

# PROVIDER NEWSLETTER

## Fall 2021

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### Links to additional articles:

#### Pharmacy Department

Pharmacy Corner: Rx Bottle Locking Caps/Lockbox Benefit  
<https://tinyurl.com/y77bjpt2>

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/448668tx>

#### Member Services Department

Access Member's Rights & Responsibilities on our Website  
<https://tinyurl.com/29s2nbn3>

#### Health Services Department

Population Health Corner:  
<https://tinyurl.com/2vn977bb>  
 Provider Preventable Conditions:  
<https://tinyurl.com/59br4cnd>

#### Claims Department

Claims Corner:  
<https://tinyurl.com/py9mb5j7>

#### Important Provider Notices:

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

#### Quality Department

Quality Corner:  
<https://tinyurl.com/4nr4cwwr>

#### Information Technology Department

Online Security and COVID-19:  
<https://tinyurl.com/ftjn4kw>

#### Provider Relations Department

2021 Physician Satisfaction Survey Results:  
<https://tinyurl.com/39uz7c2s>

Fraud, Waste, and Abuse:  
<https://tinyurl.com/4s7ye68p>

Credentialing Provider Rights & Responsibilities:  
<https://tinyurl.com/y5sra29f>

PCP Access & Availability Standards:  
<https://tinyurl.com/f9bp98n4>

Interpretation Services:  
<https://tinyurl.com/kd7zzfed>

## From the Desk of CEO Liz Gibboney

### Medi-Cal Population Remains Under-vaccinated

Our most vulnerable populations have always faced significant barriers to receiving care – language, housing, education, income, and more. COVID-19 vaccination rates put a glaring spotlight on the health care discrepancy between our vulnerable populations and the larger community. As of July 18, 2021, 45.6% of Medi-Cal population age 12 years and older had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, compared with 70.5% of all Californians age 12 years and older.

In order to have a healthy community, it is critical that these disadvantaged populations get the COVID-19 vaccine. In the middle of August, the Department of Health Care Services announced \$350 million in funding for Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans (such as Partnership) to develop strategies to increase the vaccination rate of the Medi-Cal population and to develop the infrastructure to support this work in the long term.

PHC has hosted a number of collaboration meetings with all County Public Health Departments in our 14 county service area to better understand where we can dedicate this new funding to increase the vaccination rate among the Medi-Cal populations. As we learn more about vaccine activities we will adjust our strategies to complement our community partners. Our efforts must be in collaboration with your activities. We are looking forward to this new opportunity and there will be more information to come. At a time when we are facing a surge in COVID cases, a record wildfire season, and power shutoff events, I cannot express my appreciation to each of you enough.

Simply and sincerely - **THANK YOU!**



### **A Professional Responsibility to be a Vaccine Champion**

In a webinar on August 2nd, Dr. Tomas Aragon, California's Director of Public Health, noted that physicians and clinicians are who the vaccine-curious are looking to for advice about whether or not to be vaccinated. The webinar, titled Essentials on Having Conversations About COVID-19 Vaccines With Your Patients, ended with a call to action for each clinician in California to personally commit to have "30 Conversations in 30 Days," not just with your patients, but with your social network, your family, your community. This was one of the best presentations on this topic, starting with building rapport, then asking questions, finding shared alignment, and using specific language to help reframe the way the Vaccine-Curious think about vaccination.

#### **Low Vaccination Rates in Medi-Cal**

The need is especially great for the Partnership HealthPlan of California (PHC) members you serve. The overall rate of full vaccination in our members was 34.5% about two weeks ago, compared to 51.5% in California as a whole. In every one of our 14 counties, the vaccination rate of PHC members trails the vaccination rate in the overall population. The rate is especially low among Native American members (22% vaccinated at least partially) and African American members (26% vaccinated at least partially), both populations have experienced a long history of mistreatment by government and the health care system. The demographic group currently found to have the lowest vaccination rate is Russian-speaking PHC members of West Sacramento (6.4% vaccinated at least partially). While public health media messages will help some, to make a major impact we in health care delivery are the key to making a difference. We have a professional moral obligation to do this outside of our routine patient care.

