

Access & Availability Standards Training for Health Care Providers

Provider Education & Training

Objectives

- Review Access to Care, Appointment Availability & After-hours Access Standards.
- Ensure all providers, current and new, are adhering to the Access & Availability Standards.
- Provide helpful recommendations that providers can use to be better prepared for a provider access survey conducted by MetroPlusHealth and governmental regulators.

Regulatory requirement

MetroPlusHealth has a contractual obligation to regulators to ensure that we establish and implement mechanisms to ensure that Network Providers comply with timely access requirements, and that monitoring is done regularly to determine compliance and take corrective action with Network Providers that fail to comply.



Access to care standards | Appointment availability

Did you know that Health Plans and NYS frequently call to check that your office is complying with appointment availability agreements? **As a reminder, as a contracted provider, you have agreed to maintain the following availability standards:**

- Providers are required to schedule appointments in accordance with the appointment and availability standards.
- Providers ***must not*** require a new patient to provide prerequisites to schedule an appointment, such as a copy of their medical record, phone number, address, a health screening questionnaire, and/or an immunization record.
- Providers can obtain additional information from a new member during their first appointment.
- To access the full Medical Access and Availability Standards, please [click here](#).



Emergency Care

Requires immediate in-person medical attention.
Call 911 or go to the nearest ER if emergency is life-threatening.



Urgent Care

Requires in-person medical attention within 24 hours.



Non-Urgent Care

Requires in-person medical attention within 48 to 72 hours.



Primary Care

Requires an in-person visit within 4 weeks.

Access to care standards |

After-hours appointment availability

Correct emergency Instructions provided to the caller	Instructions must state: ■ “If this is a life-threatening emergency, please hang up and dial 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.” ■ Must be stated within the first 30 seconds of answering call or the recorded message.
Process to reach physician Physician/on-call physician or medical professional is available during business hours and after hours	Appropriate actions: ■ Directly connects the caller to a medical professional (physician/on-call physician, or medical professional). ■ The caller can select an option on their telephone and be directly connected to a physician/on-call physician or medical professional. ■ Call forwarding: Call is automatically forwarded to the physician/on-call physician or medical professional.
Timeframe for response Member must be connected, transferred, or forwarded immediately	Requirement for response: ■ Immediate: Direct connect or transfer of call to physician/on-call physician or medical professional.

Access and availability | After-hours audit

MetroPlusHealth's Vendor (Press Ganey) conducts a survey to participating providers through telephonic monitoring.

Upon receipt of the vendor's **quarterly report**, providers found to be **non-compliant** will be issued a notification (non-compliant email) from MetroPlusHealth indicating the area(s) of non-compliance.

- Providers delegated or participating via a group of facility will be reported to the entity responsible for their agreement and the entity will ensure that such providers are educated and become compliant with access and availability requirements.
- Independent providers will be sent a notification, which will include actions to be taken by the provider to ensure they are compliant.
- The Non-Compliant Education Attestation is completed by the individual providers or by the contracting entity on behalf of its providers with a Plan of Correction from the provider upon **completion of a mandatory training on Access-to-Care**.
- MetroPlusHealth will conduct a **follow-up audit survey** through the Vendor with the non-compliant providers **after the completion of the education** to ensure compliance by the provider.

Appointment availability | After-hours Plan of Corrections (POC)



Appointment Availability POC

- Staff will be trained regarding NYS access and availability standards through education and training materials provided by MetroPlusHealth.
- Self-audits will be conducted to ensure adherence with the standards.
- Request additional NYS orientation (approx. 30 minutes).



After-Hours Access POC

- Caller will directly connect with a medical professional.
- Call is automatically forwarded to the physician/on-call physician or medical professional.
- Caller can select an option on their phone to be directly connected to a physician/on-call physician or medical professional.



Emergency Care POC

- Emergency care must be given **immediately** upon presentation at a service delivery site.
- Member will only be referred to the Emergency Room if the emergency is **life-threatening**.

