



## Open Access

### What is it?

Open access is also known as same day access, advanced access and third next available appointment. It is a method of scheduling in which members can receive an appointment slot on the day they call, most often with their provider.

Open access is different from walk-in clinics. For walk-in clinics, members are seen when they walk in. Open access refers to members calling for an urgent, emergent or hospital follow-up and getting an appointment quickly.

### Why do we want to do this?

- ✓ Creates capacity.
- ✓ Provides access or appointment slots for hospital discharges.
- ✓ Creates a patient-centered approach.

### How does it work?

This model differentiates urgent/emergent from routine appointments. It reduces or eliminates delays in care without adding resources and creates availability for members being discharged from the hospital to be seen. It increases member satisfaction and improves performance on quality measures for transition of care and hospital follow-ups.

This model of scheduling is supply and demand. How to implement:

1. Measure supply and demand.
2. Establish a test team to pilot.
3. Establish policies and procedures for appointment types (urgent, emergent and hospital follow-up).
4. Develop contingency plans – this should include who can supplement or substitute for whom.
5. Implement pilot.
6. Measure pilot to gauge success.
7. Deploy to all providers.

Open access slots are openings on the provider schedule that are available and not pre-booked by members making follow-up appointments. Every provider in the agency has at least one slot per day so that when hospital discharges call for appointments they can book ahead. These appointments may be managed by an Alliance Health access coordinator.

Agencies should maintain waiting list to put in when members cancel in advance, and make this a priority- based queue based on an acuity model.