

PROVIDER NEWSLETTER

Spring | 2021 | Issue 1

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Links to additional articles:

Pharmacy Department

Pharmacy Corner:

<https://tinyurl.com/zfleqvul>

The current PHC Formularies on our website:

<http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Pharmacy/Pages/Formularies.aspx>

Compliance Department:

HIPAA: Protecting Member/Patient Information

<https://tinyurl.com/v45tqlyf>

Member Services Department:

Member Rights & Responsibilities

<https://tinyurl.com/st8kqvx>

Health Services Department:

Whole Child Model CCS Eligible Members

<https://tinyurl.com/1smze7bx>

Claims Department

Claims Corner

<https://tinyurl.com/2wkdlpr8>

Population Health Department

Best Practices When Using Interpreter Services

<https://tinyurl.com/v576gn8j>

Important Provider Notices:

<http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Claims/Pages/Important-Provider-Notices-Medi-Cal.aspx>

Quality Department:

Quality Corner:

<https://tinyurl.com/3bsy3jld>

Information Technology Department:

Online Security and COVID-19

<https://tinyurl.com/vdxlacqe>

Provider Relations Department

Online Provider Portal Referral Guideline Pop-ups

<https://tinyurl.com/37sbgxuq>

Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

<https://tinyurl.com/qq6vwlw>

Credentialing Provider Rights & Responsibilities

<https://tinyurl.com/wxwbqsd>

PCP Access & Availability Standards

<https://tinyurl.com/rpnryrc>

Interpretation Services

<https://tinyurl.com/tropeda>

From the Desk of CEO Liz Gibboney

Coming together to end the COVID-19 Pandemic

It is exciting to see the images and hear the stories of our high-risk frontline health care workers and those over 65 receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. There is no doubt that we are experiencing a turning point in curtailing this terrible pandemic.

PHC has an instrumental role in the vaccine rollout. The Department of Health Care Services has asked us specifically to continue to provide case management, provide transportation to vaccine appointments, ensure all doses are received, and ensure consistent messaging. We see these requirements as a starting line, as there is much more we can and will be doing throughout the vaccine rollout to help our community partners.

For example, PHC has already collaborated closely with the counties and providers in our service area to reach out to eligible members through phone calls, as appropriate. And PHC staff are volunteering at local community vaccination events, providing logistical support, and more. We understand the urgency for members to receive the vaccine and value the opportunity to be a partner in our communities.

Additionally, we continue to offer resources, including vaccine locations and events, on our website for both members (here) and providers (here).

As we look forward to increased efforts in the coming weeks and months, I appreciate your dedication in helping us sustain our mission to help our members, and the communities we serve, be healthy.

Thank you,



Effective Promotion of COVID Vaccination

The first step to encouraging our patients to take advantage of the opportunity and privilege of being vaccinated against COVID-19 is to understand and communicate some core facts on vaccine development, efficacy, and safety. Here are some examples that may be helpful.

Have you ever seen a home makeover TV show, where they build a sturdy beautiful home in a week? New homes typically take months to build. How is this possible?

1. By having prefabricated parts ready to assemble rapidly. Don't build everything from scratch.
2. By pouring resources (workers and money) into the building process, and working long hours.
3. Wherever possible, by doing different parts of the project simultaneously, instead of sequentially.

These same three steps have been the key to developing highly effective COVID vaccines with thorough safety testing:

1. Re-purposing a vaccine platform that has been proven effective and safe on other similar infections, adapted to the specific genetic code of the COVID-19 virus.
2. Getting up-front funding for the final product, allowing people and facilities to be re-purposed to produce the vaccine on a large scale, quickly.
3. Do all the usual steps in testing a vaccine for effectiveness and safety without un-necessary delay between steps, WHILE large scale production is already going on, in case it works well.

Efficiency, while assuring quality. No corners were cut!

I heard you can still catch COVID after being vaccinated. If that's the case why should I get vaccinated? Do COVID vaccines protect against COVID infection?

The COVID-19 vaccines are amazingly effective against both *serious* COVID-19 infection (close to 100%) and *symptomatic* COVID infection (95% for two doses of the two mRNA vaccines, 72% for a single dose of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine, when given in the US).

Importantly, protection against *asymptomatic* infection is probably in the ball-park of 50%, so vaccinated individuals can still carry infection home to their family and friends who are not vaccinated, so it is very important to continue to diligently use masks, physically distance and avoid indoor gatherings with individuals outside your COVID bubble. This won't last forever. We need many people to be vaccinated AND little COVID to be circulating in the community before we consider easing up on other protective measures.

