

# Progress Notes

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## Staying Healthy Assessment – Best Practices

Implementing the Staying Healthy Assessment tool (SHA) can be challenging, but there are steps providers and office staff can take to make it easier, less time consuming, and more efficient.

### Develop a Workflow

Decide how your office or clinic will implement the SHA, either paper-based, verbally, or via an electronic platform. If paper-based, have age-appropriate SHA forms readily available in the languages of your patient population. Include SHA forms in new patient paperwork. Forms can be downloaded from L.A. Care’s website or ordered in bulk using the Health Education Materials Order Form.

### Train Providers and Office Staff

Training appropriate staff on SHA requirements and reviewing your office workflow goes a long way towards ensuring efficiency. For convenience, providers and staff can view L.A. Care’s online SHA training at any time. After viewing, please remember to send an email to [HealthEducation@lacare.org](mailto:HealthEducation@lacare.org) so that your site gets credit.

### Implement SHA Electronically

Providers can add SHA questions or scan a completed SHA into an EMR, or use SHA in a fillable/writable format without DHCS approval. DHCS requires providers to notify health plans of their intended electronic process, so remember to complete and submit a SHA Notification Form available on L.A. Care’s website.



### Prioritize Risk Factors

Patients may have multiple high-risk responses to SHA questions. This is okay. Providers will not be out of compliance if unable to address all areas. High-risk responses can be prioritized and only the most urgent addressed by the provider as time allows.

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**ELEVATING  
HEALTHCARE**  
IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
SINCE 1997

## Diabetes Statistics Affirm the Need for Intervention

*L.A. Care Resources Can Help Patients Prevent and Manage Diabetes*

More than **30.3 million** Americans have diabetes and another **84.1 million** have prediabetes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in its 2017 National Diabetes Statistics Report. California statistics from 2016 show that **2.5 million** of the state's adults have diabetes and an estimated **13 million**, or 46 percent, are prediabetic.

L.A. Care offers innovative and engaging health education services relating to diabetes and other chronic conditions through its *Health In Motion™* program and the **L.A. Cares About Diabetes Program®**. Services range from in-person group workshops (offered in both English and Spanish at locations throughout Los Angeles County) to personalized individual telephone consultations, as well as self-help online tools and resources.

Led by Certified Health Coaches and Registered Dietitians, L.A. Care programs empower members to lead a healthy lifestyle and to manage or prevent chronic conditions. Notable diabetes-related programs include an ADA-recognized Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support Program as well as an upcoming CDC National Diabetes Prevention Program.



To refer a member, please complete the Health Education Referral Form available on L.A. Care's website at **[lacare.org/providers/provider-resources/health-education-tools](http://lacare.org/providers/provider-resources/health-education-tools)**. This page also provides a link for ordering easy-to-read health education materials.

