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# Provider Alert

**To:** Sharp Health Plan Providers  
**Attn:** Office Manager/Office Administrator  
**From:** Sharp Health Plan  
**Date:** July 22, 2021  
**Subject:** Provider Appointment Availability Survey Starts July 26, 2021

Attention Provider Partners,

This communication is to inform you about the importance of participating in our upcoming survey to assess your compliance with the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) Timely Access standards. Per Section 1367.03 (f)(3) of the California Health and Safety code, the DMHC provides health plans with the methodology for the annual Provider Appointment Availability Survey (PAAS). Please note that rates of compliance and response rates will be part of publicly-available information, and that providing the data, as required under Section 1367.03 (f)(1), is a **contractual obligation**.

The DMHC requires us to survey the following provider types: Primary Care Physicians, Cardiologists, Endocrinologists, Gastroenterologists, Psychiatrists, Non-Physician Mental Health Providers, and Ancillary providers that provide Mammogram and Physical Therapy services. We are expanding our survey to include randomly-selected providers in the high-volume and high-impact specialties of Oncology, Dermatology, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Orthopedic Surgery and Ophthalmology.

For 2021, Sharp Health Plan is partnering with QMetrics, Inc. to conduct our annual PAAS survey **between July 26, 2021 and November 23, 2021**. QMetrics will conduct the survey by reaching out to randomly-selected providers within our networks, initially via fax or email.

**If you receive a survey, you will have 5 business days to complete and return the survey to QMetrics.** If the survey is not returned within five (5) business days, a representative will reach out to your office via telephone to conduct the survey. Refusal to participate in the survey will be scored as non-compliant. **We ask that you make every effort to return surveys to QMetrics within five (5) business days to eliminate the need for a telephone call to your office staff. Please provide your next available appointment regardless of modality (for example, in person or telehealth visit).**

If you have any questions, please contact our provider relations team at 1-858-499-8330, or email us at [provider.relations@sharp.com](mailto:provider.relations@sharp.com). We are available to assist you Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Warm regards,

Yolanda Hunt-Boes  
Manager, Network Management and Application Optimization

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## Timely Access Standards

### Medical Appointment Access

<b>Urgent Appointments</b>	<b>Maximum Wait Time After Request</b>
No prior authorization required	48 hours
Prior authorization required	96 hours
<b>Non-urgent Appointments</b>	<b>Maximum Wait Time After Request</b>
Primary Care Physician (excludes preventive care appointments)	10 business days
Specialist (excludes routine follow-up appointments)	15 business days
Ancillary Services (e.g., X-rays, lab tests, etc. for the diagnosis and treatment of injury, illness or other health conditions)	15 business days
<b>In-Office Wait Time</b>	<b>Maximum Wait Time</b>
In-office wait time for a scheduled appointment	30 minutes

### Behavioral Health (BH) Appointment Access

<b>Emergency Care</b>	<b>Maximum Wait Time After Request</b>
Life-threatening emergency care	Immediately
Non-life-threatening emergency care	6 hours
<b>Urgent Appointments</b>	<b>Maximum Wait Time After Request</b>
Psychiatrist	48 hours
Non-physician Behavioral Health Practitioner – no prior authorization required	48 hours
Non-physician Behavioral Health Practitioner – prior authorization required	96 hours
<b>Non-urgent Appointments</b>	<b>Maximum Wait Time After Request</b>
Psychiatrist	10 business days
Non-physician Behavioral Health Practitioner	10 business days
<b>Follow-Up Appointments</b>	<b>Maximum Wait Time After Request</b>
Follow-up (routine) care appointment with a BH physician/non-prescriber	45 calendar days
Follow-up (routine) care appointment with a BH practitioner/non-prescriber	30 calendar days
Follow-up care with a BH practitioner after hospitalization for mental illness	7 calendar days of discharge and 30 calendar days of discharge