NYS appointment availability standards for healthcare providers

Appointment type	Availability timeframe
Adult baseline and routine physical	Within 12 weeks of enrollment
Adult baseline and routine physical for HIV SNP Members	Within 4 weeks of enrollment
Initial family planning visit	Within 2 weeks of request
In-plan behavioral health or substance abuse follow-up visit (Pursuant to emergency or hospital discharge)	Within 5 calendar days of request or as clinically indicated
In-plan non-urgent behavioral health visit	Within 2 weeks of request
Health assessment of ability to work	Within 10 calendar days of request
Emergency care	Immediately upon presentation
Urgent medical/behavioral care	Within 24 hours of request
Non-urgent “sick” visit	Within 48–72 hours of request

Appointment type	Availability timeframe
Specialist referrals (Non-urgent)	Within 4-6 weeks of request
Routine non-urgent preventive health visits	Within 28 days of request
Well child care	Within 28 days of request
Initial prenatal visit, 1 st trimester	Within 3 weeks of request
Initial prenatal visit, 2 nd trimester	Within 2 weeks of request
Initial prenatal visit, 3 rd trimester	Within 1 week of request
Initial PCP visit for newborns	Within 2 weeks of hospital discharge
Initial newborn visit for HIV SNP members	Within 48 hours of hospital discharge

Appointment availability

MetroPlusHealth recommendations:

- Referring a member to another provider with availability in your facility/practice, if a provider cannot accommodate a member's request.
- Checking your patient panel capacity to ensure you are within your panel limits.
- Integrate access and availability standards into all office operations, specifically during initial staff on-boarding and through periodic in-service training at regular team meetings.
- Conducting self-audits to ensure adherence to the timeframe's turnover.

After-hours

MetroPlusHealth recommendations:

- If using an answering service, ensure that there is an available physician/on-call physician or medical professional for the call to be transferred to at all times.
- Timeframe for response is **immediately**.
- Integrate after-hours standards into all office operations, specifically during initial staff on-boarding and through periodic in-service training at regular team meetings.
- Conducting self-audits to ensure adherence to the timeframe's turnover.

Emergency care

MetroPlusHealth recommendations:

- Emergency care must be given **immediately** upon presentation at a service delivery site.
- **Only refer** a member to the Emergency Room if the emergency is **life-threatening**.

