



## Provider Alert

**To:** Sharp Health Plan Providers and Provider Office Staff  
**From:** Sharp Health Plan  
**Date:** June 16, 2023  
**Subject:** Timely Access Tool Kit for Behavioral Health Providers

Sharp Health Plan's timely access tool kit below, outlines the Department of Managed Health Care's timely access standards.

For additional information on timely access standards and procedures, please refer to the Commercial Provider Operations Manual which can be found at [www.sharphealthplan.com/POM](http://www.sharphealthplan.com/POM). Timely access to care requirements is also on the California Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) website at [www.dmhca.ca.gov](http://www.dmhca.ca.gov) or reached at 1-888-466-2219.

Thank you for your continued partnership in providing the best care possible for our members. If you have any questions, please contact a Provider Account Specialist at [provider.relations@sharp.com](mailto:provider.relations@sharp.com) or 1-858-499-8330. We are available to assist you Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Best regards,  
Sharp Health Plan  
Provider Account Management  
[Provider.Relations@sharp.com](mailto:Provider.Relations@sharp.com)  
Tel: 1-858-499-8330 | Fax: 1-858-303-9049



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# Timely Access to Care Toolkit for Behavioral Health Providers

## Access to Emergency Care

Maximum Wait Time: <b>Life-Threatening</b> Emergency Care <b>Immediately</b>		Maximum Wait Time: <b>Non-Life-Threatening</b> Emergency Care <b>6</b> hours
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## Urgent Appointments

<b>Psychiatrist</b>  <b>48</b> hours	<b>Non-Physician Behavioral Health Practitioner</b>  <b>48</b> hours <small>Prior authorization <b>not required</b></small>	<b>Non-Physician Behavioral Health Practitioner</b>  <b>96</b> hours <small>Prior authorization <b>required</b></small>
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## Non – Urgent Appointments

<b>Psychiatrist</b>  <b>10</b> business days		<b>Non-Physician BH Practitioner or substance use disorder</b>  <b>10</b> business days
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## Follow – Up Appointments

Routine Care Appointment with a <b>Behavioral Health Practitioner/Prescriber</b>  <b>45</b> calendar days	Routine Care Appointment with a <b>Behavioral Health Practitioner/ Non-Prescriber</b>  <b>30</b> calendar days	Care with a <b>Behavioral Health Practitioner After Hospitalization</b>  <b>7 &amp; 30</b> calendar days after discharge
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## Provider Appointment Availability Survey (PAAS)

Sharp Health Plan evaluates and monitors appointment access annually through the PAAS to ensure that network providers meet regulatory standards as outlined by the Department of Managed Health Care.

Providers are first faxed or emailed the survey. If no response is received, provider offices are called.

The provider’s office is asked the following questions:

Questions	Compliant Answers
When is [Provider or FQHC/ RHC Name] the next available appointment <u>date and time</u> for urgent services?	A date and time that is within <b>96 hours</b> .
When is [Provider or FQHC/ RHC Name] the next available appointment date and time for non-urgent services?	A date and time that is within <b>10 business days</b> .
If a patient was seen today, what is the earliest date and time this patient would be seen by [Provider or FQHC/ RHC Name] for a non-urgent follow-up appointment?	A date and time that is within <b>10 business days</b> .

## After-Hours Survey

The After-Hours Survey ensures network providers meet regulatory standards for timely access. The annual survey measures and reports after-hours access to behavioral health providers and assesses the accuracy of emergent, non-emergent, and urgent instructions provided to members seeking information after-hours.

The provider’s office is asked the following questions:

Questions	Compliant Answers
What would you tell a caller who states he/she is dealing with a life-threatening emergency situation?	Hang up and dial 911 AND/OR Go to the nearest emergency room



If a patient expresses an urgent need to speak with a clinician, is there a way you can put them into contact with the provider, or an on-call provider or health care professional such as an advice nurse?	Yes
In what timeframe can the patient expect to hear from the provider or on-call provider?	Immediately OR 30 minutes or less

## Provider Experience Survey

The Sharp Health Plan Provider Experience Survey includes the Provider Satisfaction with Access and Language Assistance Program Survey. This annual survey assesses provider satisfaction with access to Sharp Health Plan’s services and the availability and quality of interpreters. This electronic survey is distributed annually to all Sharp Health Plan provider partners. Your response to this survey is critical, as this survey is regulated by the Department of Managed Healthcare.

The provider’s office is asked to rate their satisfaction with their patients’ access to care:

<b>Access Survey Questions</b>
The referral and/or prior authorization process necessary for your patients to obtain covered services
Your patients’ access to urgent care services
Your patients’ access to non-urgent primary care services
Your patients’ access to non-urgent specialty services
Your patients’ access to non-urgent ancillary diagnostic and treatment services
Your patients’ access to non-urgent behavioral health care services

<b>Language Assistance Program Survey Questions</b>
Coordination of appointments with an interpreter
Availability of an interpreter, based on the needs of the enrollee
The ability of the interpreter to effectively communicate with the provider on behalf of the enrollee

