

Progress Notes

FALL 2021 • VOLUME 16 • ISSUE 4

L.A. Care Commits \$5 Million to Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science for a New Medical Degree Program

L.A. Care Health Plan has pledged to support a new medical school in South Los Angeles, to the tune of \$5 Million, which is being launched by Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science (CDU). CDU is creating a new, independent medical education program on its campus that will be dedicated to serving under-resourced communities. L.A. Care's commitment is part of its Elevating the Safety Net initiative and funds will be used to:

- Develop a community health pre-matriculation training experience focused on professionalism and wellness activities for medical students
- Enhance the current Simulation Center to offer training activities for students and faculty
- Establish a service learning program for medical students to offer certifications as emergency medical technicians, community health workers, and patient navigators
- Establish a center for faculty development to focus on recruitment, retention, and faculty development

“We launched Elevating the Safety Net in 2018 to help address a severe physician shortage and the resulting health disparities in the underserved communities that we serve,” said John Baackes, L.A. Care CEO. “COVID-19 put a spotlight on the disparities, and illustrated the critical need for doctors who understand these communities. We hope the CDU students will recognize how much they are truly needed and will elect to serve in an under-resourced community when their medical training is complete.”



The new medical school program will train an additional 60 students annually. They will be recruited with an emphasis on their interest in alleviating health care disparities. This approach was designed to encourage students to practice in the communities where they trained. The CDU independent medical education program will welcome its first medical students in 2023 and anticipates graduating its first class in 2027. It will increase the number of Black medical graduates in the State of California by approximately 30 percent and LatinX medical students by roughly 20 percent.

David M. Carlisle, MD, PhD, CDU President and CEO said, “We are grateful for the support from L.A. Care as we solidify the legacy of CDU, located in one of the most densely populated and under-resourced urban areas in the nation.”

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

news in BRIEF

Get Onboarding Support to Administer COVID-19 Vaccines!

Sign up to become a COVID-19 vaccine administrator today, and make it easy for your patients to get vaccinated. Member research indicates that patients prefer to get vaccinated in their doctor's office.

The California Medical Association (CMA) is providing onboarding support to eligible providers and will work directly with you to discuss the steps necessary to apply to administer COVID-19 vaccines. For one-on-one support, please contact the CMA at vaccinenetwork@cmadocs.org, or call their Member Resource Center at **1.800.786.4262**. For more information, you can also watch the CMA webinar "How to Enroll in the California COVID-19 Vaccination

Program." Additional enrollment information can be found at: <https://eziz.org/covid/enrollment/>.

Once enrolled in myCAvax, your practice will be referred to LAC DPH for onboarding and to receive a local supply of the COVID-19 vaccine. An LAC DPH Onboarding Analyst will support you through the onboarding readiness checklist to ensure you have completed all requirements, which include a compliance assessment and reporting requirements review.



You can also join the LAC DPH Vaccine Provider Officer Hours meetings, Wednesdays from 9 to 9:30 a.m., through Microsoft Teams or conference line **+1.323.776.6996, 428512526#**. You can reach DPH's Onboarding Team via email at COVAXonboard@ph.lacounty.gov. Additional support is available through the DPH Provider Call Center, at **1.833.505.0761**, Monday to Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and COVIDVaccineReq@ph.lacounty.gov.



L.A. Care



Physician Pay-for-Performance (P4P)

Measurement Year 2021: January 1 - December 31, 2021

REWARDS FOR PROVIDING QUALITY CARE TO L.A. CARE MEMBERS!

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

L.A. Care's Physician Pay-for-Performance (P4P) Program provides financial rewards for practices that provide high quality care for L.A. Care Medi-Cal members, and is **an opportunity to receive significant revenue above capitation**. Eligible providers can receive annual incentive payments up to \$4.00 Per Member Per Month (PMPM) for outstanding performance.

Why P4P?

- Meaningful performance measurement and reporting to support your clinical quality efforts.
- Performance benchmarking to show how you compare to other L.A. Care providers.
- Performance-based revenue to recognize clinical quality and improvement.

