



QRTips

November 2015



Access Log Reminders

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) views contract and county clinic sites as one Mental Health Plan. The Mental Health Plan has the obligation to make sure Medi-Cal consumers are able to access specialty mental health services within the established timeliness. There are three categories of access log calls: emergent, urgent and routine.

- **Emergent:** If calls are determined to be emergent, the consumer must be offered appointments **within 4 hours** of the call. Appointments **made the next day** will be **flagged as errors**.
- **Urgent:** If calls are determined to be Urgent, the consumer must be offered **appointments within 24 hours of the first contact**. Weekend days or holidays **are not excluded** in calculating the 24 hour timeline. For example, a consumer, or their family member calls in at 3:00 PM on Friday and the contact is determined to be urgent. That client **must be offered an appt.** within 24 hours. **They cannot be scheduled the next business day on Monday. Access logs that don't follow this guideline will be flagged as an error.**
- **Routine:** Calls determined to be Routine must be offered appointments within 5 working days of the first contact. **Weekends and holidays are excluded in determining the 5 day timeline.** Note that the **first day** of contact **is not counted** as part of the 5 day timeline.
- A regional clinic, or county contract program, who is first receiving contact from a Medi-Cal consumer or their legal guardian, is required to make sure the consumer has been **offered** an appointment **within 5 working days by the end of the first call/contact if determined a routine call**. If no openings are available at the clinic then they must call other county/contract clinics to determine if an appointment is available. Once it has been determined that an opening is available, then the contact/access log sheet must be faxed to the program that has agreed to accept the referral. That program must follow the 2-hour limit to contact the consumer and offer an appointment within the required timeliness. The receiving clinic will complete the Contact/Access Log Sheet and enter the information into the BHS Access log in IRIS as soon as possible.

*For calls that come late in the day (4:30 or later) and it is determined no openings are available at the clinic then it would be expected that a staff at the receiving clinic completes the referral to an alternate clinic **by 9:00 - 10:00 AM the next business day.***

- The BHS Access Log is only for Medi-Cal consumers (or their legal guardian) who are calling to request specialty mental health services and **are not open in any other agency in the County Mental Health Plan.**
- ♦ If a consumer (or legal guardian) is calling for specialty mental health services, and it is determined they are already opened in another agency (within the Mental Health Plan), but are transitioning or being closed, then this contact does not need to go into the access log. If this scenario occurs then the program receiving the call should contact the first clinic to coordinate services.
- **Access logs entries must be entered into IRIS immediately or within 24 hours.** Not every contact for specialty mental services requires access log entry. As an example, referrals from schools or emergency rooms do not meet criteria for the access log. **Remember:** If the consumer declines the initial appointment and requests another appointment outside the timeline prescribed for each type of contact, then the program has met the access log guidelines since they have offered an appointment within the time limit.

Access Log Training: <http://www1.ochca.com/ochealthinfo.com/training/bhs/accesslog/>