



Access and Availability Standards

All PCPs are required by contract to provide access to care for members in their panel 24 hours per day and seven days per week. Compliance with this requirement is monitored on an on-going basis using methodology, guidelines and sample size selection formulas provided by the City of New York Office of Medicaid Managed Care (OMMC) and/or DOH.A. Telephone surveys are conducted after hours (evening or weekends) by trained WellCare employees or a contracted vendor. Providers are expected to return the survey call within 30 minutes to be in compliance with the standard.

Obstetrical providers are also required to be available 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The PCP, obstetrician or designated on-call provider should be available to coordinate services and return emergency telephone calls within 30 minutes.

WellCare shall monitor providers against the following standards to ensure members can obtain needed health services within the acceptable appointment time frames, in-office waiting times, and after-hours standards. Providers not in compliance with these standards will be required to implement corrective actions.

Type of Appointment	Access Standard
Emergency - Primary or Specialty	Immediate upon presentation
Urgent	Within 24 hours
Non-Urgent "Sick"	Within 48-72 hours
Routine Non-Urgent Preventive	Within 4 weeks of request
Specialist Referrals – Non-Urgent	Within 4-6 weeks of request
Adult Baseline and Routine Physicals	Within 12 weeks
Well-Child Care	Within 4 weeks of request
Initial Newborn Care	Within 2 weeks of hospital discharge
Prenatal 1st Trimester	Within 3 weeks of request
Prenatal 2nd Trimester	Within 2 weeks of request
Prenatal 3rd Trimester	Within 1 week of request
Initial Family Planning	Within 2 weeks of request
Provider visits to make health, behavioral health, substance abuse assessments for the purpose of making recommendations regarding recipient's ability to perform work when requested by the local Department of Social Services (LDSS)	Within 10 days of request
Pursuant to an emergency or hospital discharge, behavioral health or substance abuse follow-up visits	Within 5 days of the request or as clinically indicated
Non-urgent behavioral or substance abuse visits	Within 2 weeks of request

In-office waiting times for primary care visits, specialty and urgent care, optometry services, and lab and X-ray services shall not exceed 45 minutes.

PCPs must provide or arrange for coverage of services, consultation or approval for referrals 24 hours per day,

seven days per week. To ensure accessibility and availability, PCPs must provide one of the following:

- A 24-hour answering service that connects the member to someone who can render a clinical decision or reach the PCP
- An answering system with the option to page the physician for a return call within a maximum of 30 minutes
- An advice nurse with access to the PCP or on-call physician within a maximum of 30 minutes

Obstetricians shall provide arrangements for emergency consultation and care for pregnant members after hours 24 hours per day, seven days per week. To ensure access and availability, one of the following must be provided:

- 24-hour answering service
- Answering system with option to page the provider
- An advising nurse with access to the provider or on-call physician