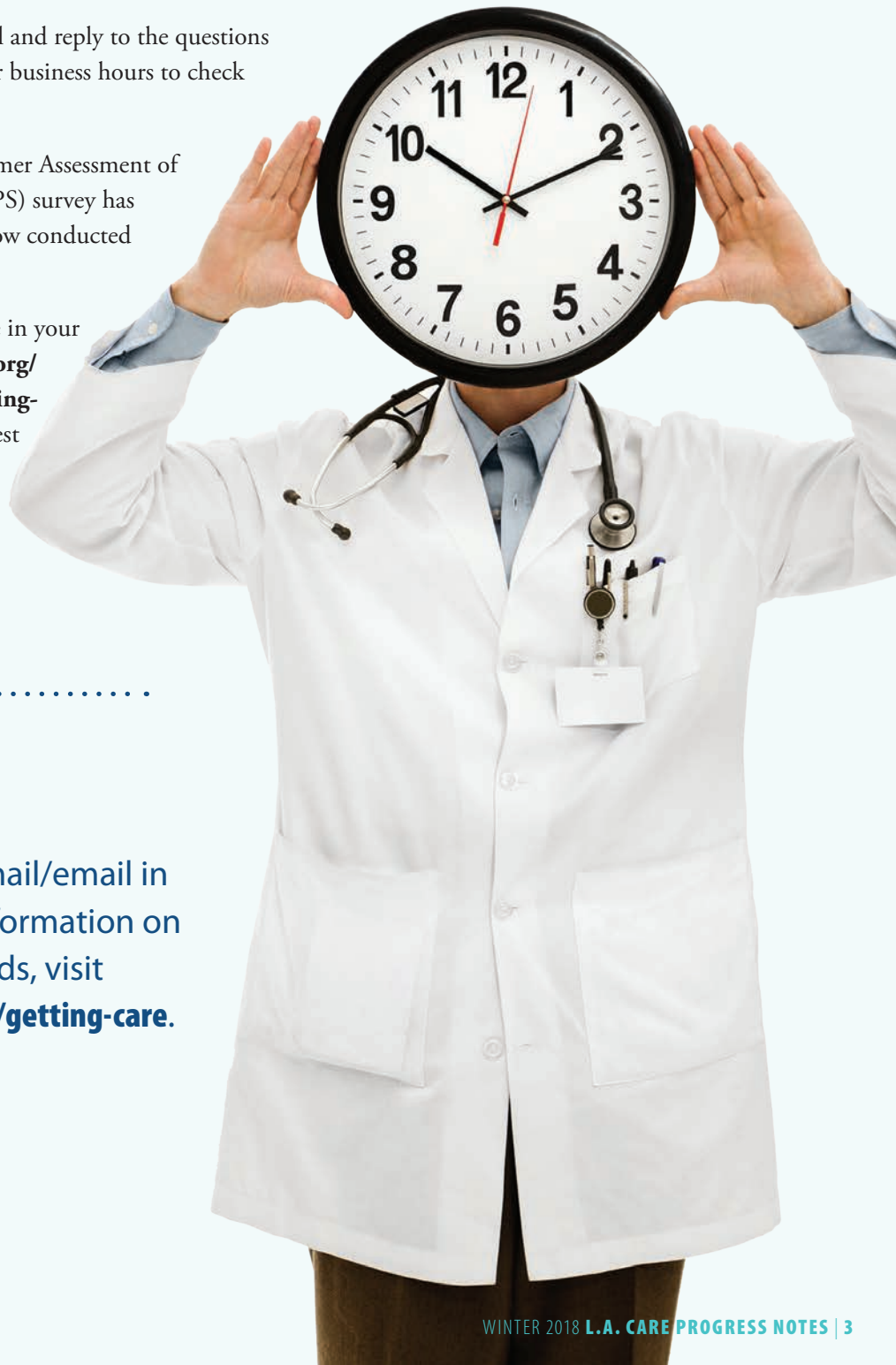
## The Access & Availability Survey Has Started!

If you have not already, soon your office will receive a phone call from L.A. Care for our annual **Access & Availability Survey**. This is a DMHC requirement and your responses factor into your P4P award.

Please make sure you/your staff answer the call and reply to the questions accordingly. Your office will also be called after business hours to check compliance for after-hours availability.

Additionally, the Clinician and Group Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CG-CAHPS) survey has launched. This patient satisfaction survey is now conducted annually so you can get timely feedback.

For tips on how to improve patient experience in your practice, view L.A. Care's slide deck at [lacare.org/sites/default/files/member-satisfaction-moving-the-needle.pdf](http://lacare.org/sites/default/files/member-satisfaction-moving-the-needle.pdf). Your medical group can request their most recent CG-CAHPS report by emailing [quality@lacare.org](mailto:quality@lacare.org).



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Look for more information by mail/email in the coming weeks. For more information on appointment wait time standards, visit [lacare.org/members/new-members/getting-care](http://lacare.org/members/new-members/getting-care).



