



After-Hours Services

CareSource® North Carolina Co. promotes member access to care by working with you, our provider, to provide appropriate after-hours services. Ensuring 24/7 coverage that allows your patients to speak with a provider is important for them to receive appropriate care and maintain their health. Below are provider guidelines and patient tips that will help your patients receive the right care in the right setting.

After-Hours Service Guidelines

To meet the National Committee of Quality Assurance (NCQA) requirements for call coverage and to ensure patient safety, it is important patients have direct access to speak with a practitioner on a 24-hour basis. Your phone answering service is an important point of access for patients needing care after hours. With this service, your patients can receive quick attention. Your after-hours service should offer one of the following options:

- Direct contact with the primary care physician (PCP) or another designated medical practitioner;
- A recording that directs the patient to call another number; **or**
- A call transfer to another location where someone can answer the phone and contact the PCP or designee.

Emergency Room (ER) Referrals

In life-threatening situations, it is appropriate to refer your patients to the emergency room (ER). Some situations where you should refer patients to the ER are when they are experiencing:

- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Bleeding that won't stop
- Severe pain
- Head injury
- Broken bones
- Major burns
- Trouble seeing, talking or moving
- Drug overdose

When to See Patients

Primary Care Physician (PCP)

Patients with:	Should be seen:
Emergency needs immediately upon presentation	24 hours a day, seven days a week
Urgent care	Not to exceed 48 hours from date of member's request
Regular and routine care	Not to exceed 30 days from date of a member's request

Non-PCP Specialists

Type of Visit	Should be seen...
Emergency needs	Immediately upon presentation
Urgent care	Not to exceed 48 hours
Regular and routine care	Not to exceed 12 weeks

Behavioral Health

Type of Visit	Should be seen...
Emergency needs	Immediately upon presentation
Non-life threatening emergency	Not to exceed six hours
Urgent care	Not to exceed 48 hours
Initial visit for routine care	Not to exceed 10 business days
Follow-up routine care	Not to exceed 30 calendar days based off the condition

Talking to Patients

CareSource North Carolina Co. regularly provides education to our members about appropriate use of services. In partnership with you, we both can educate members about how to access the right care to meet their needs by reminding them:

- In non-emergency situations, contact your PCP first.
- When a PCP cannot be reached, visit an urgent care to be seen quickly.
- Consider visiting Retail Health Clinics that are open late and on weekends.
- For routine care, visit a PCP, not the ER.

CareSource North Carolina Co. Services

CareSource North Carolina Co. helps members decide where to go for care if they are unsure. Your patients can call our 24-Hour Nurse Advice Line and a nurse will help them make the decision. Members can call 24 hours a day, seven days a week at no cost.

North Carolina: **1-833-687-7355** (TTY: **1-800-648-6056**)

Questions?

For questions, please contact Provider Services Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern Time (ET).

North Carolina: **1-833-230-2101**