



Contracted Provider Appointment Access Standards Reminder

Timely access to care is important to members' mental health and quality of life. Optum network care providers play an essential role in helping members have appropriate access to care.

To ensure members have timely access to care, we require that the network adhere to the following access standards:

- Respond within **24 hours** to a member request for routine outpatient care
- An initial MH/SUD appointment must be offered within **10 business days** of the request
- Urgent appointments must be offered within required timeframes (MH/SUD – **48 hours**)
- Appointments for non-life-threatening emergencies must be offered within **6 hours**
- An **immediate appointment** must be offered for any life-threatening emergencies
- An MH/SUD outpatient appointment must be offered within **7 days** of an acute inpatient discharge. If a situation arises when a patient is unable to be seen within 7 days, ensure they have an appointment within 30 days of discharge.

Virtual Visit Telemental Health Provider

Virtual visits are an effective way to provide care within 7 days after discharge. Visit our provider website, *Provider Express*, for more information:

providerexpress.com > Clinical Resources > [Optum Telemental Health Platform](#)

Express Access Network

If you have the ability to offer members appointments within 5 business days, please consider signing up for our Express Access program. Visit our provider website, *Provider Express*, for additional information:

providerexpress.com > Clinical Resources > [Express Access Network](#)

Appointment access standards can be found in the National Network Manual at:

providerexpress.com > Clinical Resources > [National Network Manual](#) (page 51 – Access to Outpatient MH/SUD and EAP Care)