# Vital Signs

## A Look at Opioid Misuse

The *Annals of Internal Medicine* analyzed 2015 health data for more than 72,000 non-institutionalized adults. The researchers identified populations most vulnerable to opioid misuse. The report estimated that 11.5 million adults misused opioids and another 1.9 million had a prescription drug opioid use disorder. Deaths from opioid overdose have nearly doubled over the past seven years. Additionally, findings revealed:



- Sixty percent of adults who misuse opioids take drugs prescribed for someone else.
- Pain relief was the most common motivation for misusing prescription opioids.
- Adults who had a major depressive episode were nearly twice as likely to misuse prescription opioids.
- Unemployed, uninsured, and low-income adults had a higher rate of opioid misuse.
- Men were more likely than women to misuse prescription opioids.

Los Angeles County has a 4.8 percent rate of opioid misuse according to the Department of Public Health. The annual charges for prescription related hospitalizations grew by 68 percent between 2006 and 2013. The increase in admissions is taxing hospitals and the health care system.

## Limit the Risk

Given the prevalence for misuse of prescription opioids, considerations when treating patients for pain include:

- Decrease the number of patients starting opioids
- Utilize the multimodal approach to treat chronic pain:
  - ✓ **Prescribe non-opioid medications when appropriate:** NSAIDs, COX-2 inhibitors, acetaminophen, topical analgesics, anticonvulsants, antidepressants
  - ✓ **Encourage non-drug therapy:** behavioral health therapy, acupuncture, meditation, physical therapy, occupational therapy
  - ✓ **Encourage a healthy lifestyle:** improved diet, weight loss, exercise, stress management
- Limit dose escalations of opioids and doses over 90-120 MME
  - ✓ Taper patients off high dose opioid regimens to safer lower doses
- Co-prescribe naloxone for patients who:
  - ✓ Use opioids regularly
  - ✓ Are at higher risk for opioid misuse
- Avoid co-prescribing dangerous drugs with opioid use:
  - ✓ Benzos
  - ✓ Muscle relaxants
  - ✓ Stimulants
- Discuss Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT) with patients at risk for opioid addiction.

## Focus on Mothers' and Babies' Well-being

L.A. Care is committed to the health and well-being of mothers and their babies. Our “Healthy Pregnancy,” “Healthy Mom,” and “Healthy Baby” programs work in conjunction with one another to improve pregnancy outcomes, ensure appropriate postpartum care, and promote timely well-child visits and immunizations.

Through the “Healthy Pregnancy” program, pregnant members are mailed trimester-specific, culturally appropriate educational materials. Topics include having a healthy pregnancy, nutrition, care after childbirth, and breastfeeding. A state Medi-Cal enrollment form, the Newborn Referral Form (MC 330), is also included. Members identified in their first trimester of pregnancy, or within 42 days of enrollment, receive a live agent call and are offered assistance with scheduling a prenatal visit. Members receive a onesie as a thank you once the prenatal visit is confirmed.

The “Healthy Mom” postpartum program offers assistance with scheduling an appointment. Transportation assistance and interpreting services to reduce language barriers is provided upon request as needed. Members who complete the postpartum visit are eligible to receive a \$40 “thank you” gift card.



The “Healthy Baby” program is a member outreach program aimed at improving immunization rates of members under the age of 24 months. Program components include targeted educational mailings to parents/guardians and an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) mailer reminder call.



## When the Blues Become Life-Threatening

The good tidings and joy that come with the holiday season are not always enjoyed by everyone. Patients with Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) must sometimes deal with troubling family and mental health issues. Typically starting in late fall and lasting until spring, SAD can manifest as feelings of sadness, gloominess, irritability and/or low energy.



