



## **Update to the 2023 Central California Alliance for Health Medi-Cal Health Plan Member Handbook/Evidence of Coverage**

This is a notice about some changes to your Medi-Cal Health Plan Handbook/Evidence of Coverage. Please keep this information for your reference.

### **What Has Changed?**

Effective January 1, 2023, Central California Alliance for Health (the Alliance) will allow members who are diagnosed with a complex cancer to ask for a referral from their Primary Care Provider (PCP) to a National Cancer Institute (NCI) designated cancer center. The purpose of this notice is to show revisions in the Member Handbook regarding this change. The Alliance also removed the word “brief” under Cognitive health assessments. The information in this notice either replaces or adds to the current information in your Member Handbook. If you have any questions about this change, please call Member Services at 800-700-3874 (TTY: 800-735-2929 or 711). We are open 8 AM – 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

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## **3. How to get care**

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### **Referrals**

Your PCP or another specialist will provide you a referral to visit a specialist within the time frame listed in the “Timely access to care” section of this handbook, if you need one. A specialist is a doctor who has extra education in one area of medicine. Your PCP will work with you to choose a specialist. Your PCP’s office can help you set up a time to go to the specialist.

Other services that might need a referral include in-office procedures, X-rays, and lab work.

Your PCP may give you a form to take to the specialist. The specialist will fill out the form and send it back to your PCP. The specialist will treat you for as long as they think you need treatment.

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950 East Blanco Road, Ste. 101  
Salinas, CA 93901-4487  
831-755-6000

530 West 16th Street, Ste. B  
Merced, CA 95340-4710  
209-381-5300

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If you have a health problem that needs special medical care for a long time, you may need a standing referral. This means you can go to the same specialist more than once without getting a referral each time.

If you have trouble getting a standing referral or want a copy of the Alliance referral policy, call Member Services at 800-700-3874 (TTY 800-735-2929 or 711).

You do not need a referral for:

- PCP visits
- Obstetrics/Gynecology (OB/GYN) visits
- Urgent or emergency care visits
- Adult sensitive services, such as sexual assault care
- Family planning services (to learn more, call Office of Family Planning Information and Referral Service at 1-800-942-1054)
- HIV testing and counseling (12 years or older)
- Sexually transmitted infection services (12 years or older)
- Chiropractic services (a referral may be required when provided by out-of-network FQHCs, RHCs and IHCPs)
- Initial mental health assessment
- Routine Vision Exam

Minors can also get certain outpatient mental health services, sensitive services and substance use disorder services without parent's consent. For more information read "Minor consent services" and "Substance use disorder treatment services" in this handbook.

## **California Cancer Equity Act Referrals**

**Effective treatment of complex cancers depends on many factors including getting the right diagnosis and getting timely treatment from cancer experts.**

**If you are diagnosed with a complex cancer, the new California Cancer Care Equity Act allows you to ask for a referral from your doctor to get cancer treatment specifically from an in-network National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer center, NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP)-affiliated site, or qualifying academic cancer center.**

**If the Alliance does not have an in-network NCI-designated cancer center, the Alliance will allow you to ask for a referral to get cancer treatment from one of**

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**these out-of-network centers in California, if one of the out-of-network centers and the Alliance agree on payment, unless you choose to see a different cancer treatment provider.**

**If you have been diagnosed with cancer, contact the Alliance to see if you qualify for services from one of these cancer centers.**

## 4. Benefits and services

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### **Medi-Cal benefits covered by the Alliance**

#### **Outpatient (ambulatory) services**

##### ***Cognitive health assessments***

The Alliance covers an annual cognitive health assessment for members who are 65 years of age or older, and are otherwise not eligible for a similar assessment as part of an annual wellness visit under the Medicare Program. A cognitive health assessment looks for signs of Alzheimer's disease or dementia.

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