

Progress Notes

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L.A. Care Announces Its Top Health Care Providers

Top Physicians, Clinics and Medical Groups Recognized in a Virtual Celebration

The L.A. Care Provider Recognition Awards honors practitioners, clinics and medical groups in a variety of categories. And, for the first time, the health plan awarded a Provider Equity Award. L.A. Care created the award to honor health care organizations that are working to reduce health disparities in underserved communities, advancing the health plan's commitment to providing equitable care to its members. The inaugural award went to the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (DHS) for a program that addresses food insecurity and another program that works to reduce high blood pressure, a L.A. Care priority health outcome measure.

“This award came at such a pivotal time and exemplifies the heart and mission of the organization and our team members,” said Charmaine Dorsey, LCSW, Director of Patient and Social Support Services, L.A. County DHS. *“Even in the midst of all the challenges of the last couple of years, our staff has been striving to do this incredible work serving the community, and we thank L.A. Care for recognizing that work.”*

Agnes Bahng, MD, an internist practicing in Reseda, was named the 2021 Top Practitioner in the L.A. Care Direct Network, which is made up of physicians who contract directly with the health plan, rather than the through a medical group. She says the honor gave her a sense of validation that her commitment to providing high quality care has paid off, especially in these challenging times.



**L.A. Care Health Plan Recognizes
Dr. Narciso Azurin**
As a **Top Performing Doctor** of the Year!

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to put overwhelming stress on health care workers across the country, with some facing burnout or even retiring. L.A. Care understands the unprecedented pressure and appreciates providers who have risen to the challenge to deliver excellent care to its members. The health plan recently honored its top providers with a social media celebration and billboards in recognition of their accomplishments.

“This is the fourth year of the L.A. Care Provider Recognition Awards, and awardees have certainly earned these honors as the pandemic stretched beyond what anyone could have imagined,” said John Baackes, L.A. Care CEO. *“We are so grateful for the commitment these providers have shown to serving our members who live in some of the most vulnerable communities in L.A. County – communities hit hardest by COVID-19.”*

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L.A. Care Joins California Health Care Leaders to Accelerate Medi-Cal Provider Data Sharing and Infrastructure



L.A. Care Health Plan had hoped that the proposed 2022-23 January budget would include funding for two programs that will be critical for the success of California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM). The health plan joined nearly two dozen health care leaders across the state in asking Governor Newsom to include a \$100 million General Fund allocation to accelerate Medi-Cal provider data sharing and build the data infrastructure needed to deliver on the commitment to improve Medi-Cal quality. The agencies that signed a letter to the governor say the funding will also help address longstanding equity concerns.

The two programs that need funding will address substantial data gaps that were identified by the California Health and Human Services Agency. One program provides performance payments for Medi-Cal providers that join and share data with quality health information organizations (HIOs). Such incentives have proven to accelerate HIO participation. The second program would provide funding for qualified HIOs to build and maintain the health data infrastructure needed for the sweeping set of Medi-Cal delivery system reforms in CalAIM.



We hope the revised budget released in May will include the funding that will allow qualified HIOs to connect to Medi-Cal providers' electronic health records and aggregate the clinical data to support CalAIM and other Medi-Cal activities. This would include enhanced care management, community supports, behavioral health system modernization, quality improvement and population health management.

Preventing Medical Fraud and Identity Theft

If your patient reports that their member ID has been lost or stolen, you can help your patients protect their health and avoid health care fraud or abuse. 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 their records if needed.
2. Run a CURES report on the patient to check for controlled substances that you may not have prescribed. Go to <https://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. 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.



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.

Registered Dietitians Available for Your Eligible Patients

The L.A. Care Health Education Department offers many programs, services and resources to support providers and patients. From individual telephone consults, online workshops, and multicultural written materials we have something for everyone!

Based on recent Population Needs Assessment findings, the Health Education Department is encouraging providers to discuss the importance of healthy eating, particularly increasing fruit and vegetable consumption, with patients during office and telehealth visits. Our health educators and registered dietitians are available to offer telephonic services to those patients who need more support.

To order health education materials or to refer a patient to health education services, please visit lacare.org/providers/provider-resources/tools-toolkits/health-education-tools or call or email at **1.855.856.6943** or HealthEd_Info_Mailbox@lacare.org.