Knowledge check



Knowledge check

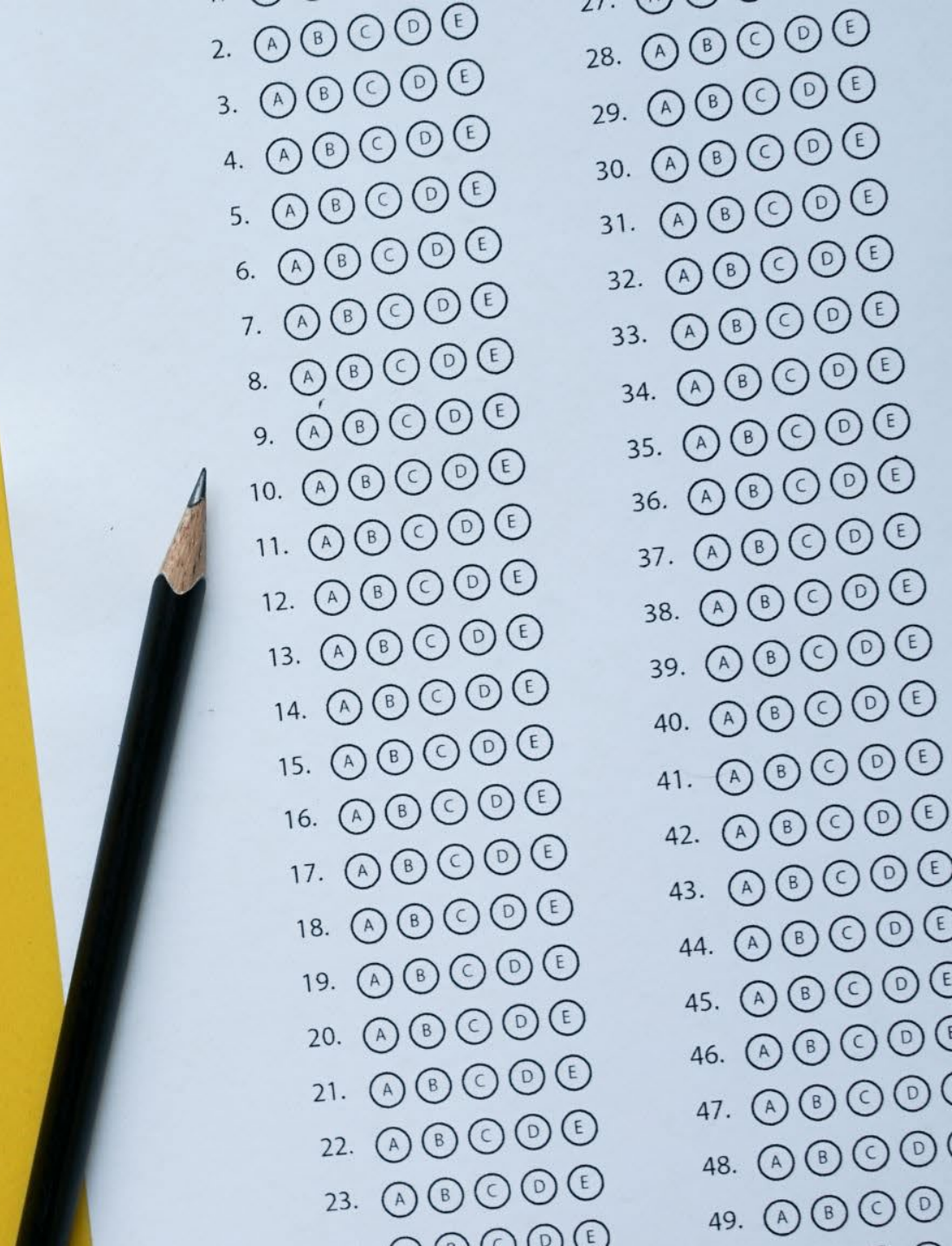
What is the timeframe for receiving an appointment for Non-Urgent Sick Visit?

- A. Within 24 hours of request
- B. Within 48–72 hours of request
- C. Within 1 week of request



The correct
answer is ...