Some patients' depression – whether caused by SAD or other factors – may become grave enough to pose a suicide risk. According to Mental Health America, 64 percent of those who attempt suicide visit a doctor in the month before their attempt and 38 percent visit the week before. Be alert to signs of suicidal thoughts or behaviors including:

- Making statements indicating no future, such as, “Maybe I won’t be around.”
- Expressing hopelessness or helplessness
- Engaging in risk-taking behavior
- Showing changes in personality
- Making preparations such as giving away prized possessions
- Withdrawing from friends, family and activities
- Displaying a lack of interest in future plans

Barbara L. Drew, Ph.D., Associate Professor in the College of Nursing at Kent State University, suggests in an article in *Medscape*, that physicians include a brief mental health assessment in every healthcare visit. She recommends drawing out information by asking open-ended questions such as “How has life been treating you?” “Do you have any particular worries?” or, if appropriate, “You look sad.”

Depending on a patient’s response, you may wish to pursue one of these courses of action:

- If your patient has a therapist, call the therapist in the presence of your patient.
- Consult with a mental health professional.
- Refer your patient to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1.800.273.TALK (1.800.273.8255)**, which is available 24/7. In addition to phone service, the agency offers an online chat program accessible at chat.[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org).
- If your patient is at serious risk and is unwilling or unable to go with a family member for emergency psychiatric evaluation, call 911.

Patients who are L.A. Care members can get help coping with SAD and other mental health needs by contacting Beacon Health Options at **1.877.344.2858 (TTY 1.800.735.2929)**.



## Spread the Word...Not the Flu!

L.A. Care continues to actively encourage members to get vaccinated against flu and is asking our providers to do the same. It’s not too late to vaccinate your patients, so please keep up the good work and vaccinate at every opportunity. Remind your patients the vaccine is needed each year to protect against a potentially serious illness, is offered at no cost to the patient, and is available through their doctor’s office or a L.A. Care affiliated pharmacy. Patients 65 years and older can also get the pneumococcal vaccine.



# Member's Rights and Responsibilities

## Members have a right to...

### Respectful and courteous treatment

- Members have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy by their health plan's providers and staff.
- Members have the right to be free from consequences of any kind when making decisions about their care.

### Privacy and confidentiality

- Members have the right to have a private relationship with their provider and to have their medical record kept confidential.
- Members also have the right to receive a copy of and request corrections to their medical record.
- If the member is a minor, they have the right to certain services that do not need their parent's approval.

### Choice and involvement in their care

- Members have the right to receive information about their health plan, its services, its doctors and other providers.
- Members also have the right to get appointments within a reasonable amount of time.
- Members have the right to talk with their doctor about all treatment options for their condition, regardless of the cost, and participate in making decisions about their care.
- Members have the right to say "no" to treatment, and the right to a second opinion.
- Members have the right to decide how they want to be cared for in case of a life-threatening illness or injury.

### Receive timely customer service

- Members have the right to wait no more than 10 minutes to speak to a customer service representative during L.A. Care's normal business hours.

### Voice their concerns

- Members have the right to complain about L.A. Care, the health plans and providers we work with, or the care they get without fear of losing their benefits.
- L.A. Care will help members with the process. If members don't agree with a decision, members have the right to appeal, which is to ask for a review of the decision.
- Members have the right to disenroll from their health plan whenever they want.
- Medi-Cal members have the right to request a State Fair Hearing.

### Service outside of their health plan's provider network

- Members have the right to receive emergency or urgent services, as well as family planning and sexually transmitted disease services outside of their health plan's network.
- Members have the right to receive emergency treatment as follows:
  - **Medi-Cal and CalMediConnect members:** Emergency care services are covered at all times anywhere in the United States, Mexico and Canada. For Medicare-covered services, emergency is NOT covered outside of the United States and its territories. For Medicare-covered emergency care provided outside of the United States and its territories that are not covered by Medi-Cal, the member may receive a bill from the provider.
  - **PASC-SEIU and members:** Emergency care services are covered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, anywhere.

### Service and information in their language

Members have the right to request an interpreter at no charge. Members have the right to get all member information in their language or in another format (such as audio or large print).

### Know their rights

- Members have the right to receive information about their rights and responsibilities.
- Members have the right to make recommendations about these rights and responsibilities.



