86.3                    | N/A                     |

## 2023 After-Hours Access Survey results

For the 2023 PAHAS, performance guidelines require 90% compliance for after-hours access. Overall results for 2023 PAHAS indicate a need for improvement, especially in the “Contact on-call physician after-hours (for urgent issues)” metric. Refer to the table below for the appointment availability results overall.

### MY 2023 – MY 2022 Provider After-Hours Availability results

| Access measure  | Appointment standard (wait time)                                     | Performance goal | MY 2023 rate (%) | MY 2022 rate (%) |
|---|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>HMO/POS (DMHC-regulated)</b>                           |  |                  |                  |                  |
| After-hours emergency instructions                        | Give members clear and appropriate instructions for emergency issues | 90%              | 93.9             | 93.4             |
| Contact on-call physician after hours (for urgent issues) | Callback within 30 minutes   |                  | 77.3             | 82.0             |
| <b>Medicare Advantage (CMS-regulated)</b>                 |  |                  |                  |                  |
| After-hours emergency instructions                        | Give members clear and appropriate instructions for emergency issues | 90%              | 92.8             | 93.0             |
| Contact on-call physician after hours (for urgent issues) | Callback within 30 minutes   |                  | 75.3             | 74.9             |
| <b>PPO</b>  |  |                  |                  |                  |
| After-hours emergency instructions                        | Give members clear and appropriate instructions for emergency issues | 90%              | 93.1             | 90.7             |
| Contact on-call physician after hours (for urgent issues) | Callback within 30 minutes   |                  | 72.3             | 78.0             |