48–72 hours of
request



Knowledge check

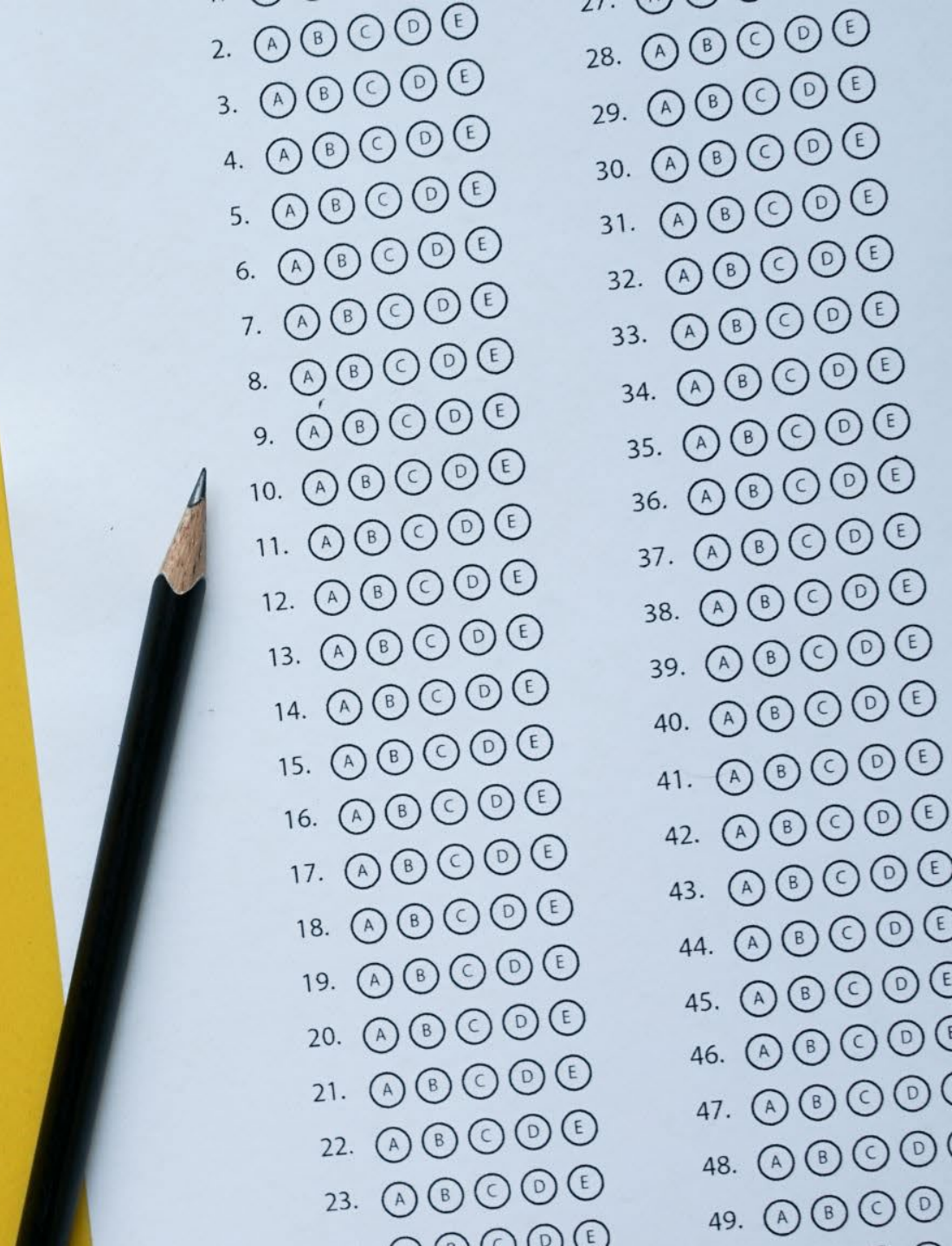
If a member needs an emergency care visit that does not require a hospital, what is the availability timeframe?

- A. Immediately upon presentation or within 1 hour of request
- B. Within 48–72 hours of request
- C. Within 1 week of request



The correct
answer is ...