## Members of L.A. Care have the responsibility to...

### Act courteously and respectfully

- Members are responsible for treating their doctor, all providers and staff with courtesy and respect.
- Members are responsible for being on time for their visits or calling the doctor's office at least 24 hours before the visit to cancel or reschedule.

### Give up-to-date, accurate and complete information

- Members are responsible for giving correct information to all providers and to L.A. Care.
- Members are responsible for getting regular checkups and telling the doctor about health problems before they become serious.

### Follow their doctor's advice and take part in their care

- Members are responsible for talking over their health care needs with their doctor, developing and following the treatment plans they and their doctor agree on.

### Use the Emergency Room only in an emergency

- Members are responsible for using the emergency room in cases of an emergency or as directed by their doctor.

### Report wrongdoing

- Members are responsible for reporting health care fraud or wrongdoing to L.A. Care.
- Members can do this without giving their name by calling the L.A. Care Compliance Helpline toll free at **1.800.400.4889**, going to **lacare.ethicspoint.com**, or calling the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Medi-Cal Fraud and Abuse Hotline toll-free at **1.800.822.6222**.

# Preventing Medical Fraud and Identity Theft

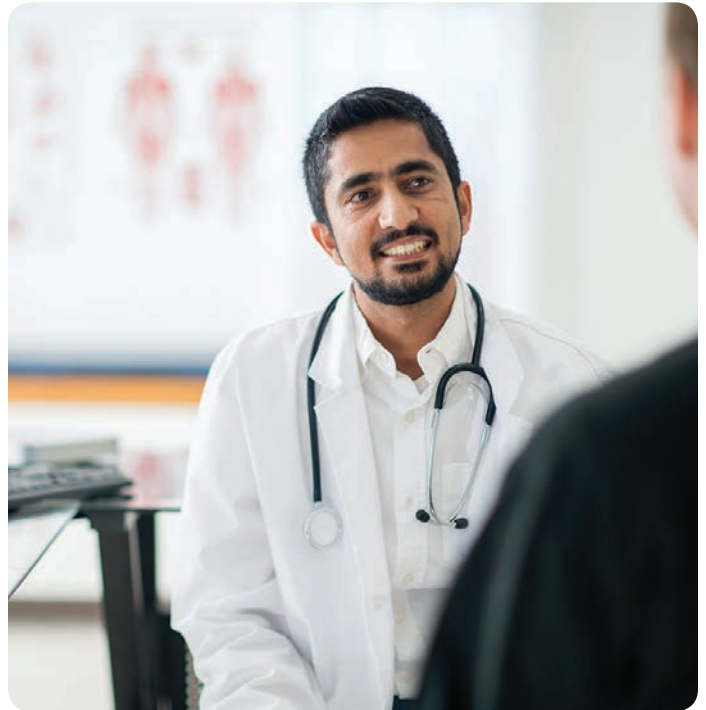
You can help your patients protect their health and avoid health care fraud or abuse. If your patient reports their member ID has been lost or stolen, here are some ways to assist them:

1. Check medical records to make sure they match the patient's condition. Give them a copy of the records if needed.
2. Run a CURES report on the patient to check for controlled substances that you may not have prescribed. Go to [oag.ca.gov/cures](http://oag.ca.gov/cures)
3. Recommend that patients place a fraud alert with one of the three (3) credit bureaus.

**a. Equifax – Call 1.888.766.0008**

**b. Experian – Call 1.888.397.3742**

**c. TransUnion – Call 1.800.680.7289**



The fraud alert service is free and will help protect your patients from future abuse. When calling, the patient should ask for a copy of their credit report and check it closely.

4. Advise your patients to file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). They can do this online by completing the form at [identitytheft.gov](http://identitytheft.gov). The patient will be given an FTC Identity Theft Affidavit which they should print out and save. Patients can also call **1.877.438.4338**.



5. Advise your patients to file a report with their local police department.
6. To learn more about how to protect your patients and yourself from identity theft, and what actions victims of identity theft should take, please visit [identitytheft.gov](http://identitytheft.gov).



