



Provider Alert

To: Sharp Health Plan Providers and Provider Office Staff
From: Sharp Health Plan
Date: September 8, 2026
Subject: Office Hours, After-Hours, and Telephone Triage Standards Reminder

Dear Provider Partner,

Sharp Health Plan would like to remind providers of the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) accessibility requirements and Sharp Health Plan standards regarding office hours, after-hours access, and telephone triage services.

Primary Care Office Hours

Primary care offices are expected to maintain reasonable and regular office hours. All primary care sites must:

- Clearly post regular office hours
- Be available to members a minimum of 20 hours per week

After-Hours Access Requirements

Primary Care Physicians and Behavioral Health Providers must ensure members have access to urgent and emergency care 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Every after-hours caller should receive emergency instructions directing them to:

- Hang up and dial 911, and/or
- Go to the nearest emergency room

For non-emergency situations that cannot wait until the next business day, members must be provided with a method to reach:

- The provider
- An on-call provider
- Another qualified health care professional, such as an advice nurse

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SHARP Health Plan

Timely Access to a Clinician

Whether a member reaches:

- A live person, or
- A recorded message

The member must be able to connect with or receive a response from a provider, on-call provider, or qualified health care professional:

- Immediately, when available, or
- Within 30 minutes or less

Telephone Triage and Screening Services

Providers are required to maintain telephone triage or screening services 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Triage services must be delivered by a physician, registered nurse, or other qualified health care professional acting within their scope of practice.

The telephone triage or screening waiting time must not exceed 30 minutes.

Annual Monitoring

Sharp Health Plan evaluates provider compliance with accessibility and after-hours standards through annual and ongoing monitoring activities, including the Provider Appointment Availability Survey (PAAS) and After-Hours Access Survey. Providers are encouraged to periodically review their office procedures, after-hours messaging, and on-call processes to ensure continued compliance.

For additional information, please refer to the Provider Operations Manual and Sharp Health Plan Policy SHP-PP-HS-PN-110.

Sincerely,

Sharp Health Plan Provider Account Management

provider.relations@sharp.com

Tel: 1-858-499-8330 | Fax: 1-858-303-9049

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