

Access and availability standards for health care professionals in New York

The following table details the UnitedHealthcare Community Plan medical and behavioral health appointment access time frame for primary care and specialty health care professionals.

Appointment type	Access standards
Emergency care	
Emergency care (emergent) (MED/MH/SA): Defined as a medical or behavioral condition with sudden onset, severe symptoms that, to the average person, appears to require immediate medical attention or it could result in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing the health of the person in serious jeopardy • Serious impairment to bodily functions • Serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part • Serious disfigurement 	Immediate, face-to-face medical attention If a practitioner or covering practitioner isn't immediately available, the patient or representative should call 911.
Urgent care	
Urgent care (MED)	Within 24 hours of patient request
Urgent care (MH/SA)	Within 48 hours of patient request
Routine care (non-urgent)	
Mental health/substance abuse visit	Within 2 weeks of patient request
Sick visit (MED)	Within 48–72 hours as clinically indicated
Assessment regarding ability to perform/return to work (MH)	Within 10 days of patient request
Follow-up visit pursuant to an emergency or hospital discharge (MED/MH/SA)	Within 5 business days of member request or as clinically indicated
Adult, child/adolescent well/preventive visit (MED/PED/GYN)	Within 4 weeks of patient request
Specialty care	Within 4 to 6 weeks of patient request
Initial family planning/reproductive health visit	Within 2 weeks/14 days of patient request
Adult baseline and routine physicals (adults > 21 years)	Within 12 weeks of enrollment
Maternity infant care	
Initial prenatal visit	Within 3 weeks for first trimester, 2 weeks for second trimester and 1 week for third trimester of patient request
Initial newborn primary care physician (PCP) visit	Within 2 weeks of hospital discharge
Office wait times	
For scheduled appointments, the wait time in offices should not exceed 60 minutes. All PCPs are required to monitor waiting times and adhere to this standard.	
24-hour accessibility	
All UnitedHealthcare Community Plan participating health care professionals must be available, either directly or through medical coverage arrangements, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Availability must be by live voice direct to the health care professional, covering health care professional or through an answering service that can reach the health care professional. Voice messaging systems must connect patients to a live voice or a cell phone/beeper and not simply refer the patient to an emergency room. During after-hours, response time frame for health care professional's call back must be specified on the voice messaging system.	