ELIGIBILITY

- There is no need to sign up.** All eligible providers automatically participate in the Physician P4P Program.
- Solo and small group physicians with 250 or more L.A. Care Medi-Cal members as of January 2021 are eligible. Clinic organizations with 1,000 or more L.A. Care Medi-Cal members as of January 2021 are eligible. This includes members in L.A. Care Medi-Cal, as well as Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan and Anthem Blue Cross.
- Performance scoring is based on overall Medi-Cal membership.

DATA SUBMISSION

- Providers and their employers must submit encounter data through their normal reporting channels. Medical Records are NOT reviewed as part of the Physician P4P Program.
- This encounter and lab reporting is the basis of performance scoring, and is essential to success in the Physician P4P Program.



For more information, please refer to the *Physician Pay-for-Performance – Program Manual*, or contact Incentive_Ops@lacare.org.



PERFORMANCE MEASURES

In 2021, the Physician P4P Program includes 14 HEDIS measures that can impact your earned incentive. Your continued efforts to provide proactive and comprehensive care to L.A. Care members is essential:

Adult Medicine Measures:

- Asthma Medication Ratio- Ages 5-64
- **Comprehensive Diabetes Care: HbA1c Control (<8.0%)***
- **Controlling High Blood Pressure***
- Depression Screening and Follow-Up for Adolescents & Adults- Depression Screening

Women's Health Measures:

- Breast Cancer Screening
- **Cervical Cancer Screening***
- Chlamydia Screening in Women
- Prenatal & Postpartum Care (2 measures):
Timeliness of Prenatal Care*; Postpartum Care

Pediatric Medicine Measures:

- Asthma Medication Ratio- Ages 5-64
- Child & Adolescent Well-Care Visits
- **Childhood Immunization Status- Combo 10***
- Depression Screening and Follow-Up for Adolescents & Adults- Depression Screening
- Immunizations for Adolescents- Combo 2
- Weight Assessment & Counseling for Nutrition and Physical Activity for Children/Adolescents- Physical Activity
- Well-Child Visits in the First 30 Months of Life

NEW IN 2021:

Removed:

- Adolescent Well-Care Visits
- Antidepressant Medication Management Continuation
- Child & Adolescent Well-Care Visits: Well-Child Visits in the First 15 Months of Life;
- Well-Child Visits in the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Year of Life
- Comprehensive Diabetes Care: Retinal Eye Exams

Added:

- New Payment Measures:
 - Child & Adolescent Well-Care Visits
 - Depression Screening and Follow-Up for Adolescents & Adults- Depression Screening
 - Well-Child Visits in the First 30 Months of Life

Reporting Only Utilization Management Measures:

- Emergency Department Utilization**
- Hospital Admission Rate**
- Plan All-Cause Readmission Rate**
- Follow-Up After Emergency Department Visit for People with High-Risk Multiple Chronic Conditions**
- Transitions of Care-Patient Engagement After Inpatient Discharge**
- Transitions of Care-Medication Reconciliation Post-Discharge**

Reporting Only Member Experience Measures:

- Adult Timely Care and Service
- Adult Getting Needed Care
- Adult Rating of All Health Care Combined
- Adult Rating of PCP
- Child Timely Care and Service
- Child Getting Needed Care
- Child Rating of All Health Care Combined
- Child Rating of PCP

*Measures highlighted in bold are double-weighted and have a greater role in determining physicians' performance scores, performance rankings, and incentive payments. Please pay extra attention to these measures to maximize performance and incentives income.

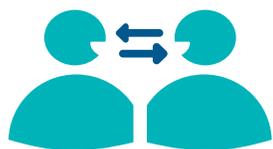
**The following measures are reporting only in Measurement Year 2021, and will not be included in overall scoring or for payment. These serve as test measures that may be scored for payment in future program years.

