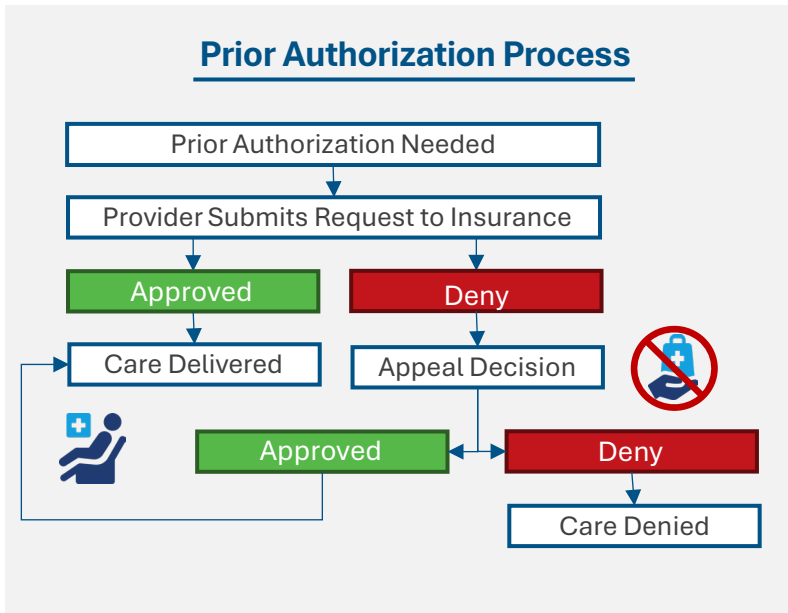


Ensuring Timely Access to Care: Reforming Prior Authorization Processes

For certain medical treatments, tests, procedures, or medications, payors require prior authorization to be obtained before the service can be provided.

Timeliness in healthcare is critical, delays in receiving care can be a matter of patient safety. Prior authorization, which aims to control costs and ensure medical necessity, requires time to submit documentation and for the plan to review and decide whether to cover the service recommended by the provider.

Delays in this process can range from a few days to several weeks, which can result in delayed care and potentially put the patient at risk.



Prior Authorization Impact

- 94%** of physicians report care delays
- 24%** of physicians say delays caused serious harm
- 12.5%** of Medicaid PA requests denied
- 1 in 5** discharges are delayed
- Patients stay an extra **4.5 DAYS** due to these delays

Legislative Priorities

- **Mandate payors respond** to prior authorization requests within **24 hours for urgent and 72 hours** for nonurgent requests.
- **Ensure physicians** reviewing requests **are credentialed in the relevant specialty** and expertise treating the specific conditions for which they are making a determination.
- **Prohibit prior authorizations** for prehospital transportation, emergency services, medications for opioid use disorder, or additional requirements for surgical procedures during another authorized procedure.
- Limit the ability to revoke, change, condition or restrict a prior authorization within **45 days of the approval**.

Patient Story

Patient hospitalized for anemia requiring repeated blood transfusions and inpatient evaluation. UHC and Sunshine CMS cited technicalities to refuse prior authorization, while the patient was denied access to ongoing Enzyme Replacement Therapy. While dealing with several months' delays at the hands of the insurance companies, the patient's biomarkers worsened, and she was hospitalized again.

SOURCE: [AMA prior authorization \(PA\) physician survey](#) | AMA