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# Provider Alert

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To: Sharp Health Plan Providers  
Attn: Office Manager/Office Administrator  
From: Sharp Health Plan  
Date: September 22, 2021  
Subject: **Important Reminder – Annual After-Hours Survey**

In accordance with the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) regulations, Sharp Health Plan will be administering the annual survey of our contracted providers' after-hours telephone access. The purpose of this survey is to confirm that members who call providers after normal business hours will receive appropriate messaging and access to care.

**The survey will be conducted on weekdays between the hours of 6 p.m. and 8 a.m. from October 1 through December 31.** We kindly ask you to ensure that your providers' telephone systems, answering services and after-hours staff are set up and trained to be compliant with the standards as outlined on page 3 of this communication under "Timely Access to Care Toolkit for Medical Providers."

As a reminder, After-Hours Access standards and other important information can be found in our Provider Operations Manual at [sharphealthplan.com/pom](http://sharphealthplan.com/pom). Additionally, enclosed is a timely access resource toolkit that further outlines the DMHC's timely access standards. If you have any questions, please contact us at [provider.relations@sharp.com](mailto:provider.relations@sharp.com) or 1-858-499-8330. We are available to assist you on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Best regards,


*Yolanda Hunt-Boes*

Yolanda Hunt-Boes  
Manager, Network Management and Application Optimization

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# Timely Access to Care Toolkit for Medical Providers

## Urgent Care Appointment

Prior authorization is **not required**  
 **2** days

Prior authorization **is required**  
 **4** days

## Non – Urgent Care Appointment

### Primary Care Physician

 **10**  
business days  
Excludes preventive care appointments

### Specialty Care Physician


 **15**  
business days  
Excludes routine follow-up appointments


### Ancillary Provider

 **15**  
business days  
X-rays, lab tests, etc. for the diagnosis and treatment of injury, illness or other health conditions

## After – Hours Availability


  
For life-threatening emergencies members should be directed to **call 911 and/or go to the nearest ER**

  
A member should be able to **speak with a provider, on-call provider or healthcare professional**

  
A member should be connected to a provider **immediately or within 30 minutes**

## Access to Care

  
Providers must provide **24/7** screening by telephone (wait times should **not exceed 30 minutes**)

  
In-office wait times for a scheduled appointment should **not exceed 30 minutes**

  
Sharp Health Plan provides **free interpreter services** for scheduled appointments

## 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 office will be asked the following questions:

Questions	Compliant Answers
When is the next available appointment <u>date</u> and <u>time</u> with [Provider Name] for an urgent appointment?	A date and time that is within <b>48 hours</b> (for appointments with no prior authorizations required) or <b>96 hours</b> (for appointments with prior authorizations required).
When is the next available appointment <u>date</u> and <u>time</u> with [Provider Name] for a non-urgent appointment?	A date and time that is within <b>10 business days</b> for PCPs and <b>15 business days</b> for specialists and ancillary services.

## After-Hours Survey

The after-hours survey ensures that network providers meet regulatory standards for timely access. The survey measures and reports after-hour access to primary care physicians and assesses the accuracy of emergent, non-emergent, and urgent instructions provided to members seeking information after-hours.

The provider office will be 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 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 office will be asked the following questions:

Access Survey Questions
How satisfied are you with <b>the referral and/or prior authorization process</b> necessary for your patients to obtain covered services?
How satisfied are you with your patients’ access to <b>urgent care services</b> ?
How satisfied are you with your patients’ access to <b>non-urgent primary care services</b> ?
How satisfied are you with your patients’ access to <b>non-urgent specialty services</b> ?
How satisfied are you with your patients’ access to <b>non-urgent ancillary diagnostic and treatment services</b> ?
How satisfied are you with your patients’ access to <b>non-urgent behavioral health care services</b> ?

Language Assistance Program Survey Questions
How satisfied are you with the health plan’s coordination of <b>appointments with an interpreter</b> ?
How satisfied are you with the health plan’s <b>availability of an appropriate range of interpreters</b> ?
How satisfied are you with the health plan’s <b>training and competency of available interpreters</b> ?

## Contact Us

For additional information on the timely access standards and procedures, please refer to the [Commercial Provider Operations Manual](#) that can be found on [www.sharphealthplan.com](http://www.sharphealthplan.com).

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.