SCORING & PAYMENT

- 1 Eligible providers* receive an **attainment** score and an **improvement** score for each performance measure:
 - Attainment reflects a provider's HEDIS performance in the program year compared to peer group performance.
 - Improvement reflects a provider's HEDIS performance in the program year compared to his or her performance one year prior.Providers must have at least 10 eligible members to receive a score for a particular measure.
- 2 The better of these two scores becomes the provider's incentive score for each measure. **This ensures that high performers receive high scores, and that lower performers demonstrating improvement also have an opportunity to score well.**
- 3 An average of all incentive scores (must have a minimum of three scored measures) determines the provider's overall **performance score**.
- 4 P4P payments are distributed annually in the fourth quarter according to the following formula:
 - a. $\text{Performance score} \times \# \text{ of eligible, assigned members} = \text{member points}$
 - b. $\text{Member points} \times \text{payment amount per member point} = \text{payment} \$\$\$$

*The Physician P4P Program determines clinic performance scores at the clinic organization level.

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Interpretive Services: Available For Your Patients

Are you having a hard time communicating with patients in their language? L.A. Care offers free, in-person (face-to-face) interpreting services for your Medi-Cal members. When you have a patient scheduled who you think might benefit from this service, please let them know that L.A. Care offers interpreting services free of charge, for the following appointments:

- Medical
- Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT)
- Behavioral appointments/Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)

Members should call L.A. Care's Customer Solution Center (CSC)/Member Services at **1.888.839.9909** and speak with a representative who will take down their appointment time, date, physician, location and duration of appointment. The representative will confirm the appointment by calling the medical office and then schedule an interpreter.

You can also call our CSC/Member Services to assist members with scheduling interpreter services. Or after you schedule their appointment, have the member call us to get an interpreter.

LACC/D members who need interpreting services for ABA appointments should call Beacon Health Options directly at **1.877.344.2858** for further assistance.

FREE Smartphone and FREE Text/Talk for Your Patients!

Your Medi-Cal patients are eligible for a free or low-cost cell phone and wireless services through the federally funded Lifeline Program. SafeLink Wireless offers FREE smart phones, unlimited talk and text with 3GB of data each month at no charge. Enrollees do not need to sign a contract and will never get a bill.

Advise patients to call **1.800.723.3546** or go to **SafeLink.com/LACARE**.





Vital Signs

Diabetes Prevention and Self-Management Services

L.A. Care members with pre-diabetes and diabetes can manage their diagnosis with the support of two programs that allow members to participate from the comfort of their home. The Health Education Department has partnered with Solera Health and Diabetes Care Partners (DCP) to offer programs that can make lasting and impactful lifestyle changes to members' health.



Diabetes Prevention Program

Members with pre-diabetes now have access to L.A. Care's free Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) from the convenience of their phone. The program includes a full year of support to make small changes to member's food choices and activity levels. Health coaches help find what works for each member. Members are eligible for a free Fitbit after completing four weeks in the program.

To qualify the following criteria must be met:

- Be at least 18 years old and
- Be overweight based on your height and weight
- Not have diabetes
- Have other risks of developing diabetes, like family history or gestational diabetes

To see if your patient qualifies, visit solera4me.com/lacare or call **1.866.690.6202** | TTY 711, Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Diabetes Self-Management Education

Diabetes Care Partners (DCP) offers monthly Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME) through telehealth sessions for members. This free series of four interactive workshops will help members manage their diabetes.

Members will learn:

- How diabetes affects the body
- How to check and manage blood sugar
- How to prevent or delay complications from diabetes
- How to eat well while managing diabetes



To sign up your patient today, contact the Health Education Department by completing a Health Education Referral Form at https://www.lacare.org/sites/default/files/la3144_hecls_form_202010rev.pdf and follow the instructions.

Vaccinate Your Patients Against Flu

For the past year, the world has been focused on COVID-19. Yet once again we are heading into flu season. As it approaches, L.A. Care asks providers to schedule flu shot appointments for all patients six months of age and older.