Vital Signs

Pharmacy Updates: New Programs for Opioid Drug Management



According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1.6 million people had an opioid use disorder in 2019 and 70,630 people died from a drug overdose that same year. In an attempt to curb the opioid epidemic, L.A. Care has implemented two drug management programs, the Pharmacy Home Program (PHP) and the Opioid Home Program (OHP). Currently, PHP targets L.A. Care Covered and PASC-SEIU lines of business, and OHP targets the Cal MediConnect (CMC) line of business.

On January 1, 2022 Medi-Cal was removed from our PHP program due to the Medi-Cal Rx carve out, as the state Department of Health Care Services will not be continuing opioid lock-in programs. The PHP and the OHP lock members into one designated provider and/or pharmacy for receiving opioids and benzodiazepines for 12 months, with an option to extend an additional 12 months depending on case management.

A coverage limitation could help prevent members from over utilizing opioids and minimize the risk of overdose. The L.A. Care Pharmacy team reviews members' usage to determine if there is a need for coverage limitation. Case Management reaches out to providers to see if they are in agreement with the limitation. If the provider(s) does not respond after three outreach attempts within 10 business days, a member may be locked into a single pharmacy for better monitoring.

For a beneficiary to be eligible to enroll in the OHP or PHP program, they must have an average MME ≥ 90 mg for any duration within the most recent six months and be obtaining prescriptions for opioids or benzodiazepines from either a) 3 or more providers and 3 or more pharmacies OR b) 5 or more providers regardless of the number of pharmacies.

CMC members will also be eligible for OHP if they have had a history of opioid-related overdose. Also, new as of January 1, any beneficiary diagnosed with sickle cell disease will be excluded. Other exclusion criteria include (depending on the program), members receiving foster care, members with access or quality of care issues, members receiving hospice, palliative, or end-of-life care, residents of a long-term care facility, or members being treated for active cancer-related pain.



If you have any questions about the changes, please contact the L.A. Care Health Plan Provider Solutions Center at **1.866.522.2736**. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays.

Medication Therapy Management Provides Comprehensive Reviews

Medication Therapy Management (MTM) is available to L.A. Care's Cal MediConnect (CMC) members. It includes comprehensive medication reviews (CMR) conducted by a licensed pharmacist and targeted medication reviews (TMR). Formerly, these services were carried out by MedWiseRx. For 2022, MTM program services are provided by the Navitus Clinical Engagement Center (CEC).

Eligibility criteria for a member to receive these services will include a minimum of three (3) chronic diseases, a minimum of eight (8) Part D medications, and an annual cost for covered Part D medications totaling \$4,696 or more. Centers for Medicare Services and Medicaid (CMS) also expanded the MTM program eligibility criteria for 2022 to include members who are enrolled in L.A. Care's Drug Management Program (described below).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has endorsed MTM services, stating that "MTM has been shown to be effective for lowering systolic and diastolic blood pressure; lowering LDL cholesterol and other health indicators (e.g., glycosylated A1C, HbA1c); increasing patient knowledge; improving patient quality of life and medication adherence; and improving the safe and effective use of medications." In 2021, CMS required health plans to reach

a Comprehensive Medication Review (CMR) completion rate of at least 89% to achieve a five-star rating, and a similar rate is expected for 2022.

Medication Adherence Program

As part of an ongoing effort to improve medication adherence for our CMC members, L.A. Care Health Plan has partnered with Navitus CEC (our **MTM** vendor) to deliver Pharmacoadherence services to our members. You may be receiving a letter or call for members under your care that have been identified with gaps based on medication refill history. Please discuss the information and ways to improve medication adherence with the member. Members are also eligible to receive 100-day supplies of all their chronic medications.





Vital Signs

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

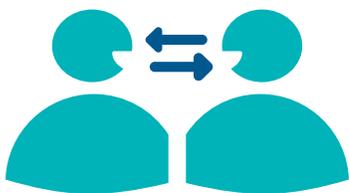


The NAL phone number is also located on the back of the patient's health plan member ID card. Additionally, the NAL phone numbers can be found on the L.A. Care websites: **lacare.org**, **lacarecovered.org**, and **calmediconnectla.org**.