# Nurse Advice Line

L.A. Care Health Plan offers its members a Nurse Advice Line (NAL) service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A team of registered nurses is available to answer any health-related questions. L.A. Care members can access this service by phone or chat live with a nurse using their L.A. Care Connect online member account.



As a complement to your service, please encourage your patients to call the NAL for free health advice. If your patient is a L.A. Care member or a Medi-Cal member with one of our Plan Partners, they can call the Nurse Advice Line at the numbers listed below:

## **Anthem Blue Cross**

**1.800.224.0336**

**TTY 1.800.368.4424**

## **Kaiser Permanente**

**1.888.576.6225**

## **Care1st Health Plan**

**1.800.609.4166**

**TTY 1.800.735.2929**

## **L.A. Care Health Plan**

**1.800.249.3619**

**TTY 711**

The NAL phone number is also located on the back of the patient's health plan member ID card. Additionally, they can be found on the L.A. Care websites: **lacare.org**, **lacarecovered.org**, and **calmediconnectla.org**.

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## **Staying Healthy Assessment – Best Practices**

### **Develop Appropriate Interventions**

Providers are required to address high-risk areas whether through counseling, referral, provision of anticipatory guidance or follow-up. L.A. Care offers many resources to assist providers, including our *Health In Motion*<sup>™</sup> health education program, *My Health In Motion*<sup>™</sup> online wellness portal, and the availability of easy-to-read health education materials in multiple languages. Visit the Health Education page on L.A. Care's website at <http://www.lacare.org/providers/provider-resources/health-education-tools> to learn more.

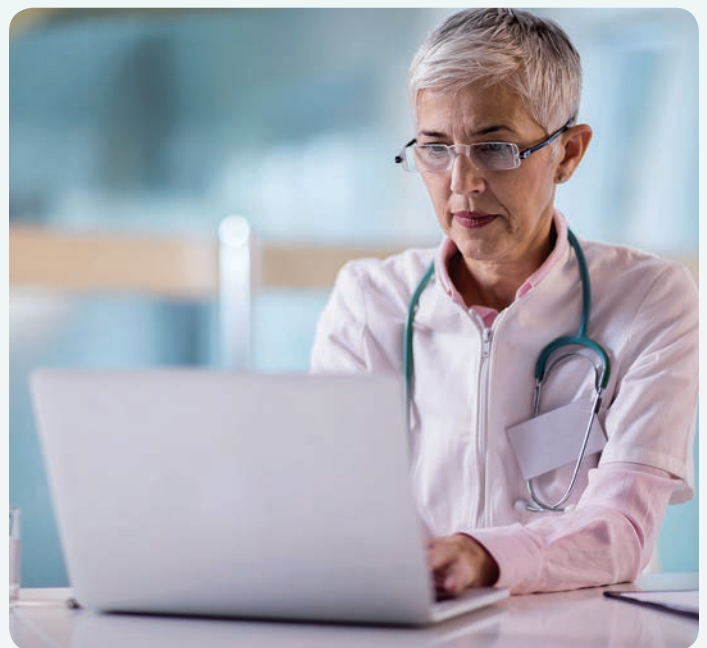
### **Search for Community Resources**

Community resources are available in multiple social service categories including housing, food insecurity, domestic violence, transportation, legal services and more. Visit 211 LA County at <https://www.211la.org/search-resources> to search the site and find the best resource to meet your patients' needs.

