

Monterey County Behavioral Health Quality Improvement

PROTOCOL

RE:	Urgent Appointment
POLICY REFERENCE	Pol. 129
FORM REFERENCE	Scheduling Calendar
EFFECTIVE	12/18/17

To decrease wait times and develop a standardized process for scheduling an “urgent” appointment, we have established the following procedures. “Urgent” is defined by the individual requesting the appointment, however, this protocol defines urgent as a necessary appointment to avoid the probability of deterioration due to the mental health condition. The standard number of days to an urgent appointment is 5-days, however, the number of days to next appointment may be modified to meet the individual’s needs, including availability for same day appointments. Urgent appointments are available throughout adult and children’s programs in all regions. An urgent appointment may be offered to individuals who are opened to an outpatient episode *AND* to individuals who do not yet have an open outpatient episode at the time of the request. For individuals without an open episode, staff will need to open an Access episode to continue with scheduling the urgent appointment. Any staff member may schedule an urgent appointment.

Urgent appointments include appointments for:

1. Access to Treatment programs for evaluation (during the initial testing phase, this service will be available to only Salinas-Access to Treatment program for small-scale testing). We anticipate system-wide roll-out in December 2017.
2. Medication Support appointments may be made for in-office and telepsychiatry

How does this process work?

- ❖ When you select a client, the Urgent appointments *script* will find the available appointments based on the client’s:
 - Primary Language
 - Age
- ❖ For individuals who have an **open outpatient mental health episode**:
 - The script will return available appointment with the individual’s assigned prescriber (361U service code).
 - If assigned prescriber is NOT available, an urgent appointment may be scheduled with the next available prescriber.
 - For individuals **without** an assigned prescriber, an urgent appointment for medication support may be scheduled with the next available prescriber

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- ❖ For individuals **without an open** mental health outpatient episode
 - Staff shall open an Access episode
 - Schedule the urgent appointment with the next available Access clinician
- ❖ Once an appointment is scheduled, the report will print an appointment Reminder card with the appointment information. The reminder will contain: the individual's name, date/time/location of appointment, and information on how to cancel/reschedule. The appointment Reminder card shall be given to the individual.

Things to consider when scheduling an urgent appointment

- ❖ For appointment with prescriber
 - Does the individual prefer an in-office or telepsychiatry
 - Individual's without an open mental health patient shall be scheduled with Access clinician

PROCEDURES:

All prescribers shall have appointment slots for urgent appointments designated with a **361U** service code. Access programs shall have appointment slots designated with a 331 service code. In order to avoid conflicts in scheduling, please be sure to maintain your schedules up-to-date using specific "Indirect Service Codes" in the scheduling calendar to block indirect service activities (i.e. 801 team meeting, 803 vacation/sick time, etc.).

The scheduled urgent appointment will be visible on your calendar, just like any other appointment. You can review clinical progress notes for information about the individual's needs and reason for urgent appointment.

For individuals currently **OPEN to outpatient care episode**

1. Whenever possible, schedule the urgent appointment with the individual's assigned prescriber
2. Schedule 361U appointment for medication support
3. Print and provide the individual a copy of the Appointment Reminder Card
4. If feasible, ask the individual if they are interested in receiving text message reminders for medication appointments
 - a. Complete "Electronic Communication Consent" form in Avatar
 - i. You may collect via paper and enter in Avatar (English):
<https://www.mtyhd.org/QI/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Electronic-Communication-Consent-English.pdf>

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- ii. You may collect via paper and enter in Avatar (Spanish):
<https://www.mtyhd.org/Ql/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Electronic-Communication-Consent-Spanish.pdf>
5. Complete your documentation within 24-hours of the service to support communication with the treatment team (this may be especially important for same-day urgent appointments).
 - a. Use FIRP format and standards for documentation
 - b. Include mental health interventions provided
 - c. Rationale for urgent appointment and/or clearly state the client's identified needs

For individuals WITHOUT an open outpatient episode

1. Open Access episode
2. Schedule appointment with Access clinician
3. Print and provide the individual a copy of the appointment Reminder card
4. If feasible, ask the individual if they are interested in receiving text message reminders for medication appointments
 - a. Complete "Electronic Communication Consent" form in Avatar
 - i. You may collect via paper and enter in Avatar (English):
<https://www.mtyhd.org/Ql/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Electronic-Communication-Consent-English.pdf>
 - ii. You may collect via paper and enter in Avatar (Spanish):
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5. Complete your documentation within 24-hours of the service to support communication with the treatment team (this may be especially important for same-day urgent appointments).
 - a. Use FIRP format and standards for documentation
 - b. Include mental health interventions provided
 - c. Rationale for urgent appointment and/or clearly state the client's identified needs