



An independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

**ACCESS TO CARE STANDARDS
FOR ALL PRODUCTS IN ALL LINES OF BUSINESS -
EXCLUDING MEDICARE AND MEDICAID
SPECIALISTS INCLUDING NON-MD SPECIALISTS**

The following Access to Care Standards for Specialists has been established by the BCBSNC Physician Advisory Group. Non-MD specialists are chiropractors (DC), podiatry (DPM), physical therapy (PT), speech therapy (ST), and occupational therapy (OT).

1. Waiting time for appointment:

a. Urgent - not life threatening, but a problem needing care within 24 hours

Pediatrics	within 48 hours
Adults	within 48 hours

b. Regular:

Pediatrics	(e.g., tube referral) - within 2 weeks
Adults	<u>SUB-ACUTE PROBLEM</u> (of short duration): within 2 weeks <u>CHRONIC PROBLEM</u> (needs long time for consultation): within 4 weeks

2. Time in waiting room (minutes):

(A) Scheduled	after 30 minutes, patient must be given an update on waiting time with an option of waiting or rescheduling appointment; maximum waiting time = 60 minutes
(B) Work-ins	(called that day prior to coming) Pediatrics and Adults - after 45 minutes, patient must be given an update on waiting time with an option of waiting or

	rescheduling; maximum waiting time = 90 minutes
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3. After Hours Calls and Coverage

a. Response time returning call after-hours:

A(1) Urgent	20 minutes
B(2) Not Urgent	1 hour

b. Coverage

Practice has a recorded telephone message instructing the patient to call 911 or go to the ER for any life threatening event and to refer them to the physician on-call or to an answering service.

(A) Daytime hours/week	40 hours/week
(B) Night hours/weekend	24 hour/day coverage

4. Language

Interpreter services are available either in the practice, with a contracted interpreter phone line or through hospital interpreter services.

5. Office Hours: Indicates hours during which appropriate personnel is available to care for members.

(A) Daytime hours/weeks	15 hours/week minimum covering at least 4 days
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GOAL: 100% compliance

- Definitions of "Regular" appointments:
 - **Pediatrics:** any pediatric patient with a non emergent, non urgent condition being referred to a non-MD provider
 - **Adult Sub-acute problem:** any problem which, if treated appropriately, should be of short duration
 - **Adult Chronic problem:** any problem which will requiring a long period of care to reach resolution

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