

Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) Timely Access Data Collection

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

General Information

- **Question:** What is the purpose of SMHS timely access data collection?

Answer: Intention is to determine system ability to offer and provide timely initial and ongoing outpatient care (i.e. treatment). Timely access requirements are both Federal and State. [Timely Access to Service Standards, and Tracking and Monitoring Requirements Policy](#) provides details.

- **Question:** Which providers are responsible for reporting timely access to services data?

Answer: Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) outpatient (non-residential) treatment providers. Timely access data is collected for Medi-Cal Members only and for ongoing treatment services (i.e. mental health services).

Timing to Submit Timely Access Data

- **Question:** How long do providers have to collect all data points and finalize/submit timeliness records (how long can records be left open for)?

Answer: Timeliness records are to be finalized (i.e. submitted) within 30 days of having all required data elements. Outreach to schedule and connect members to services (i.e. first service and first follow up service) is anticipated to take up to 90 days from the Date of Request. Therefore, the maximum is 120 days to finalize (i.e. submit) all timeliness records.

Mental Health (MH) Timely Access Reporting Tool Web Application

- **Question:** What is the Mental Health Timely Access Reporting Tool Web Application (Web App) and when should providers begin using it to report timely access to services data?

Answer: The MH Timely Access Reporting Tool is the new platform through which ACBHD is collecting SMHS provider's timely access to services data: https://bi.acbhcs.org/timely_access_reporting_tool/. The platform includes a list of members for whom timely access data is being requested from programs. The list includes members with new service requests/referrals or first service dates on or after July 1, 2025.

- **Question:** What do I do if I can't access the MH Timely Access Reporting web application?

Answer: For Organizations/Programs, Web App access requires SmartCare access. To obtain SmartCare access, please obtain a Staff ID and complete the Staff Authorization form <https://bhcsproviders.acgov.org/providers/eforms.htm>

Contact ACBHD Information Systems at (510) 817-0076 or ACHSupport@acgov.org for assistance with accessing the Web App.

- **Question:** How do I change the information for the contact(s) set to receive the broadcast emails?

Answer: The Web App includes a form to allow providers to update the contact information for their organization, to ensure receipt of the monthly broadcasts requesting timeliness data reporting. Please visit the Web App and click on the "UPDATE ALERTS" button to add, edit or remove people from the alert emails.

- **Question:** What if a program is listed on the email I received but I am not responsible for providing timeliness data for that program?

Answer: The broadcast email is sent to all contacts that we have for the agency, even if the contacts for the specific programs are different. Therefore, an agency contact may see programs listed on the email that do not pertain to them.

- **Question:** What if my program has previously submitted timeliness data through the Timely Access Data Tool Reporting e-form, do I need to re-enter the data into the new MH Timely Access Reporting web application?

Answer: Timeliness data for referrals/requests or first service dates on or after July 1, 2025, should be entered in the Web App, even if data were previously provided via e-form submission.

Member-Level Questions

- **Question:** Why am I seeing a member on my MH Timely Access Reporting Tool for whom I did not receive an ACCESS referral for?

Answer: ACCESS referral data is utilized to determine members who are screened and referred to SMHS outpatient services, and are therefore reflected in the MH Timely Access Reporting Tool.

Contact ACCESS 1-800-491-9099 to request the member referral letter and contact the member to schedule. Additional note: ACCESS referral process includes a member-text, which provides the Referred-to-Program information, and therefore the ability for direct Member-to-Program contact.

If unable to successfully schedule or connect member to service, select Closure Reason: 7 (unable to contact).

If able to successfully schedule, but delayed, select Delay Reason: 5 (Other) + Description (Referral receipt delay).

Program-Level Questions

- **Question:** Why is my program(s) not showing up in the MH Timeliness Tracking Tool?

Answer: If your program(s) are not showing up on the MH Timeliness Tracking Tool, they are either not subject to timeliness data reporting or have yet to have a member who requires timeliness reporting.

- **Question:** Why am I seeing a first service date on the MH Timely Access Reporting Tool for a member who no-showed (i.e. did not receive a service)?

Answer: System issue of no-show events erroneously being identified as services. System edits completed March 2026.

- **Question:** Why is my program asked to submit timeliness data for long-standing members?

Answer: If a member has not received a non-psychiatry service within the last 6 months, timeliness data will be requested. Consider transitioning members in these situations to lower levels of care (e.g. medication only program).

- **Question:** What do I do when a member is showing up in the MH Timely Access Reporting Tool and is associated with the wrong program within my agency?

Answer: When an agency receives an ACCESS program referral, you may determine that a different program within an agency is more appropriate to serve a member's needs. Proceed with the requested timeliness data submission since the primary data tracking purpose is to determine system ability to offer and provide timely service access to members.

- **Question:** A member was referred to our Program but then the referral was transferred to another program. How do we proceed?

Answer: Complete and submit MH Timeliness Tracking for the member. Closure reason: 8 (Other) + Description (Referred to another program).

Technical Assistance

- **Question:** Who can I contact if I am having data entry or data accuracy issues as it relates to the Mental Health (MH) Timely Access Reporting Tool Web Application?

Answer: Please contact ACHSupport@acgov.org

- **Question:** Who can I contact and where can I find more information about Timely Access Data requirements and tools?

Answer: Please reach out to QATA@acgov.org for more resources, training and Medical documentation requirements information. You can also attend the monthly brown bag meetings that relate to the service type you are providing.

[Monthly Mental Health Brown Bag](#)

[Substance Abuse Brown Bag](#)

- **Question:** How do I get updates related to requirements related to Timely Access Data?

Answer: Subscribe to receive provider communication from ACBHD Quality Assurance (QA) Division:

Mental Health Providers, [Click to subscribe](#)

Mental Health Individual Providers, [Click to subscribe](#)

Substance Use Disorder Providers, [Click to subscribe](#)