Immediately upon
presentation or
within 1 hour of
request



Knowledge check

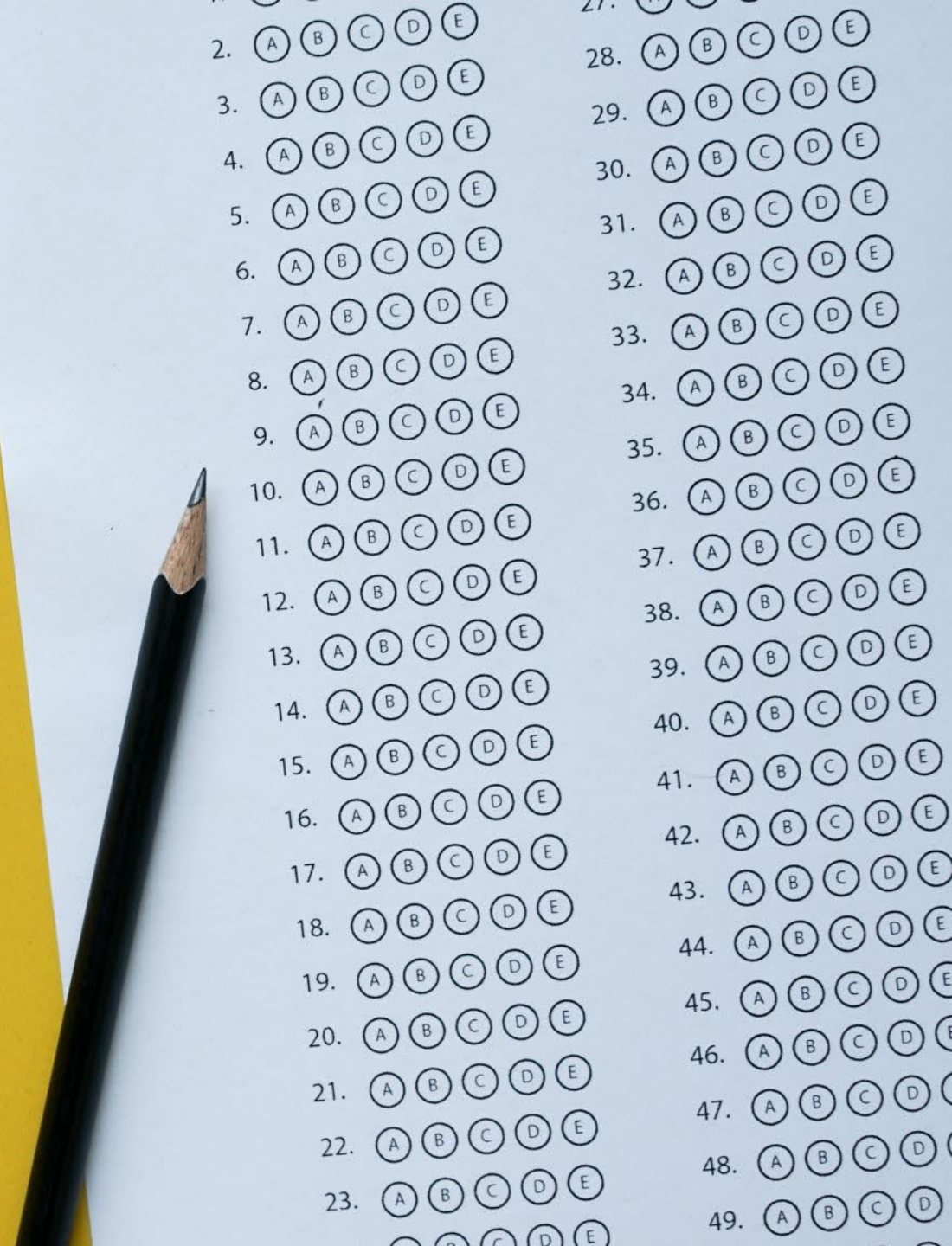
If a member needs to schedule a newborn appointment, what is the next availability timeframe?

- A. Within 1 week of hospital discharge
- B. Within 24 hours of hospital discharge
- C. Within 2 weeks of hospital discharge



The correct
answer is ...