I'm worried about the side effects of the vaccine. Could I catch COVID from the vaccine? Can't the RNA in the vaccine become a part of my own DNA, causing problems down the road? What about long term side effects?

First and foremost, COVID vaccination cannot cause COVID-19. (About 30% of Americans believe this, so it is important to address this up front.) No COVID virus was used in production. The messenger RNA in the vaccine codes for just one protein of the virus. This messenger RNA was manufactured from chemical building blocks in vaccine production facilities.

The messenger RNA is quickly digested by our bodies back into these building blocks, just after it instructs the protein factories within cells to produce the Spike protein in large amounts, so your body can learn to react against it in the future. Messenger RNA does *not* become part of your body's DNA. Your DNA is safely located in the nucleus of the cell, away from the protein factories where the messenger RNA does its work.

In the past year, about 1 in 700 Americans have died of COVID. In comparison, the major risks of the vaccines are exceedingly rare: 4 hospitalizations per million doses of the current vaccine for either anaphylaxis or low platelet count (immune thrombocytopenia).

Effective Promotion of COVID Vaccination ...continued

Longer term side effects affect about 5-10% of those infected with COVID-19 (sometimes called “long haulers”), while *no* long-term side effects have yet been described for the vaccine (at least 42 million doses given so far, in just the United States).

Short term side effects of the vaccine include arm pain, muscle aches, headache, fever, and fatigue. These minor side effects are quite common, and indicate that your immune system is working well.

Framing the Conversation

Frame COVID-19 vaccination conversations with messages that resonate. Here are three ways of framing recommended by the Ad Council COVID Collaborative:

Moments Missed: Reference things your patients miss the most. With many feeling COVID-19 fatigue, missed moments (especially human connections that we took for granted like visiting family and friends) serve as a powerful reminder of the ultimate end goal: vaccination as a pathway to the possibility of regaining these moments. Don’t use the term “return to normal” though, as these overpromises could lead to unsafe behavior after vaccination.

Protection: Emphasize a shared goal of “protecting yourself, loved ones and those in your community” (rather than “coming together as a nation”).

Positive tone: Be inviting and respectful as opposed to demanding. Start with the assumption that the person would want to be vaccinated. If they say they don’t want the vaccine, then acknowledge “the choice is yours to make” which connects with the deeply rooted American value of liberty. Trying to harness fear of COVID can backfire, leading to fear of the vaccine.

In this pandemic, all of us in the healthcare community have the privilege and the responsibility to be public health ambassadors, for our patients, our families and our communities. As ambassadors, to be most effective we must be energetic, committed and diplomatic.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

On February 1, 2021, with direction from the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), PHC will change the term “Special Member” to Direct Member. Please note that this is a name change only and will not impact members’ benefits or coverage.

PHC will communicate the name change to members through our Member Newsletter providing instructions to receive an updated ID card. With that, you may see ID cards with “Special Member” or “Direct Member” through this transition. In addition, PHC is communicating this change with the County Offices in the counties we serve. Please continue to perform eligibility checks as you would for all members.

Please contact your Providers Relations Representative with any questions.

The PHC Provider Newsletter and all linked articles are available online at <http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Medi-Cal/Pages/default.aspx>

For the most current P&T Formulary updates and changes, please see PHC's P&T Formulary Changes Webpage. Updates from P&T are posted on PHC's web site quarterly in the P&T Formulary Changes webpage.

Please visit the Provider section of our website at <http://www.partnershiphp.org> to view **PHC's Medi-Cal Provider Manual** including all Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.

PHC Utilization Management (UM) Criteria and Policies are available online by accessing the PHC Medi-Cal Provider Manual.

The Provider Manual can be found by visiting the Providers section of our website at <http://www.partnershiphp.org>.

UM Criteria is located under the Health Services category (Section 5) within the Provider Manual. Staff are available to assist you with UM related questions or inquiries during business hours, 8:00am through 5:00pm, Monday through Friday.

Calls received after business hours will be returned on the next business day.

**CLAIMS MAILING
ADDRESS**

Attn: Claims Department
P.O. Box 1368
Suisun City, CA 94585-1368

**UTILIZATION
MANAGEMENT**

Questions about UM
Authorizations
(800) 863-4144

PHC CARE COORDINATION

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(800) 809-1350



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