

June 2023



Provider Bulletin

A **quarterly** publication for providers.



A welcome note of gratitude

I am Michael Schrader, the new CEO of Central California Alliance for Health, and this is my first article in the *Provider Bulletin*. Please accept my sincere appreciation for all you have done to support the health and wellness of our approximately 423,000 members.

The Alliance is only as strong as our contracted providers and community-based organizations (CBOs), and I am committed to continuing to cultivate those solid and much-appreciated partnerships. Our members seek provider access and choice; we aim to meet these needs by partnering with the broadest and best network of providers. Our members need health inequities identified and removed so that they can be their healthiest selves; we aim to meet these needs by joining forces with CBOs to address these social determinants of health.

The Alliance proudly serves approximately 25% of the residents of Merced, Monterey and Santa Cruz counties. Together with you, we're optimistic about advancing the Alliance's 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, including two strategic priorities and four goals:

Strategic priority: Health equity

- Eliminate health disparities and achieve optimal health outcomes for children and youth.
- Increase member access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health care.

Strategic priority: Person-centered delivery system transformation

- Improve behavioral health services and systems to be person-centered and equitable.
- Improve the system of care for members with complex medical and social needs.

Alliance Board Meetings

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Wednesday, Aug. 23, 2023

3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Physicians Advisory Group Meetings

Thursday, Sept. 7, 2023

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Whole Child Model Clinical Advisory Committee (WCMCAC) Meeting

Thursday, Sept. 21, 2023

Noon to 1 p.m.



I intend to meet with providers and CBOs over the coming months for continued collaboration across our organizations. Once again, thank you for all you do for our service areas as we look to achieve Healthy People, Healthy Communities.

Michael Schrader

Michael Schrader, CEO

New grant opportunities

The Alliance's Medi-Cal Capacity Grant Program (MCGP) introduced several new funding opportunities in April 2023. Funding is now available to support:

- Hiring of Community Health Workers.
- Focused health care technology and infrastructure to increase access to Medi-Cal services.
- Home visiting programs for Medi-Cal members aged 0-5 and their parents/caregivers.
- New and expanded opportunities for physical activity for Medi-Cal members.

Additionally, the ongoing Provider Recruitment program is now accepting applications and awarding grants four times per year.

Please visit our website at **www.thealliance.health/grants** for more information, including application deadlines, eligibility guidelines, program criteria and how to apply.



Provider-preventable conditions

Federal regulations and state law require that providers report all provider-preventable conditions (PPCs) to the California Department of Healthcare Services (DHCS). This applies to all providers and facilities contracted with the Alliance.

All PPCs for any Medi-Cal members must be reported to DHCS no later than five working days after discovery of the PPC via the DHCS secure online reporting portal: **<https://ppccloud.cloudapps.dhcs.ca.gov/>**.

This applies to all PPCs not present on admission (POA), regardless of whether Medi-Cal reimbursement is sought for treatment of the PPC. A copy of the submission must be submitted to the Quality Improvement (QI) department at the Alliance via our secure fax line at **831-430-5688**.

Even if an adverse event or a health care-associated infection (HAI) was already reported to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), providers are required to also report PPCs to DHCS, as reporting requirements for PPCs are different from those for adverse events and HAIs reported to CDPH.

For more information, see the Provider-Preventable Conditions FAQ page at **www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/Pages/PPC_FAQ_Landing_Page.aspx**.

Please also refer to Alliance Policy #401-1305: **www.morehealth.org/alliancepolicy401-1305**.





Preventive care is key for men's health

June is National Men's Health Month, and we're taking this opportunity to communicate to members the importance of men taking care of their health. The Alliance is prioritizing this message because:

- Only half of adult men have seen a doctor for preventive care in the past year, and they are likely to delay or avoid getting medical help until a health problem becomes serious.
- The leading causes of death in men are heart disease and cancer, with risk heightened by social determinants of health.

Please join us in our efforts to reduce health disparities and increase utilization of preventive care services.

Our message to members

- Now is a great time for men to schedule a preventive care exam to check for issues like high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes.
- Screenings can help find health conditions early, when they are more treatable. Serious health conditions in men include prostate cancer, colon cancer, testicular cancer and heart disease.
- Additionally, men can get caught up on vaccines and get tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) as needed.

Preventive care services are available at no cost to Alliance members.

Alliance health programs

The Alliance offers member programs to help manage chronic health conditions commonly faced by men.