# Valuable Information at Your Fingertips: Available to Providers on L.A. Care's Website

Information about many different topics that might be helpful to you is provided in a useful way about L.A. Care and its processes. Please visit our website at [lacare.org](http://lacare.org) and click on "For Providers" for the following information:

- Quality Improvement Program, including goals, processes and outcomes related to care and services
- Policy encouraging practitioners to freely communicate with patients about their treatment, including medication treatment options, regardless of benefit coverage limitations
- Requirement that practitioners, providers and facilities cooperate with quality improvement activities; provide access to their medical records, to the extent permitted by state and federal law; maintain confidentiality of member information and records, to the extent permitted by state and federal law; maintain confidentiality of member information and records; and allow L.A. Care to use performance data for activities such as quality improvement activities and public reporting to consumers
- Policy on notification of specialist termination
- Access standards
- Care management services and how to refer patients
- Disease Management Program information and how to refer patients
- Health education services and how to refer patients
- Coordination of Medicare and Medicaid benefit
- Care services to members with special needs
- Clinical Practice Guidelines, including ADHD and depression
- Preventive Health Guidelines
- Medical record documentation standards; policies regarding confidentiality of medical records; policies for an organized medical record keeping system; standards for the availability of medical records at the practice site and performance goals
- Utilization Management Medical Necessity Criteria, including how to obtain or view a copy
- Policy prohibiting financial incentives for Utilization Management decision makers
- Instructions on how to contact staff if you have questions about Utilization Management processes and the toll-free number to call
- Instructions for triaging inbound calls specific to Utilization Management cases/issues



- Availability of, and the process for, contacting a peer reviewer to discuss Utilization Management decisions
- Policy on denial notices
- Policy regarding the appeals notification process
- Pharmaceutical management procedures and lists of pharmaceuticals included in the benefit plan and Formulary updates
- Policy regarding your rights during the credentialing/recredentialing process, including how to review information and correct erroneous information submitted to support your credentialing application, as well as how to obtain information about the status of your application and how to exercise these rights
- Members' Rights and Responsibilities
- Web-based provider and hospital directory



If you would like hard copies of any of the information available on the website, please contact our Provider Relations team at **1.213.694.1250, ext. 4719**.  
**1.866.LA.CARE6 (1.866.522.2736)**.

Progress Notes is a publication of L.A. Care Health Plan for our Medi-Cal and Cal MediConnect provider networks.

If you have any questions or comments about topics in this issue, please write to us at [editor@lacare.org](mailto:editor@lacare.org) or call us at **1.866.LA.CARE6 (1.866.522.2736)**.



## IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

**L.A. Care Compliance Helpline: 1.800.400.4889**,  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**Provider Solution Center: 1.866.LA.CARE6, 1.866.522.2736**  
(Eligibility & Claims questions only)

**Provider Relations: 1.213.694.1250 x4719**

**Medical Management:** phone **1.877.431.2273**,  
fax **1.213.438.5777** for authorization requests

**LTSS Department: 1.855.427.1223** for Long-Term Services and Supports

**HCC Outreach Specialist, Betty Garcia: 1.213.694.1250 x4935**, fax  
**1.213.438.4874** for Annual Wellness Exam (AWE) forms

**Health Education: 1.855.856.6943** for forms and programs

**Nurse Advice Line:** L.A. Care – **1.800.249.3619**,  
Kaiser – **1.888.576.6225**, Care1st – **1.800.609.4166**,  
Anthem Blue Cross – **1.800.224.0336**

**Beacon Health Options: 1.877.344.2858**  
(TTY **1.800.735.2929**) for behavioral health services  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**L.A. Care Covered™: 1.855.270.2327** (Providers: Option "2")



**L.A. Care**  
HEALTH PLAN®

**L.A. Care Health Plan**  
1055 West 7th Street, 10th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017  
[lacare.org](http://lacare.org)

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# Progress Notes

A NEWSLETTER FOR OUR PHYSICIAN PARTNERS

# Progress Notes

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## Get the latest from thePULSE

Sign up today for thePULSE, L.A. Care's newsletter created by L.A. Care's Provider Network Operations and Marketing departments and emailed exclusively to network providers. Get important updates on incentives, initiatives, HIT and relevant L.A. Care news. Progress Notes is also available electronically. Visit [lacare.org](http://lacare.org) under the "For Providers" section to select the "Newsletter Sign Up" link today!

## News Alert



## Focus on Mothers' and Babies' Well-being

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