

New Report: Healthcare Provider Networks Inadequate to Serve All Causes and Solutions in Pennsylvania

Health plans must provide reasonable access to a sufficient number of in-network providers and services. Yet many Pennsylvanians face delays of months or even years in scheduling appointments as well as excessively long driving distances to treatment locations. PHAN's new report looks at how inadequate provider networks can impact access to care for plan members.

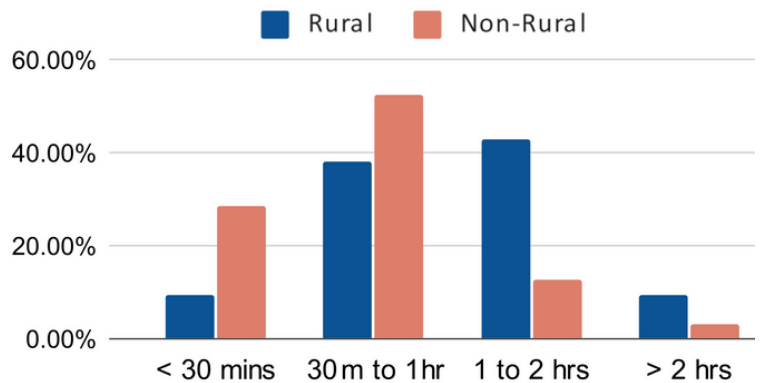
The full report is available on our website: pahealthaccess.org/network-adequacy-report

Widespread and Urgent

In surveys conducted by PHAN:

- **2 in 5** participants reported waiting for an appointment for **longer than 4 months**
- **1 in 10** reported waiting a **year or more**
- **1 in 3** reported **travel times longer than 1 hour** each way to appointments
- Travel times were even longer for rural participants (see chart on right).
- **1 in 5** said their **condition had worsened** due to a delay in accessing care.

Longest Travel (One Way)



Phantom Providers

Studies of provider directories used by health plans consistently show an alarming number of inaccuracies and even “phantom providers” (providers who are listed, but who do not actually accept patients enrolled in the plan). One study found that as many as **58.2%** of listings were phantom providers.



Impacted people featured in the report

Solutions

Pennsylvania regulations on network adequacy have remained stagnant for **20 years**. The federal government recognized a need for increased oversight and responded accordingly and 10 states have adopted improved standards. **Pennsylvania must follow suit by:**

- Updating the complaints process to be more user-friendly so problems are caught early and can be documented
- Revising metrics to monitor what impacts Pennsylvanians’ access to care
- Ensuring plans incorporate providers that serve high-risk and vulnerable populations
- Enforcing existing regulations by verifying insurers’ self-reports
- Streamlining the process for providers to join networks
- Increasing transparency by publishing available data

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