Within 2 weeks
of hospital
discharge



Knowledge check

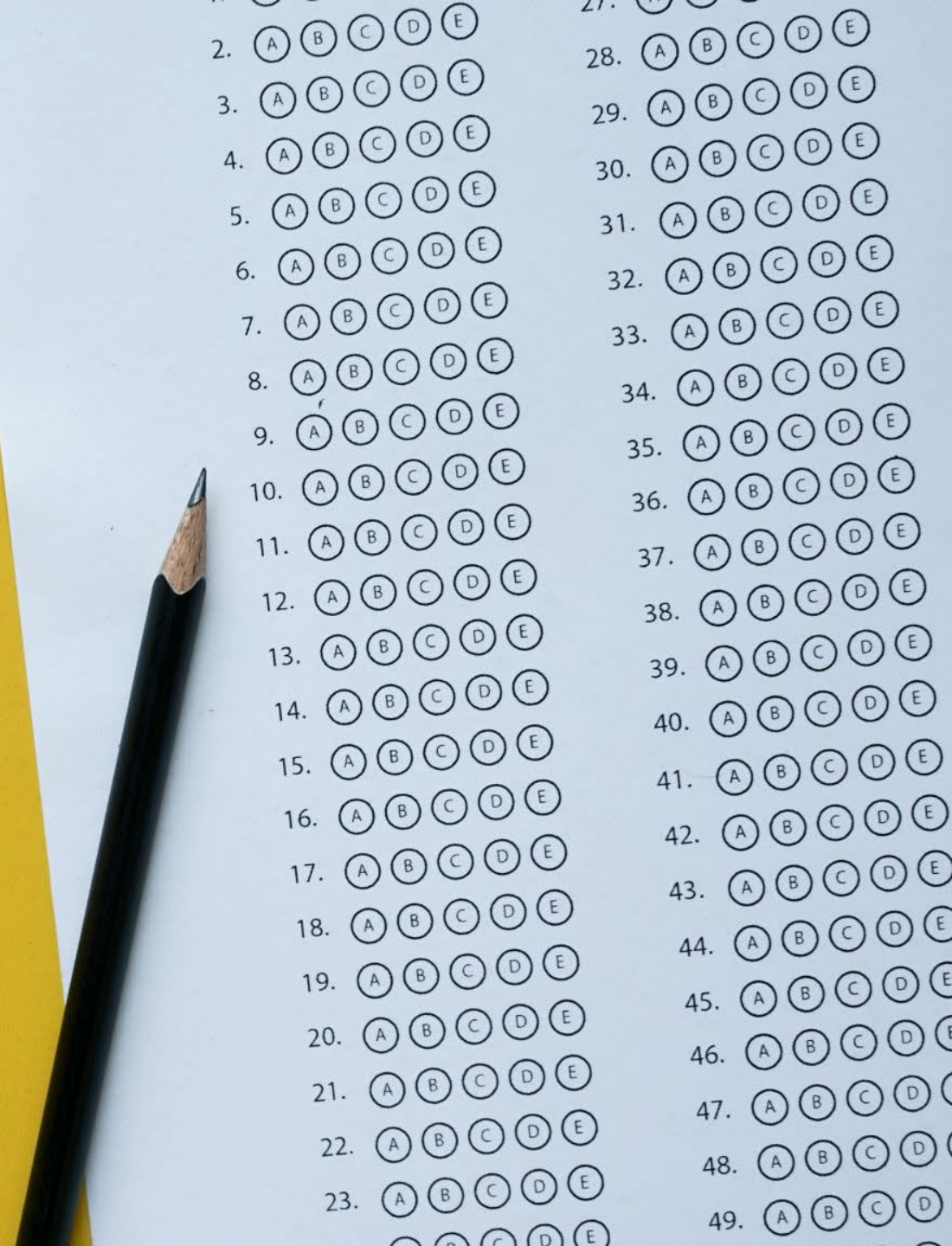
I need to schedule a specialist appointment, what is the timeframe for the next available appointment?

- A. Within 1 week of request
- B. Within 4–6 weeks of request
- C. Within 72 hours of request