- **Healthy Breathing for Life Program:** Participants can learn how to avoid asthma attacks and how to best use their asthma medicine.
- **Diabetes resources:** For members, we offer the Live Better With Diabetes and Diabetes Prevention programs. Participants learn tools to keep diabetes under control, like how to eat the right foods, be more active and lower stress.
- **Healthier Living Program:** Members learn skills to better manage chronic condition(s).
- **Wellness that Works (formerly Weight Watchers):** Members 18 years and older can learn about healthy eating, staying active and creating health and wellness goals.

More information on referring members to health programs can be found at www.thealliance.health/health-and-disease-management.

Provider resources

Our Pharmacy Department offers pharmacist-led academic detailing programs covering diabetes, hypertension and asthma. For more information, please email Pharmacy@ccah-alliance.org.

MCAS measure improvement

Alliance quality improvement efforts align with multiple measure sets, such as those developed by NCQA and CMS and utilized by DHCS through its Medi-Cal Accountability Set (MCAS). The Alliance and its provider network will be held to a minimum performance level on 18 measures (see table below).

If a minimum performance level (MPL) is not achieved, DHCS will establish sanctions and performance guidelines to provide Alliance staff with direction for improvement in its reporting population.

MY2023 MCAS: Measures held to MPL

Care-Based Quality Improvement Program Measures	Performance Measure	MCAS Measure Type Methodology*
x	Asthma medication ratio	Administrative
x	Breast cancer screening	Administrative
	Controlling high blood pressure	Hybrid/Administrative
x	Cervical cancer screening	Hybrid/Administrative
x	Chlamydia screening in women	Administrative
x	Childhood immunization status – Combination 10	Hybrid/Administrative
x	Developmental screening in the first three years of life	Administrative
	Follow-up after ED visit for mental illness – 30 days	Administrative
	Follow-up after ED visit for substance abuse – 30 days	Administrative
x	Hemoglobin A1c control for patients with diabetes – HbA1c poor control (> 9%)	Hybrid/Administrative
x	Immunizations for adolescents – Combination 2	Hybrid/Administrative
	Lead screening in children	Hybrid/Administrative
	Postpartum care	Hybrid/Administrative
	Timeliness of prenatal care	Hybrid/Administrative
x	Topical fluoride for children	Administrative
	Well-child visits for age 15 months to 30 months – two or more well-child visits	Administrative
x	Well-child visits in the first 15 months of life – six or more well-child visits	Administrative
x	Child and adolescent well-care visits	Administrative

*Hybrid methodology uses a combination of administrative (claims, supplemental data) and medical records data to identify services used in the numerator or to exclude a member in the denominator.



Alliance resources for measure improvement

The Alliance is partnering with providers to offer practice support for achieving quality measures. Resources include:

- The Care-Based Quality Improvement Program (CB QIP). The one-time program provides financial investment to support quality improvement practices for sites that have Care-Based Incentive (CBI) quality metrics below the 50th percentile for Medicaid and therefore received a CBI 2022 payment reduction between 25% and 100%.
- Detailed information and best practices through CBI Forensics Visits and on the CBI Tip Sheets: **www.thealliance.health/cbi-resources**.
- Practice coaching. To learn more about practice coaching, email **pc@ccah-alliance.org**.
- Practice Transformation Academy videos available on our Webinars and Training webpage: **www.thealliance.health/for-providers/resources/training**.
- Measure reports available on the Alliance Provider Portal.

Questions?

Please contact your Provider Relations Representative at **800-700-3874, ext. 5504**.

ECM/CS updates coming July 1, 2023

Starting July 1, 2023, there will be two new populations of focus for Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports (ECM/CS). There will also be two new Community Supports.

The new populations of focus (POFs) include:

- Children and Youth enrolled in California Children's Services (CCS) or CCS Whole Child Model with additional needs beyond the CCS condition.
- Children and Youth Involved in Child Welfare.

The new Community Supports are:

- Respite Services for Caregivers: a service for caregivers of members who require intermittent temporary supervision.
- Personal Care and Homemaker Services: for individuals who need assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) such as bathing, dressing, toileting, ambulation or feeding.

These services will be provided across all three counties.

ECM services will be continued for existing POFs, including adults and families experiencing homelessness, adults with serious mental illness and substance use disorder, adults with avoidable emergency department or hospital visits, adults at risk for long-term care (LTC) and adults in LTC interested in transitioning to the community.



