

ACCESS TO CARE STANDARDS
(Primary Care Physicians)

BCBSNC and the Provider Advisory Group have established the following Access to Care Standards for Primary Care Physicians. Please note that the following standards are monitored at the practice level, not the individual provider level.

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:

Pediatrics	see within 24 hours
Adults	see within 24 hours

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

Pediatrics	within 3 calendar days
Adults	within 3 calendar days

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

Pediatrics	within 7 days
Adults	within 7 days

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

Pediatrics	within 14 days
Adults	within 14 days

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

Pediatrics	within 30 calendar days
Adults	within 60 calendar days

2. Time in waiting room (minutes):

(A) Scheduled	30 minutes 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) Walk-ins	<u>Walk-ins are discouraged</u> , but reasonable efforts should be made to accommodate patients. Life threatening emergencies must be managed immediately.
(C) 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

3. Response time returning call after-hours (minutes):

(A) *Urgent	20 minutes
(B) Other	1 hour

*** NOTE: If your situation is urgent, please let your physician's answering service know.**

4. Office Hours: Indicates hours during which appropriate personnel is available to care for members, i.e., MD, DO, FNP, PA.

(A) Daytime hours/weeks	7 hours per day x 5 days = 35 hours
(B) Night hours/week	optional, but encouraged
(C) Weekend hours/week	optional, but encouraged

5. A clear mechanism to convey results of all lab/diagnostic procedures must be documented and followed. An active mechanism (i.e., not dependent on the patient) to convey abnormal values to patients must be documented and followed.