2017 AMA Prior Authorization Physician Survey

**PATIENT IMPACT**

**Average wait time for PA responses**

Q: In the last week, how long on average did you and your staff need to wait for a prior authorization (PA) decision from health plans?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 1 hour</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few hours</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than a few hours but less than 1 business day</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 business day</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 business days</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–5 business days</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 business days</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

64% report waiting at least one business day

30% report waiting at least three business days

**Care delays associated with PA**

Q: For those patients whose treatment requires PA, how often does this process delay access to necessary care?

- Always: 15%
- Often: 39%
- Sometimes: 6%
- Rarely: 1%
- Never: 1%
- Don’t know: 1%

92% report care delays

**Abandoned treatment associated with PA**

Q: For those patients whose treatment requires PA, how often do issues related to this process lead to patients abandoning their recommended course of treatment?

- Always: 2%
- Often: 19%
- Sometimes: 57%
- Rarely: 19%
- Never: 3%
- Don’t know: 2%

78% report that PA can at least sometimes lead to treatment abandonment

**Impact of PA on clinical outcomes**

Q: For those patients whose treatment requires PA, what is your perception of the overall impact of this process on patient clinical outcomes?

- Significant NEGATIVE impact: 2%
- Somewhat NEGATIVE impact: 31%
- Rarely: 19%
- No impact: 61%
- Somewhat or significant POSITIVE impact: 7%

92% report that PA can have a negative impact on patient clinical outcomes

Total does not equal 100% due to rounding.
Physician perspective on PA burdens

**Q**: How would you describe the burden associated with PA for the physicians and staff in your practice?

**Change in PA burden over last five years**

**Q**: How has the burden associated with PA changed over the last five years for the physicians and staff in your practice?

### Additional PA practice burden findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Survey result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>13.9 average prescription PAs per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ 15.1 average medical services PAs per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>29.1 average total PAs per physician per week</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Average of <strong>14.6 hours</strong> (approximately two business days) spent each week by the physician/staff to complete this PA workload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice resources</td>
<td>34% of physicians have staff who work exclusively on PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>79% of physicians are sometimes, often or always required to repeat PAs for prescription medications when a patient is stabilized on a treatment regimen for a chronic condition</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Total PAs per week rounded after combining prescription and medical services PAs.

### Survey methodology

- 27-question, web-based survey administered in Dec. 2017
- Sample of 1000 practicing physicians drawn from M3 panel
- 40% primary care physicians/60% specialists
- Sample screened to ensure that all participating physicians:
  - Are currently practicing in the U.S.
  - Provide 20 or more hours of patient care per week
  - Complete PAs during a typical week of practice

For information on the AMA’s advocacy efforts and resources to reduce PA burdens, please visit [ama-assn.org/prior-auth](http://ama-assn.org/prior-auth).