#### **Workplace Vaccine Requirements**

We need to have conversations with co-workers, giving the vaccine-curious the information they need to make informed decisions. Dr. Aragon has ordered all health care settings, including outpatient medical practices, to have all their staff vaccinated. Last month, PHC announced a similar requirement for our employees. We determined that, in the face of the Delta variant and other coming variants, our staff need to be vaccinated to do our work efficiently (without excessive quarantines due to exposures) and to minimize risk to our staff and their families. We delayed our return-to-office for two months, combining this announcement with a requirement that all employees be vaccinated, beginning two weeks after the full FDA approval of any COVID vaccine, except for those legally allowed exemptions (medical and religious).

#### **Use Every Opportunity to Vaccinate**

One of the few places that our PHC members, your patients, interact with trained health care professionals is in doctors' offices and hospitals. We encourage you to evaluate and overcome the barriers of offering COVID vaccinations to every patient, at every appointment, in lieu of having them come back for a separate visit.

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## Provider Newsletter

### Treatment Authorization Requests (TARs)

TARs should be submitted electronically via PHC's Online Services portal. Electronic submission will allow for more expedient processing. If online submission is not possible the TAR may be submitted via fax.

**Routine TARs** will be processed within 5 business days of receipt of all required documentation. If additional information is needed, the Provider will be notified in writing. The Provider has 14 calendar days from the date the TAR was originally received to submit the requested documentation.

**Expedited processing** is available for requests only if the provider indicates or PHC determines that the standard timeframe could seriously jeopardize the Member's life or health or ability to attain, maintain, or regain maximum function. These TARs must be clearly marked "Urgent" with the reason. Expedited appeals will be completed promptly, but no later than three (3) calendar days after receipt of the request. A TAR for elective non emergent surgery or procedure submitted urgently only due to the imminent date of service is not considered Urgent. TARs submitted under these circumstances will be processed as a routine TAR.

**Correction TARs** - The provider has up to 12 months from the approved date of the ORIGINAL authorized TAR to submit correction requests, using our online services portal.

Utilization Management Department **1-800-863-4144** or **863-4133**

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### PHC Provider Webinars: New Claims System Implementation

Partnership HealthPlan of California (PHC) will host monthly webinars for all providers regarding the 2022 implementation of the new claims system Health Rules Payor (HRP) which includes Claims Editing System (CES), Local Code Conversion, and enhancements to the Provider Online Services Portal (OLS). PHC will discuss the implementation timeline and how these changes will help providers when billing PHC.

Information about the implementation is posted on the PHC website at

<http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Medi-Cal/Pages/default.aspx>.

You can sign-up for upcoming webinars at:

<https://partnershiphp.webex.com/partnershiphp/onstage/g.php?PRID=e8d1ba3d3fd2dd02db480cdaf7b55930>

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#### 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

Asthma, Diabetes, ESRD  
(800) 809-1350

Contact Us:

(707) 863-4100

[www.partnershiphp.org](http://www.partnershiphp.org)

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: <http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Pharmacy/Pages/PT-Formulary-Changes.aspx>

The **PHC Medi-Cal Formulary** web site also contains the current PHC Formulary and other information, including restrictions, recent updates, how to request an exception, generic availability, and other pharmacy processes. <http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Pharmacy/Pages/Formularies.aspx>

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 on 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.

**Case Management Services** includes case management for pregnancy care, diabetes, people who are **Seniors and Persons with Disabilities** and other PHC members who could benefit from case management. Members do not need prior approval from their PCP or PHC to get case management services. Call the PHC Care Coordination Department at 800-809-1350 to learn about PHC's Case Management Services.



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