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Tips for your practice:

- Remind your patients by phone, text, mail, and/or email to get the flu shot
 - Emphasize that the vaccine is needed every year, is at no cost to L.A. Care members, and is important to protect children, seniors, and high-risk patients
 - Schedule vaccinations as soon as the vaccine is available (typically in September)
 - Utilize scheduled visits as an opportunity to vaccinate
 - Remember that providers are the most trusted source of vaccine information and advice
-

L.A. Care promotes the importance of annual flu vaccination to members through reminder phone calls and postcards. Providers should anticipate an influx of members needing the flu vaccine. Office visits are also an opportunity to provide the pneumococcal vaccine to patients 65 years and older.



You can find Flu and COVID-19 Resources & Tools under Provider Resources on **lacare.org** or visit the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health at **[http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/a"cd/Flu.html](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/a)**



Vital Signs

Stay Updated on Pharmacy and Formulary at L.A. Care



The L.A. Care Formulary is a preferred list of covered drugs. It applies to outpatient and self-administered drugs and does not apply to medications used in the inpatient setting or medical offices. L.A. Care Health Plan has an active Pharmacy Quality Oversight Committee comprised of physicians and pharmacists who review and approve the drugs that are included on the Formulary, which is updated monthly. Revisions are based on safety, clinical efficacy, and cost-effectiveness. Updates to the Formulary are available online at [lacare.org](https://www.lacare.org).

How to Use the Formulary

Medicines on the Formulary are listed in alphabetical order and by class or category. Both brand name and generic medications are covered by L.A. Care. However, FDA approved generics should be used when available. Generics are generally more cost-effective than brand named drugs. A prescriber may request a brand name product in lieu of an approved generic, if the prescriber determines that there is a documented medical need for the brand equivalent. This type of request for coverage may be made by completing a Medication Request Form.

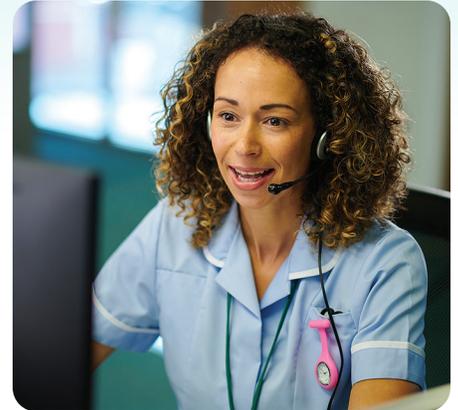
Some Formulary medicines require prior authorization. These drugs are listed throughout the Formulary, and on a separate list within it called the “Prior Authorization Drug List”. You can determine if a drug requires a Prior Authorization by referring to the Formulary on the L.A. Care website at [lacare.org](https://www.lacare.org). Some drugs require “Step Therapy” which involves one or more “prerequisite” first step drugs being tried first. Some drugs have “Quantity Limits” which means that coverage is limited to specific quantities per prescription and/or time period.



Nurse Advice Line

L.A. Care 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 an L.A. Care member or a Medi-Cal member with one of our Plan Partners, they can call the NAL at the numbers listed below:



Anthem Blue Cross:

1.800.224.0336 TTY **1.800.368.4424**

Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan

1.800.609.4166 TTY **1.800.735.2929**

Kaiser Permanente:

1.888.576.6225

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, the NAL phone numbers can be found on the L.A. Care websites: lacare.org, lacarecovered.org, and calmediconnectla.org.

L.A. County Home Visiting Programs



Your perinatal patients might be eligible for **no-cost** home visiting programs. Most programs span from the first/second trimester of pregnancy to 9 months post-delivery and include 9 engagement points with a parent coach, hospital liaison, and a registered nurse. As you assess the clinical needs of your patients, please consider these programs.

Eligibility: Individuals who are pregnant, have recently delivered, or have young children. Eligibility criteria varies by available program.

Referrals: Route patients to the eDirectory of L.A. County Home Visiting Programs <https://edirectory.homevisitingla.org/Home/Index> where they will be able to identify local programs by completing a short questionnaire.