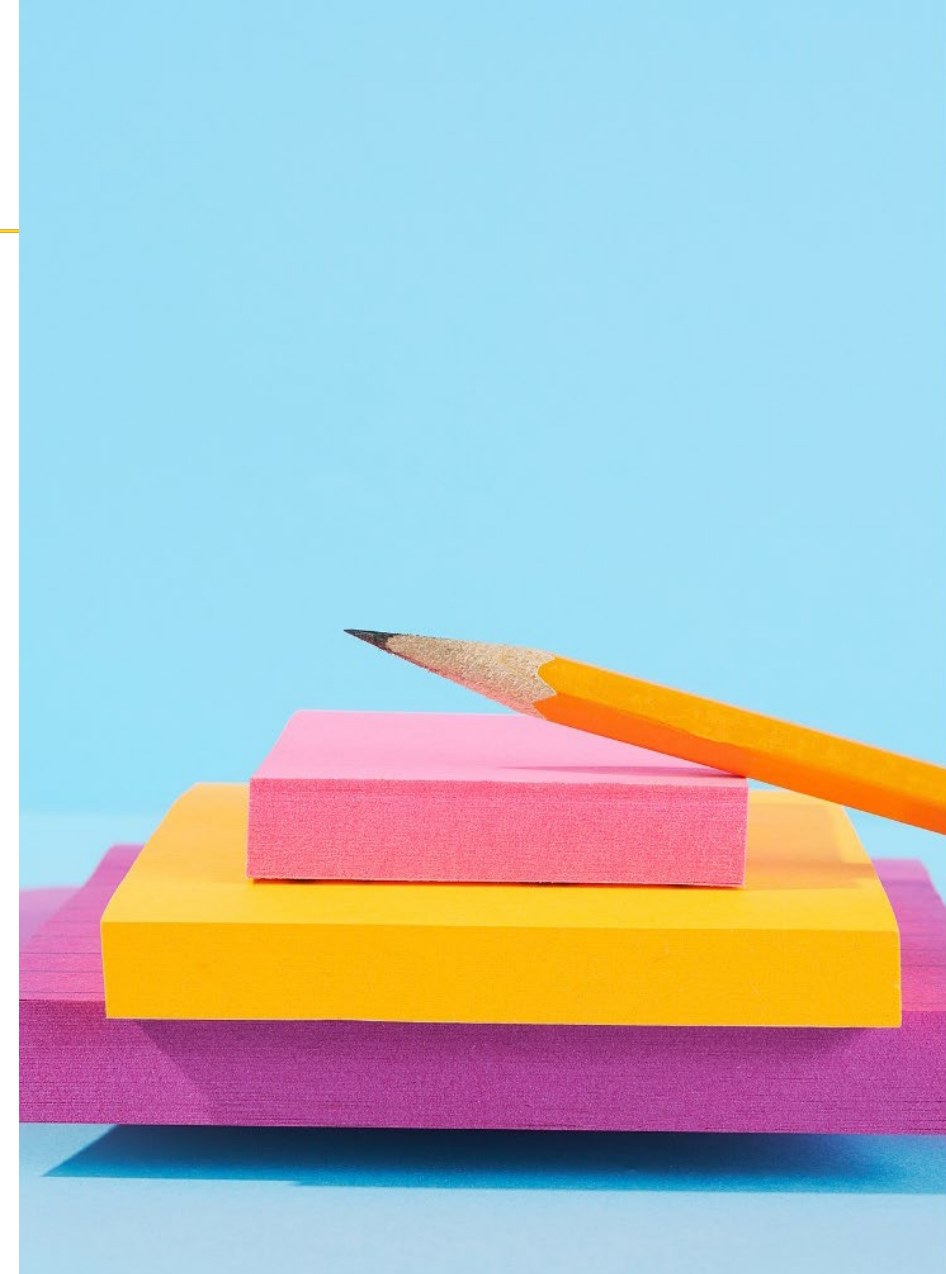
The correct
answer is ...

Within 4–6
weeks of request



Quick tip

If the requested MetroPlus Provider provider is not available within the specific timeframe, the appointment can be scheduled with another MetroPlus provider within that same office.



General resources



Visit metroplus.org to access information 24/7

- Provider Manual
- Provider Newsletters Formularies
- Benefits Provider Search
- Provider Directory (PDF)



Once you register, you can access the Provider Portal to:

- Check member eligibility
- Check the status of submitted claims
- Check Member authorization status
- Access Provider orientation, benefit changes and clinical guidelines
- PCPs can access membership rosters
- Obtain MetroPlus reports:
 - Membership reports
 - Utilization reports
 - Provider Performance Profiles
 - Diagnosis Code lists



To register, go to:

[Provider | MetroPlus Health Plan](#)

Thank you for your participation in the MetroPlusHealth Access & Availability Standards Training

For any general queries or concerns, please contact the
Provider Call Center at **800.303.9626** or connect with a
Provider Education Trainer at providerrelationsops@metroplus.org.

This presentation is for Provider educational purposes ONLY and
does not include plan specific information.



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