To learn more about ECM/CS programs in Merced, Monterey and Santa Cruz counties, including how to refer Alliance members, visit our ECM/CS page: **www.thealliance.health/ecm-cs**.

Annual cognitive health assessment for members 65+

Medi-Cal members 65 years of age or older without Medicare coverage now qualify to receive an annual cognitive health assessment. Licensed Medi-Cal providers must complete the training and use Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS) approved screening tools (www.morehealth.org/dementia-care-aware-resources). Providers are required to complete the Dementia Care Aware training (www.morehealth.org/dementia-care-aware-education) before billing the Alliance.



Billing Code	Description	Billing Frequency
CPT 1494F	Members 65+ years of age	Once per year, per same provider
CPT 99483	Comprehensive E&M visit; establish or confirm a diagnosis of cognitive impairment	N/A
CPT 96125	Time spent administering assessment; interpretation of results	1 service(s) allowed in 1 day(s) – all providers

Note: 99483 and 96125 cannot be billed with 1494F.

Required documentation in the medical record:

- Screening tool(s).
- Screening results and verification that it was reviewed by a provider.
- Interpretation of results.
- Details discussed with the member and/or authorized representative and appropriate actions taken regarding screening results.

Alliance network providers may be asked to provide medical record documentation to ensure that the necessary follow-up services based on the assessment scores are being completed and the appropriate screening tools are being used.

Prevention, testing for lead poisoning

Lead can be found in soil, food containers, natural remedies, toys, jewelry, paint, plumbing fixtures, work environments and homes built before 1978. Children under 6 years old are susceptible to lead poisoning due to their size, rapid development and tendency to put objects into their mouths. Lead exposure can cause developmental delay, learning difficulties and slow growth.

Symptoms of lead poisoning are not always obvious. However, some may experience irritability, fatigue, sluggishness and headaches. Blood testing is crucial to proactively diagnose lead poisoning.

Start educating parents and guardians about lead exposure when their child is 6 months old, with testing occurring at 12 and 24 months. If there is no history of blood lead results, conduct a test by age 6.

Parents and guardians can help prevent lead poisoning by:

- Feeding their child a healthy diet, including iron and calcium supplements.
- Removing children from exposure areas.
- Keeping the home clean and dust-free.
- Encouraging frequent handwashing.
- Testing the paint, pipes and plumbing fixtures in the house.



See the following resources for more information:
www.morehealth.org/bloodleadtests
www.morehealth.org/bloodleadlevels





Supporting maternal mental health

Depression and anxiety disorders, along with other mental health conditions, can occur during pregnancy and postpartum. Effective screening, diagnosis and treatment of perinatal depression and anxiety can improve health outcomes for children, mothers and families. **You can refer Alliance members to programs supporting maternal mental health.**

Please join us in helping pregnant and parenting mothers and their families thrive during pregnancy and infant years.

How to access mental health services for patients

If a pregnant woman or a parent with a child under the age of 1 is having a tough time coping, they are not alone. It is common to have thoughts of depression and feelings of anxiety when dealing with the changes that come with pregnancy and a new baby. This can affect both moms and dads. It is important for parents to know that there is help – they are not to blame and do not have to suffer in silence.

The Alliance offers behavioral health services, such as counseling and therapy, through Carelon Behavioral Health. Contact Carelon (formerly known as Beacon Health Options) for behavioral health assessment and Alliance member referrals. **Carelon's toll-free access line is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, at 855-765-9700 (TTY: Dial 711).**


If a patient expresses intent of harm to self or others, including infants, obtain mental health evaluation immediately and call **988**. This is the federal Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, focused on supporting people experiencing mental health crises.

Outreach and health education

The Alliance also conducts outreach with Case Management services and the Healthy Moms and Healthy Babies program to help pregnant women access early prenatal and postpartum care. Providers can refer Alliance members to the Healthy Moms and Healthy Babies program, which you can learn more about at **www.thealliance.health/health-education**.

Healthy Start rewards members 0-21 for getting routine care!

The Alliance's Healthy Start member incentive program for ages 0-21 helps providers keep their youngest patients on track with needed vaccines. Launched April 1, Healthy Start rewards families for getting routine care. The following rewards are available for members who complete their checkups and immunizations.