The Great American Smokeout

Each year, the American Cancer Society designates the third Thursday in November as the Great American Smokeout. It is an opportunity for individuals to start their journey towards a smoke-free life. This year it takes place on **Thursday, November 18.**

L.A. Care is encouraging members to work with their doctors if they need help quitting. Providers are in a unique position to offer tobacco-cessation counseling and medication per All Plan Letter (APL) 16-014 *Comprehensive Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Services for Medi-Cal Beneficiaries*. A quick reference guide to APL 16-014 is presented here. You can view the APL in its entirety on the DHCS website under MMCD APLs and Policy Letters.



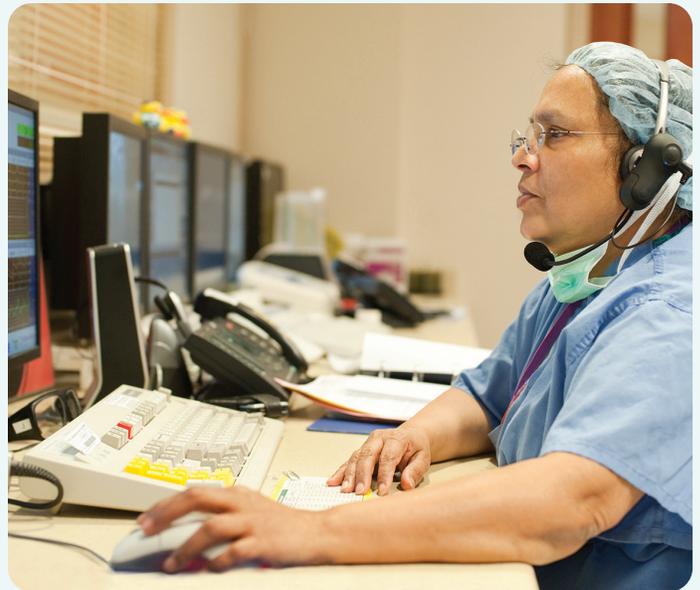
APL 16-014 Requirement*	Provider Strategy and/or Resource
Conduct an initial and annual assessment of tobacco use for each adolescent and adult beneficiary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer the Staying Healthy Assessment (SHA) Tool which assesses smoking status/exposure to tobacco smoke. • Add tobacco use as a vital sign. • Use an F17 ICD-10 code to document tobacco use. • Place an identifying stamp or sticker on patient's medical record.
Prescribe FDA-approved tobacco cessation medications (for non-pregnant adults of any age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribe medications using L.A. Care's formulary guide found on L.A. Care's website. • Prescribe a 90-day treatment regimen of medication as appropriate.
Provide or refer patients to tobacco cessation counseling (four sessions of at least 10 minutes must be offered)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer L.A. Care patients to individual, group or telephonic tobacco cessation services using L.A. Care's online health education referral form. • Refer to the CA Smoker's Helpline, 1.800.NO-BUTTS. • Use the 5A's (Ask, Advise, Assess, Assist, and Arrange) or the "5 R's" (Relevance, Risks, Rewards, Roadblocks, Repetition) to provide individual counseling to patients during office visits.
Assess pregnant patients' tobacco status and offer face-to-face cessation counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask all pregnant patients if they use tobacco or are exposed to tobacco smoke. • Offer at least one face-to-face counseling session per quit attempt.
Provide education or counseling to school-aged children and adolescents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide anticipatory guidance and risk-reduction counseling regarding tobacco use to children and adolescents.
Participate in provider training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in one or more of the provider trainings listed in Attachment B of APL 16-014.

**Table does not include all APL 16-014 requirements, please refer to the actual policy letter for details.*



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

If you have questions or comments about topics in this issue, please write to us at 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)

Medical Management: 1.877.431.2273
fax **213.438.5777** for authorization requests

LTSS Department: 1.855.427.1223 for Long-Term Services and Supports

HCC Outreach Specialist, Betty Garcia: 213.694.1250 x4935
fax **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®

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Progress Notes

A NEWSLETTER FOR OUR PHYSICIAN PARTNERS

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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 Management 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 under the "For Providers" section to select the "Newsletter Sign Up" link today!

News Alert



Diabetes Prevention and Self-Management Services

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