

Progress Notes

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L.A. Care Health Plan Drives Safety Net Empanelment: Innovations in Primary Care

Empanelment is the act of assigning patients to a primary care provider to promote continuity of care and improve patient health outcomes. Los Angeles Practice Transformation Network (LAPTN), which is an L.A. Care program, implemented empanelment as part of its efforts for the CMS-funded Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative (TCPI). Empanelment was initiated and facilitated by LAPTN quality improvement advisors assigned to safety-net clinics in L.A. County.

In August 2019, *Annals of Family Medicine* published an article based on LAPTN work titled “An Empanelment Toolkit for the Safety-Net Clinic Setting” by LAPTN quality improvement advisors Stella Gukasyan, Ed.M and Michael Wong, MPH.

After LAPTN started four years ago, quality improvement advisors discovered many clinics neither used empanelment nor had sufficient resources and knowledge to start empanelment. Most clinics were unaware of the positive impact of empanelment on clinical workload, clinician satisfaction and efficiency, as well as patient care.

Surprisingly, there was a lack of resources and tools available to help guide implementation of empanelment in the safety-net setting. LAPTN designed and created a toolkit consisting of a panel size calculation template, an implementation guide, and monitoring tools to guide a comprehensive, sustainable empanelment process.



The toolkit provides safety-net clinics the opportunity to promote continuity of care and improve patient outcomes and service delivery.

LAPTN which completed at the end of 2019 empaneled more than 250 clinicians. Nineteen clinics ran empanelment calculations, adopted best practice policies and procedures for empanelment, and uploaded clinician assignments into the electronic health record. The full report can be read at: www.annfammed.org/content/17/Suppl_1/S84.full

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

Improving Communication Between Primary Care and Specialty Care Physicians

This summer L.A. Care surveyed primary care physicians (PCPs) and specialty care physicians (SCPs) about how frequently they received adequate clinical feedback after referring patients.

PCPs and SCPs felt that their communication with one another was often lacking and provided feedback on helpful ways to improve communication. These barriers in communication affect patients' overall health and sometimes lead to unnecessary duplicative testing.

Two of the most common suggestions were:

- Send consultation notes immediately after seeing the patient.
- Reduce time spent on hold when providers call other offices with updates.

Best practices on sharing clinical notes include reasons for current visit, the scope of examination, pertinent examination findings, diagnosis or impression, treatment details and future recommendations and clear documentation of oral communications (phone calls, in person conversations, etc.).

The L.A. Care Quality Improvement team can help if you are experiencing communication issues between PCPs/SCPs! Please email quality@lacare.org with issues you are experiencing regarding communication and we'll help find a solution to meet your needs.





NCQA HEDIS 2020 Requirement Changes: Prenatal and Postpartum Care (PPC) Measures

Timeliness of Prenatal Care

Members should complete a prenatal care visit *either* in the first trimester or within 42 days of enrollment with L.A. Care.

Postpartum Care

Members should complete a postpartum visit on, or between 7 – 84 days (1 to 12 weeks), after delivery. In previous years, the visit needed to occur 21 – 56 days (3 to 8 weeks) after delivery.



Please ensure that your patients are completing the required prenatal and postpartum appointments.



Vital Signs

Clinical Practice and Preventive Health Guidelines Adopted by L.A. Care



L.A. Care reviews and adopts evidence-based Clinical Practice and Preventive Health Guidelines from peer reviewed sources and organizations like the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, for diseases and health conditions identified as most salient to L.A. Care members. L.A. Care’s Joint ‘Performance Improvement Collaborative Committee’ and ‘Physician Quality Committee’ regularly review and identify the most salient guidelines to help improve the delivery of health care services to members. The current list of Clinical Practice and Preventive Health Guidelines adopted by L.A. Care are available for download at lacare.org.

Guideline Focus Areas

Clinical Practice

Behavioral Health
 Cardiovascular
 Endocrine
 Infectious Diseases
 Pain Management
 Obstetrics and Perinatal Care
 Respiratory
 Musculoskeletal
 Obesity

Preventive Health

- U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) A and B Recommendations.
- Recommendations for Preventive Pediatric Health Care, Bright Futures from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. Guideline on Periodicity of Examination, Preventive Dental Services, Anticipatory Guidance Counseling and Oral Treatment.
- Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule for ages 18 year or younger (CDC)
- Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule (CDC)

lacare.org/providers/provider-resources/clinical-practice-guidelines

For hard copies, please reach out to quality@lacare.org

Kroger Mail Order Pharmacy Offers a New Service for Medi-Cal Members

Since May 2018, **Kroger Mail Order Pharmacy** via **Postal Prescription Service (PPS)** has been servicing L.A. Care members for their mail order pharmacy needs. By enrolling in mail order, members can get up to a 90-day supply of maintenance medications delivered to their doorstep at no additional cost – thereby improving medication adherence. Prescriptions are expected to arrive within 7 to 10 business days.



