



**BBlueCrossBlueShield  
of North Carolina\***

# BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF NORTH CAROLINA

## ACCESS TO CARE STANDARDS HMO-PPO (Primary Care Physicians)

BCBSNC and Physician Advisory Group have established the following Access to Care Standards for Primary Care Physicians.

**EMERGENT CONCERNS (LIFE THREATENING) SHOULD BE REFERRED DIRECTLY TO THE CLOSEST EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO SEE THE PATIENT IN THE OFFICE FIRST.**

### 1. *Waiting time for appointment (number of days):*

- (A) **Urgent** - not life threatening, but a problem needing care within 24 hours:

<b>Pediatrics</b>	see within 24 hours
<b>Adults</b>	see within 24 hours

- (B) **Symptomatic non-urgent:** e.g., cold, no fever.

<b>Pediatrics</b>	within 3 calendar days
<b>Adults</b>	within 3 calendar days

- (C) **Follow-up of Urgent Care**

<b>Pediatrics</b>	within 7 days
<b>Adults</b>	within 7 days

- (D) **Chronic care follow-up:** e.g., blood pressure checks, diabetes checks

<b>Pediatrics</b>	within 14 days
<b>Adults</b>	within 14 days

- (E) **Complete Physical/Health Maintenance:**

<b>Pediatrics</b>	within 30 calendar days
<b>Adults</b>	within 60 calendar days

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**2. Time in waiting room (minutes):**

<b>(A) Scheduled</b>	30 minutes After 30 minutes, patient must be given an update on waiting time <b>with</b> an option of waiting or rescheduling appointment; maximum waiting time = 60 minutes
<b>(B) Work-ins/Walk-ins</b>	(Called that day prior to coming) <b>Pediatrics and Adults</b> - after 45 minutes, patient must be given an update on waiting time with an option of waiting or rescheduling; maximum waiting time = 90 minutes. <u>BCBSNC discourages walk-ins</u> , but reasonable efforts should be made to accommodate patients. Life threatening emergencies must be managed immediately.

**3. After Hours Calls and Coverage**

**3.A Response time returning call after-hours & during lunch:**

<b>3A(1) *Urgent</b>	20 minutes
<b>3A(2) Other</b>	1 hour

**\*NOTE:** Most answering services cannot differentiate between urgent and non-urgent. Times indicated make assumption that the member notifies the answering service that the call is urgent, and that the physician receives enough information to make a determination.

**3 B. Coverage**

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

**4. Language**

Interpreter services are available either in the practice, with a contracted company (AT&T) or through hospital services.

**5. Office Hours:** Indicates the posted hours during which appropriate personnel is available.

<b>(A) Daytime hours/weeks</b>	7 hours per day x 5 days = 35 hours
<b>(B) Night hours/weekend</b>	24 hrs/day coverage

Standard: Office Hours=35 hrs/week

**GOAL: 100% compliance 1A & 3A=critical indicators**

**Note: If practice fails one more critical indicators, review is taken to the Credentialing Committee the month of the review.**