



ACCESS TO CARE AND AFTER HOURS STANDARDS



CareSource promotes access to care by partnering with health care providers to ensure our members receive the best possible health care services. It includes evaluation of the availability, accessibility and acceptability of services rendered to patients by participating providers.

Participating providers are expected to have procedures in place to see patients within these time frames and to offer office hours to their CareSource patients that are at least the equivalent of those offered to any other patient.

In addition, a member's waiting time at a provider's office should be no more than one hour from the scheduled appointment time, except when the provider is unavailable due to an emergency.

Ensuring coverage that allows your patients to speak with a practitioner is important for them to receive appropriate care and maintain their health.

Please keep in mind the following access standards for each level of care:

Primary Care Providers (PCP)

Type of visit	Should be seen...
Regular and routine care	Not to exceed 15 business days
Urgent care*	Not to exceed 48 hours
Emergency needs	Immediately upon presentation

For PCPs only: Provide 24-hour availability to your CareSource patients by telephone. Whether through an answering machine or a taped message used after hours, patients should be given the means to contact their PCP or a backup provider to be triaged for care. It is not acceptable to use a phone message that does not provide access to your or your backup provider and only recommends emergency department (ED) use for after hours.

Specialists

Type of visit	Should be seen...
Regular and routine	Not to exceed 30 business days
Urgent care*	Not to exceed 48 hours
Emergency needs	Immediately upon presentation

Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Providers

Type of visit	Should be seen...
Initial visit for routine care	Not to exceed 10 business days
Follow-up routine care	Not to exceed 30 calendar days based on the condition
Urgent care*	Within 48 hours
Non-life-threatening emergency care	Not to exceed 6 hours
Emergency needs	Immediately upon presentation

*Providers should see members as expeditiously as the member's condition and severity of symptoms warrant.

It is expected that if a provider is unable to see the member within the designated time frame, CareSource will facilitate an appointment with another participating provider, or a non-participating provider, when necessary.

For the best interest of our members and to promote their positive health care outcomes, CareSource supports and encourages continuity of care and coordination of care between medical care providers as well as between physical and behavioral health providers.

Talking to Patients

CareSource regularly provides education to our members about appropriate use of services. Partnering with you gives us the opportunity to educate members about how to access the right care to meet their needs and remind them to:

- Contact their PCP first in non-emergency situations.
- Visit an urgent care to be seen quickly when a PCP cannot be reached.
- Consider visiting Retail Health Clinics or Convenience Care Clinics that are open late and on weekends.
- Visit a PCP for routine care, not the ED.

Nurse Advice Line

CareSource helps members decide where to go for care when 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 **1-833-687-7378** 24 hours a day, seven days a week at no cost.



Questions?

Please contact Provider Services at **1-833-230-2101**, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Pacific Time (PT).

Thank you for partnering with CareSource!