Reward age group	Reward	Reward requirements
 Ages under 15 months	\$50 Target gift card	The child must have 6 checkups with their doctor by 15 months.
 Ages 15-30 months	\$25 Target gift card	The child must have 2 checkups with their doctor by 30 months.
 2-year-olds	\$100 Target gift card	The child must have completed all needed vaccines from their doctor by 2 nd birthdate.
 13-year-olds	\$50 Target gift card	The child must complete 1 checkup with their doctor within 12 months and have completed all needed vaccines from their doctor by 13 th birthdate.
 Ages 18-21 years	\$25 Target gift card	The child must have 1 checkup with their doctor between April 1 and Dec. 31, 2023.

Healthy Start is part of our overall Health Rewards Program, which incentivizes members for improving their health. The Health Rewards Program also includes:

- **Healthy Weight for Life:** a 10-week workshop for parents and guardians with children who are at risk for obesity.
- **Healthy Moms and Healthy Babies:** a program for pregnant women and mothers with infants to keep up with prenatal and postpartum care.

- **Healthier Living Program:** a 6-week workshop for adults with chronic conditions.
- **Nurse Advice Line:** a service for members to speak with a registered nurse about their health questions, available 24/7.

Questions about member rewards?

Members or providers can call the Alliance Health Education Line at **800-700-3874, ext. 5580**.



For full details on our Health Rewards Program, visit www.thealliance.health/healthrewards.

Billing for services

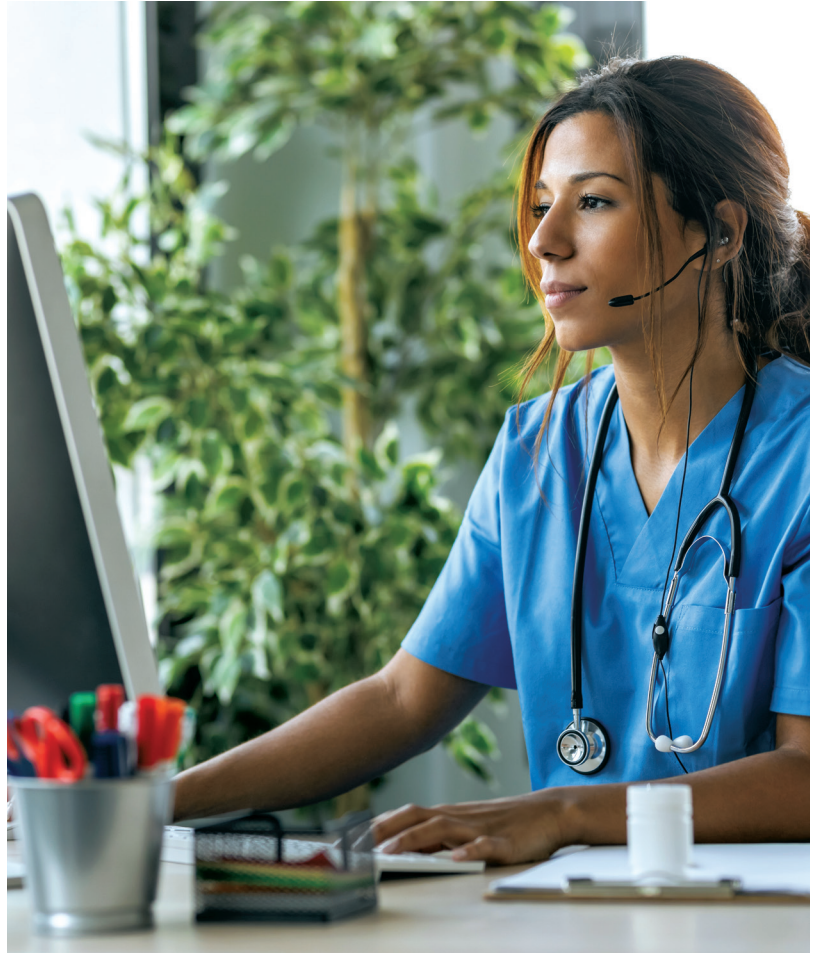
Complete and accurate medical recordkeeping is vital for both patient care and ensuring appropriate reimbursement for rendered services. Best practice guidelines and Alliance provider contracts require that medical documentation support billed services.

The Alliance conducts periodic reviews of medical records related to the verification of billed services, medical necessity, coding compliance, quality of care and more. Requests for medical records and subsequent reviews have identified common issues, including:

- Failure to submit documentation to substantiate a billed service.
- Documentation is incomplete or missing key data elements.
- Documentation does not support medical necessity.
- Documentation does not support the billed modifier, CPT code or level of CPT code.