Need Interpretive Services?

L.A. Care offers interpreting services at no cost to your patients. Use of trained qualified interpreters leads to increased patient health knowledge, and decreases problems with patient-provider encounters while complying with state and federal regulatory requirements.



For Telephonic Interpreting Services, please call: **1.855.322.4034**. In order to access the telephonic interpreting service to assist L.A. Care limited English proficient patients, simply dial the number above and have the following information ready:

1. L.A. Care member ID
2. Physician's NPI

If you have questions regarding interpreting services, please call the L.A. Care Provider Solutions Center at **1.866.522.2736**.

L.A. Care Health Plan Launches Inaugural Provider Equity Award

As Part of Provider Recognition Awards

Congratulations to the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (LAC DHS) on being the winner of L.A. Care's Provider Equity Award! This award acknowledges LAC DHS providers and staff's dedication to advancing health equity throughout Los Angeles County. L.A. Care introduced the Provider Equity Award this year.

This new award recognizes provider performance on health equity efforts, including reducing health disparities and addressing social determinants of health. Health equity means a fair and just opportunity for everyone to be as healthy as possible.

Providers, who were self-nominated for this award, submitted examples of how they are addressing food insecurity among their patients and how they are helping to reduce health disparities in one of L.A. Care's priority health outcome measures. The measures include diabetes, high blood pressure and prenatal and postpartum care. LAC DHS received the highest combined score.

New Program Addresses Hypertension

LAC DHS achieved high marks for its Registered Nurse Hypertension Optimization Management and Enhancement (**RN HOME**) program. An interdisciplinary team of

providers, pharmacists, nurses, and other medical staff created a nurse-driven, hypertension medication program. LAC DHS found that the intervention group reached blood pressure goals in a statistically significant shorter time than the usual care group. Patients reported satisfaction with the availability and ease of the program's appointments, quality of care, personalized education and the attention from the nursing staff.

Increased Food Distribution at Primary Care Sites

In collaboration with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, LAC DHS created **Food Rx**, an initiative to expand patient screening and interventions around food insecurity. Patient data captured through the program resulted in increased food distribution, including fresh fruit and produce, at primary care sites across LAC DHS.



The creation of the Provider Equity Award is another example of the L.A. Care commitment to providing equitable care. The award will now be part of the L.A. Care annual Provider Recognition Awards, which recognizes L.A. Care top practitioners, clinics and provider groups for the excellent care they provide members.

Top Performing Providers in the L.A. Care Physician P4P Program



Congratulations to the Physicians and Community Clinics listed below for providing quality care to L.A. Care's Medi-Cal members, and for outstanding performance in the 2020 Physician Pay-for-Performance (P4P) Program. Providers were selected based on the following categories*: Pediatric Services, Adult Services and Women's Health during Measurement Year (MY) 2020. **

In addition to receiving their incentive payments, these providers and their staff are being recognized by L.A. Care for their commitment to elevating care in L.A. County. We celebrate their outstanding accomplishment!

Solo and Small Group Physicians***	
Category	Physician Name
Pediatric Services	Lily Balette
	Jackyln Chan
	Bothyna Sedrak
Adult Services	Pejman Bahari- Nejad
	Henry Chang
	Jaime Gonzalez
Women's Health	Narciso Azurin
	Doris Ragland
	Ana Rodas
Direct Network	Agnes Bahng

Community Clinics***	
Category	Clinic Name
Pediatric Services	AltaMed Health Services
	El Proyecto Del Barrio
	White Memorial Community Health Center
Adult Services	Garfield Health Center
	Herald Christian Health Center
	QueensCare Health Center
Women's Health	AltaMed Health Services
	Eisner Health
	KHEIR Center

***Pediatric services** include Childhood Immunization Status – Combo 10 (CIS-10), Immunizations for Adolescents – Combo 2 (IMA-2), and Well-Child Visits in the Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Years of Life (W34). Adolescent Well-Care Visits (AWC). Well-Child Visits in the First 15 Months of Life (W15). Weight Assessment & Counseling for Nutrition and Physical Activity- Physical Activity (WCC). **Adult services** include HbA1c Control (< 8.0%) (CDC), Eye Exam (CDC-REE), High Blood Pressure (CBP), Antidepressant Medication management – Continuation (AMM) **Women's health** includes Breast Cancer Screening (BCS), Cervical Cancer Screening (CCS), Chlamydia Screening (CHL), Timeliness of Prenatal Care and Postpartum Care (PPC-Post, PPC-Pre).

