

## SECTION 14 - ACCESS STANDARDS

### Access to Services

PHP assures there is the capacity to serve the expected enrollment in its service area that offers an appropriate range of services and that maintains a sufficient number, mix and geographic distribution of providers of varying services.

PHP enters into subcontracts with a network of providers that is sufficient to provide adequate access to covered services to meet the needs of the population served. This process ensures that services are geographically accessible and consistent with local community patterns of care.

All Plan Providers are required to provide Members with an emergency telephone number and a written summary about how to access care after hours.

### Access Standards

PHP employs written standards for timeliness of access to care and Member services that meet or exceed the standards established by CMS and the DHFS. PHP expects its Plan Providers to comply with the following access standards to the extent they are applicable to the provision of services:

#### Travel Time/Distance:

- Time/Distance to Primary Care and Hospitals - All Members in urban or suburban locations are to have access to primary care sites and hospitals within thirty (30) minutes or thirty (30) miles of their residence. Transport time and distance in rural areas to primary care sites and hospitals may be greater than thirty (30) minutes or thirty (30) miles if based on the community standard for accessing care. Where greater, the exceptions must be justified and documented on the basis of community standards. This information must be made available for review upon CMS's request
- Time/Distance to Specialty Care Locations - Travel time/distances to all types of specialty care, including mental health, pharmacy, general optometry, lab and x-ray services, and long-term care services shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes or thirty (30) miles from the participant's residence. PHP may exempt individuals who request to receive services from a specialty provider with whom they have an established relationship but the travel time or distance is greater than thirty (30) minutes or thirty (30) miles

#### Appointment Times:

- Plan Providers shall employ sufficient medical personnel and staff to meet basic standards in the scheduling of appointments for enrolled Members. Appointments must be available for eligible recipients in accordance with the usual and customary practice standards and hours of operation. (Note: “Usual and customary” means access that is equal to or greater than the currently existing practice in the fee for service system.)

#### Maximum Expected Waiting Times:

- Appointment/Waiting Time - Usual and customary not to exceed thirty (30) calendar days for regular appointments and forty eight (48) hours for urgent care
- In-Office Waiting Time - Members with appointments shall not routinely be made to wait longer than one (1) hour
- Emergency Care - Emergency care must be provided as the situation dictates. In general, emergency care must be given in accordance to the time frame dictated by the nature of the emergency, at the nearest available facility, twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week, regardless of contracts. All emergency care must be provided on an immediate basis at the nearest facility available, regardless of contracting arrangements
- Urgent Care - Triage and appropriate treatment shall be provided on the same or next day
- Non-Urgent Problems and Routine Primary Care - Appointments for non-urgent care and routine primary care shall be provided within three (3) weeks of participant request
- Specialty Care - Referral appointments to specialists, except for specialists providing mental health and substance abuse services (e.g., specialty physician services, hospice care, home health care and certain rehabilitation services, etc.), shall not exceed thirty (30) calendar days for routine care or forty eight (48) hours for urgent care
- General Optometry Services - Plan Providers must have a system in place to document compliance with the following appointment scheduling time frames listed below. PHP monitors compliance with appointment/waiting time standards as part of the required surveys and monitoring requirements
- Transport Time - Transport time will be the usual and customary, not to exceed one (1) hour, except in areas where community access standards and documentation will apply
- Pharmacy Services - Plan Providers must have a system in place to document compliance with the following appointment scheduling time frames listed below. PHP monitors compliance with appointment/waiting time standards as part of the required surveys and monitoring requirements
- Lab and X-Ray Services - Plan Providers must have a system in place to document compliance with appointment scheduling time frames. PHP monitors compliance with appointment/waiting time standards as part of required surveys and monitoring requirements
- All Other Services - All other services not specified here shall meet the usual and customary standards for the community

### Primary Care Provider Standards

<b>Service</b>	<b>Appointment Time Frame</b>
Life-threatening emergency	Immediate
Urgent need	Within 24 hours or as soon as Member believes necessary
Non-urgent problem	Within 7 calendar days or as soon as Member believes necessary
Routine or preventive exam	Within 30 calendar days or as soon as Member believes necessary
After hours care	Return phone call within 1 hour

### **Patient Load**

DHFS determines the ratio of participants to primary care physicians; PHP monitors the ratio to ensure proper case-load ratios are maintained.

PHP establishes, maintains and monitors a panel of primary care providers from which Members may select personal primary care providers. If necessary, PHP may assign a primary care provider to a Member who does not select a primary care provider prior to enrollment in Program.

### Behavioral Health Care Provider Standards

<b>Service</b>	<b>Appointment Time Frame</b>
Life-threatening emergency	Immediate
Non life-threatening emergency	Within 6 hours
Urgent need	Within 48 hours
Routine office visit	Within 10 working days