Failure to document a service in the medical record may result in claim denial; recovery of claim payments; fraud-, waste- or abuse-related inquiries; or a corrective action plan. The Alliance encourages providers to promote accuracy in documentation practices and to have procedures for responding to medical records requests.

Documentation completed adequately at the time of service ensures appropriate payment for services delivered to Alliance members!



UB-04 claim form completion: Outpatient services

Although Medi-Cal instructs providers to bill only up to 99 units on one line, the Alliance claims system can process claims with more than two digits in Box 46 of the UB-04 claim form.

Please do not split your claim line if you have more than 99 units. Instead, add all units and charges on one line.

Find more information on UB-04 claim forms on the DHCS website at www.morehealth.org/ub-04-claim-form.

Home infusion medications benefit

The Alliance covers home infusions as a member benefit. Most patients prefer receiving their infusion medications at home, rather than at a hospital or clinic. If you have a patient who may be a good fit for home infusion, please discuss it with them to see if they are interested.

Benefits to home infusions

- They can improve quality of patient care and life.
- The home setting can be more convenient for the patient than going to a hospital or clinic.
- A dedicated team of clinical experts monitors patients throughout the duration of therapy.
- There are flexible scheduling options to fit patient needs, including evenings and weekends, by appointment.
- A 24/7 clinical support team is available to answer any questions.

Pharmacies and referrals

The Alliance contracts with two pharmacies for home infusion.

- Integrated Care Systems (ICS) Website: www.icshomecare.com/infusion-and-injectable-therapy
Phone: **800-734-2896**
- Optum Infusion Pharmacy (Optum)
Website: <https://specialty.optum.com/find-care/optum-infusion-pharmacy.html?page=fusion-io>
Phone: **877-698-5415**

If you would like to refer a member to receive in-home infusions, please send a referral to ICS or Optum.

Please note: In-home infusions are offered for select medications only.



Please visit the ICS or Optum websites for more information on what medications they can administer in the home and how to submit a referral.

If you have questions about the home infusion benefit, please call the Alliance Pharmacy Department at **831-430- 5507**.

Important reads:

Medi-Cal Rx Drug Utilization Review (DUR)

Please review the following Medi-Cal Rx DUR articles published in January 2023.

Topics include:

1. Risks to Patients Exposed to Xylazine in Illicit Drugs.
2. Improving the Quality of Care: Treatment of Latent Tuberculosis Infection.
3. 2022 Immunization Update: Mpox, HepB, Influenza, COVID-19, Pneumococcal, Zoster.
4. Removal of DATA-Waiver (X-Waiver) Requirement.

These resources are linked on the Alliance's pharmacy services webpage under the "Drug Utilization Review (DUR)" section: www.thealliance.health/pharmacy-services.

Important phone numbers

Provider Services	831-430-5504
Claims.	831-430-5503
Authorizations	831-430-5506
Status (non-pharmacy) . .	831-430-5511
Member Services.	831-430-5505
Web and EDI	831-430-5510
Cultural & Linguistic Services.	831-430-5580
Health Education Line. . .	831-430-5580



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New Providers

Merced County

Primary Care

- Shaheer Hamid, MD, Pediatrics
- Leonard Oestreicher, MD, Family Medicine

Referral Physician/Specialist

- Lillian Choi, MD, Gastroenterology
- Bakht Roshan, MD, Infectious Disease

Monterey County

Primary Care

- Vivian Garcia, MD, Family Medicine
- Christine Nguyen, MD, Family Medicine

Referral Physician/Specialist

- Oluwafunmilola Adekanmbi, MD, Neurology
- Yalda Ataie, MD, Internal Medicine
- Matthew Awerbuck, MD, Internal Medicine
- Gina Capodanno, MD, Pediatric Endocrinology
- Reb Julia Haas Close, MD, Emergency Medicine
- Mark Howard, MD, Orthopaedic Surgery
- Gloria Hwang, MD, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
- Edinrin Obasare, MD, Cardiovascular Disease
- Anthony Razzak, MD, Gastroenterology



Santa Cruz County

Primary Care

- Nathan Rheault, DO, Family Medicine
- Brent Wentworth, DO, Family Medicine

Referral Physician/Specialist

- Kristen Albright, DPM, Podiatric Medicine
- Ruby Lo, MD, Vascular Surgery
- Rajeev Prasad, MD, Nephrology
- Lily Zeng, MD, Pulmonary Disease

Holiday office closure

- Monday, June 19, 2023 (Juneteenth)
- Tuesday, July 4, 2023 (Independence Day)