**Providers had to have at least 30 eligible members per measure and at least 3 scored measures within a category to be included for recognition. Performance is based on administrative data received by L.A. Care.

***Providers are shown in alphabetical order by last name.

L.A. Care Announces Its Top Health Care Providers

Continued from cover

“The biggest challenge has been patient attitudes toward the pandemic. We have patients who believe in the vaccines, masking and social distancing, and we also have patients who don’t,” said Bahng. “The most I can do is talk about the evidence and the history of how vaccines have helped eradicate diseases in the past. I do my best to debunk any of the myths going around.”

Among the clinics honored is White Memorial Community Health Center. The clinic received the Top Performing Clinic Award for Pediatric Care.

“At the start of the pandemic, everyone pulled together, from physicians to the screeners at the entrance of the clinic, and when you do that, you have success,” said Grace Floutsis, CEO and CMO. “Also, we put together a very strong QI program with the help of an L.A. Care grant that allowed us to hire a clinical quality champion. Thanks to the work we did in 2018 and 2019, we were already hardwired and poised to do good work when the pandemic hit, and we kept our focus, despite the uncertainty and the constant changes in workflow.”

This year, we divided our medical groups that serve L.A. Care Medi-Cal members into two groups based on the number of members they serve.

The 2022 Top Practitioner awardees are:

- ✓ Agnes Bahng, MD – L.A. Care Direct Network
- ✓ Jackyln Chan, MD – Pediatric Care
- ✓ Narciso Azurin, MD – Women’s Health
- ✓ Henry Chang, MD – Adult Care

The 2022 Top Performing Clinic awardees are:

- ✓ White Memorial Community Health Center – Pediatric Care
- ✓ Eisner Health – Women’s Health
- ✓ Queenscare Health Centers – Adult Care

The 2022 Top Performing Independent Physician Association (IPA) awardees are:

- ✓ PMA/Axminster Medical Group – L.A. Care Medi-Cal product (Large Group IPA)
- ✓ All Care Medical Group – L.A. Care Medi-Cal product (Small Group IPA)
- ✓ PIH Health – L.A. Care’s Cal MediConnect product
- ✓ High Desert Medical Group – L.A. Care Covered product

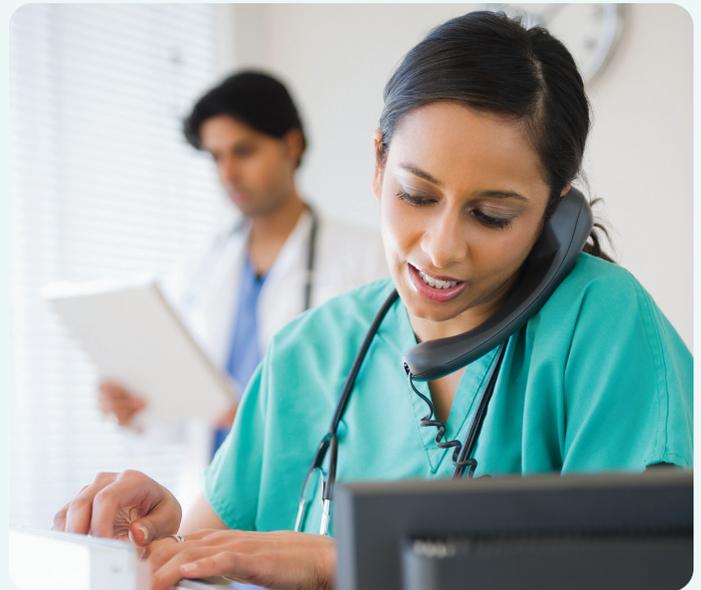


The practitioner, clinic and IPA awardees were chosen based on an internal performance rating system used by L.A. Care to determine quality of care being provided for members. The Health Equity award winner was chosen for its performance on health equity efforts, including health disparities and addressing social determinants of health.



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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A NEWSLETTER FOR OUR PHYSICIAN PARTNERS

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News Alert



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