As of October 2019, **Ralphs Pharmacy**, a division of Kroger Co., began servicing L.A. Care Medi-Cal members, while **PPS** continues to service Cal MediConnect, L.A. Care Covered, and PASC members. Prescribers can call, electronic prescribe, fax, and mail prescriptions to Ralphs Pharmacy for L.A. Care Medi-Cal members. Prescriptions are required to have complete directions for use (e.g. “use as directed” is not appropriate).

Ralphs Pharmacy



Phone Number
213.452.0830
Fax Number
213.452.0834

Mail
Ralphs Pharmacy #22
645 West 9th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Better Communication=Better Care

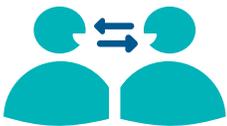
L.A. Care offers no-cost face-to-face interpreting services, including American Sign Language. Use of trained qualified interpreters not only complies with state and federal regulatory requirements; it also leads to increased patient health knowledge, and decreases problems with patient-provider encounters. As you continue to deliver the best care to your diverse patient population, here are some tips on how to request interpreting services and how to cancel or change a request.

For Telephonic Appointments



1. Call **1.855.322.4034** to request a telephonic interpreter. Have your physician's NPI and L.A. Care member's ID ready.

For Face-to-Face Appointments



1. Call **1.866.522.2736** to place your interpreter request. Provide the following information:
 - a. Language requested
 - b. Date, time and length of the appointment
 - c. Provider specialty
 - d. Purpose of appointment (consultation, annual physical exam, follow-up, etc.)
 - e. Full address and phone number: include suite and floor numbers
 - f. Type of location (hospital, clinic, doctor's office, lab, etc.)
 - g. Provider's name
 - h. Contact person at provider's office (if available)
 - i. Gender preference, if any. If gender preference is not available, is member okay with other gender?
2. **For Cancellations or Changes:**
Call **1.866.522.2736** at least **24 hours in advance** to notify us of any cancellations, or if the date, time or location of the appointment has changed.

Quality health care depends upon good communication between the physician and the patient. Timely requests of interpreting services and advance cancellation notice helps us ensure that your patients will have access to interpreting services when they need it most.

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

Kaiser Permanente:

1.888.576.6225

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

Vaccinate Your Patients Against the Flu



As flu season peaks in January and February, L.A. Care Health Plan asks that patients who have not been vaccinated receive the flu shot at an upcoming appointment. Despite the flu peak activity period, be sure to keep the vaccination stocked as flu season can continue until May. Please pay special attention to these high-risk populations:

- Adults 65 and Over
- Pregnant Women
- Children Under 5
- Individuals with chronic illnesses

Remember that providers are the most trusted source of vaccine information and advice.

Transportation for Behavioral Health Services

Transportation services are available to L.A. Care Medi-Cal members (under APL 17-010) for medical related and behavioral health appointments as follows:

Non-Medical Transportation (NMT), is available for members who need transportation for medically necessary services, such as medical appointments (mental health visits or behavior therapy services), picking up medications and/or prescription drugs, and/or Durable Medical Equipment (DME). Transportation services are provided by passenger car, taxi or other forms of public/private transportation.

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT), is available for members to get to their non-emergency medical visits, in either an ambulance, litter van, wheelchair van medical transportation services, and/or coordinating with para transit. If the member has a medical and/or physical condition that prevents them from traveling by bus, passenger car, taxicab, or another form of public/private transportation, and needs medical care they can utilize this type of transportation.

Physician Certification Statement Form (PCS), is required when **NEMT** services are needed/requested. The form can be accessed via lacare.org, under:

1. Providers
2. Forms and Manuals
3. Utilization Management Forms – “Referral Form for Transportation Services and Physician Certification Statement.” Please download form, complete it and return via fax to **213.438.2201**.

