

Dear Optum Clinician:

OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions of California (Optum) will soon be administering our annual Provider Appointment Availability Survey (PAAS) to assess compliance with the time-elapsd appointment standards, set forth in section 1300.67.2.2 of title 28 of the California Code of Regulations.

The survey will be administered by our partner vendor, **QMetrics, Inc.**

- **Emails** will come from **QMetrics** <invites@mailier.surveygizmo.com> with the Subject Line: **“A Short DMHC Required Survey”**. Each survey will have a unique link to a provider specific survey to be completed online.
- **Faxes** will come from **1-877-399-3439** and completed surveys should be returned to this same fax number.

The results must be reported annually to the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) by all health plans, including Optum, and your cooperation in completing the survey, should your office be sampled for participation, is required.

PROVIDER APPOINTMENT AVAILABILITY SURVEY (PAAS): AUGUST 2023 - DECEMBER 2023

1. Health plans are required to ensure that health care services are provided to patients in a timely manner appropriate for the nature of the patient’s condition, consistent with good professional practice.
 2. Optum has partnered with survey vendor QMetrics, Inc. to administer this year’s PAAS.
 3. The assessment will be administered first by **email with a link to take the survey online or FAX.** Participants who do not respond to email or FAX surveys after five business days will be required to respond to the survey over the phone. We strongly encourage you to respond to the fax or email to avoid receiving a telephone call as this will reduce the burden on your office staff. The survey is expected to take less than five minutes.
 4. **The survey will ask for the next available urgent and non-urgent appointment date and time. The next available appointment can be a PHONE OR VIDEO/TELEHEALTH APPOINTMENT.**
 5. Health plans are required by law to gather information concerning appointment availability and report the findings to the DMHC.
 6. If you have questions about the survey contact your Optum Provider Service representative. Please do not contact the DMHC.
 7. **For Non-Physician Mental Health or Substance Use Disorder Providers:** Effective July 1, 2022, non-urgent follow up appointments with a Non-Physician Mental Health or Substance Use Disorder Providers should follow-up within 10 business days of the prior appointment for those undergoing a course of treatment for an ongoing mental health or substance use disorder condition. This should not limit coverage for nonurgent follow-up appointments with a Non-Physician Mental Health or Substance Use Disorder Providers to once every 10 business days.
(The applicable waiting time for a particular appointment may be extended if the referring or treating licensed health care provider, or the health professional providing triage or screening services, as applicable, acting within the scope of their practice and consistent with professionally recognized standards of practice, has determined and noted in the relevant record that a longer waiting time will not have a detrimental impact on the health of the enrollee).
- **The survey tool for these provider types will include one (1) additional question to assess compliance with the 10 business day follow-up appointment standard.**

To assist you with establishing appropriate scheduling practices based on the timeframes required under the Timely Access Regulations, we have included an outline of the appointment availability standards below. Please share this information with the appointment schedulers in your office.

Urgent Care	
Prior Authorization not required by Health Plans <u>2 Days (48 hours)</u>	Prior Authorization required by Health Plans <u>4 Days (96 hours)</u>
Non-Urgent Care	
Doctor Appointment: Specialty Care Physician <i>Psychiatrists (MD-Doctor of Medicine/ DO-Osteopathic Doctor)</i> <u>15 business days</u>	
Mental Health Appointment (non-physician) <i>(Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC), Psychologist (PhD-Level), Marriage and Family Therapist/Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Master of Social Work/Licensed Clinical Social Worker)</i> <u>10 business days</u>	
Follow-up Care	
Mental Health/Substance Use Disorder Follow-Up Appointment (non-physician) <u>10 business days from prior appointment</u>	

For PAAS questions, please reach out to:

- QMETRICS Phone: 1-888-388-9111 extension 6 and/ or
- Paassurvey@qmetrics.us

Your participation in completing these surveys is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time.