

# Appointing Processes

## Quick Reference Guide

### Key Points:

- The provider must have an approved referral/authorization from either a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center (VAMC), or TriWest, before an appointment can be made.
- Except for urgent or emergent care, providers should not administer care that does not have an approved referral/authorization from either VA or TriWest; otherwise, they risk not being reimbursed.
- Under CCN, there are multiple pathways for an appointment: direct from a VAMC, coordinated by TriWest, or self-appointed by a Veteran.
- TriWest or VA generates approved referral/authorization information with all appointment details, authorization/referral number and scope of care upon appointment confirmation.

**TriWest cannot pay for out-of-network claims or for care that does not have an approved referral/prior authorization (except for urgent care and emergency care). Providers can check a referral/authorization status using VA's online HealthShare Referral Manager (HSRM), available on the VA website.**

### Pathways for Appointing:

#### 1. VAMC Direct Appointing

- Veteran's VAMC approves care
- VAMC staff contacts the provider directly on behalf of the Veteran
- VAMC makes the appointment for the Veteran and sends the approved referral/authorization letter to the provider
- VAMC pushes the appointment information to TriWest
- TriWest's system associates services with an approved referral/authorization number and allows claim payment.

#### 2. TriWest Appointing

- Veteran's VAMC approves care and delegates the appointment process to TriWest.
- TriWest contacts the CCN provider on behalf of the Veteran and sends the approved referral/authorization to the provider.
- TriWest's system associates services with an approved referral/authorization number and allows claim payment.

#### 3. Veteran Self-Appointing

- Both the VAMC and TriWest offer self-appointing options for Veterans. A Veteran can self-appoint when he/she has an approved referral/authorization, **unless he/she self presents to an Emergency Room (ER).**
  - **Veterans MUST have an approved referral/authorization in order to self-appoint; otherwise, the provider risks losing reimbursement.**
- If the Veteran does not self-appoint within 90 days after the approved referral/authorization, the approved referral/authorization will be returned to VA.

- If the provider hasn't received an approved referral/authorization letter within a week, the provider should contact the VAMC or TriWest to ensure the appointment information is available.
- A Veteran may also self-appoint through the Veteran self-service website or phone app.
- Either TriWest or VA sends the provider an authorization letter.
- If the Veteran self presents to an ER, the ER is required to notify the Community Care Centralized Notification Center within 72 hours of the Veteran self-presenting for treatment. Notify the Community Care Centralized Notification Center via:
  - Website: <https://emergencycarereporting.communitycare.va.gov>
  - Phone: 844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842)
    - Questions: [VHAOCCEmergencyCareTeam@va.gov](mailto:VHAOCCEmergencyCareTeam@va.gov)
- Providers will also be required to include a valid email address for decision correspondence when reporting emergency treatment. VA will no longer include Veteran's personal identification information in outgoing correspondence. Providers will need the notification identification number, assigned upon submission of reporting, to correlate authorization decisions to reported emergency events.

### CCN Participation Requirements for Appointments:

- If you determine your Veteran patient needs additional care beyond what was authorized, you must submit a Request for Service (RFS) directly to VA, preferably through VA's secure, web-based system, HealthShare Referral Manager (HSRM).
  - If you need to find your authorization letter, go to HSRM.
- You may NOT charge a Veteran for not keeping a scheduled appointment.

### Drive-Time and Appointing for Veterans

The following are VA standards for drive-time and appointing for Veterans:

Urban	45 minutes
Rural	100 minutes
Highly Rural Location	180 minutes

The following services are **EXCLUDED** from the drive-time standards: telehealth, non-urgent neurosurgery and cardiothoracic surgery, rheumatology, and dermatology.

### Maximum Appointment Availability Times

	Primary Care	Specialty Care
Urban	30 days	30 days
Rural	30 days	30 days
Highly Rural Location	30 days	30 days

	Emergent	Urgent
Urban	24 hours	48 hours
Rural	24 hours	48 hours
Highly Rural Location	24 hours	48 hours

**Note:** Either TriWest or VA coordinate and schedule appointments with your office in a timely manner based on the medical needs of the Veteran, following the VA CCN appointment availability standards which are: 24 hours for emergent health needs, 48 hours for urgent health issues, and within 30 days for primary or specialty care appointments.