****NMT vs NEMT: it does not matter what type of medical care they require, but how they are getting there.*

Please refer members/patients to L.A. Care Health Plan at **1.877.431.2273**. They should select option 4 for transportation. The member will be given a reservation number. They can either set-up transportation services as “Roundtrip” or as “Will-Call,” and get picked-up after their appointment. Let members know that this is a covered benefit, free of charge, and accessible to them. This will help patients to maximize their medical services, which include mental health services (Beacon Health Options or Department of Mental Health), behavioral health treatment, and/or vision coverage (VSP).



L.A. Care Nutrition Education Services



Ensure your patients get the most appropriate care and support by familiarizing yourself with the nutrition education services available through L.A. Care. If you have any questions regarding these services, please contact **L.A. Care’s Health Education Unit at 1.855.856.6943**. For class information, patients may contact the Family Resource Centers directly at **1.877.287.6290**.

L.A. Care Nutrition Services		
Offered By	Population Served	Nutrition Services Provided
<p>Health Education Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual phone consults • Delivered by a Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist (RDN) 	<p>L.A. Care Members Only</p>	<p>Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT)</p> <p>Requires provider referral to help with the management of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diabetes • Kidney disease • Congestive heart failure • Hyperlipidemia • Hypertension • Obesity • Digestive problems <p>Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-care behaviors to better manage diabetes and help prevent complications • Offered telephonically by an RDN or in person via a contracted vendor
<p>Family Resource Centers (FRCs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person individual and group wellness nutrition education • Delivered by an RDN or instructor • Calendar of classes and support services at lacare.org/frc 	<p>Open to L.A. Care Members and the Community</p>	<p>Wellness Nutrition Education Classes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhances health and prevents chronic disease through general improved eating habits

*Access the *Health Education Referral Form* in the provider portal under “Forms” or by using this link: lacare.org/sites/default/files/hecls-referral-form-1217.pdf

Preventing Medical Fraud and Identity Theft

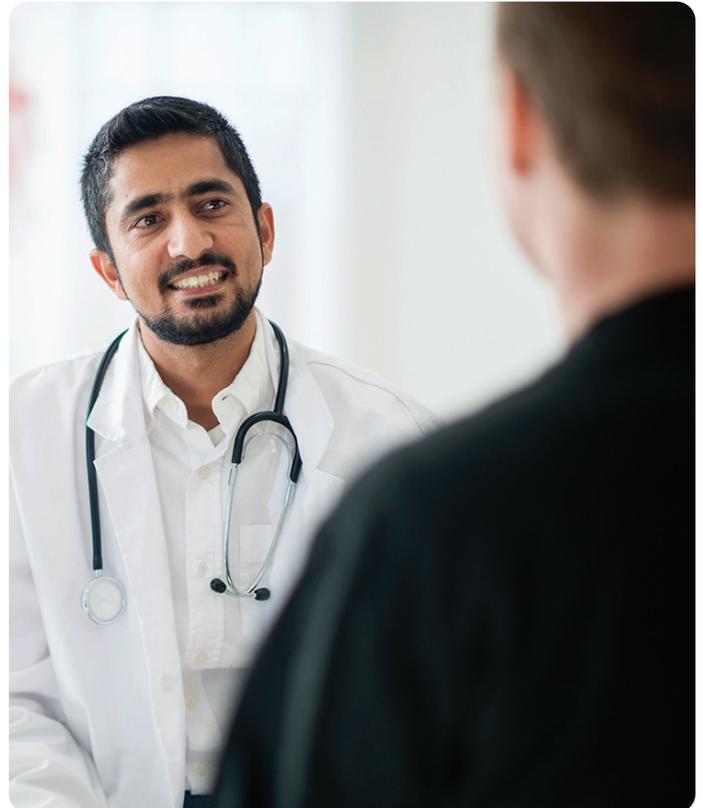


If your patient reports that their member ID has been lost or stolen, you can help them protect their health and avoid health care fraud or abuse. Here are some ways to assist:

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 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.
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.

Health Education Supports Providers and Patients

L.A. Care's Health Education Unit can help your patients with weight and chronic condition management, tobacco cessation, and more. Patients can access additional resources and tools on our health and wellness portal, *My Health in Motion™* (My HIM™). To refer your patients or order free health education materials visit the Health Education Tools page on L.A. Care's website under the "For Providers/Tools and Toolkits" tab.



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 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: phone **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®

L.A. Care Health Plan

1055 West 7th Street, 10th Floor

Los Angeles, CA 90017

lacare.org

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Progress Notes

A NEWSLETTER FOR OUR PHYSICIAN PARTNERS

Progress Notes

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News Alert



NCQA HEDIS 2020 Requirement Changes

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