

# Progress Notes

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## L.A. Care Awards \$4.4 Million to Create Nine New Medical Residency Positions in L.A. County

*Grants Are Part of the Health Plan's \$155 Million Elevating the Safety Net Initiative*

L.A. Care Health Plan, the nation's largest publicly operated health plan, has announced its second round of **Residency Support Program** grants as part of the five-year, \$155 million **Elevating the Safety Net** (ESN) initiative. The health plan is committing nearly \$4.4 million to establish nine new residency positions at four medical institutions. Some of the funding will also support required core faculty positions. This is all part of L.A. Care's efforts to address a growing physician shortage. A University of California, San Francisco report found that California faces a shortage of 8,800 primary care physicians by 2030.

*"Studies show that physicians often stay in the region where they complete their residency, and we need them here now," said John Baackes, L.A. Care CEO.*

*"Marginalized communities in L.A. County are already experiencing a physician shortage, so we have to do all we can to keep physicians here."*



In July 2019, L.A. Care committed more than \$5.2 million to establish 14 new residency positions at five medical institutions. L.A. Care's 2020 Residency Support Program grants will support residency slots launching in fall 2021 at the following institutions:

**Adventist Health White Memorial Charitable Foundation**

**AltaMed Health Services Corporation**

**Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science**

**David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA**

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

# news in BRIEF



## New Cultural Training: “Unconscious Bias in Medicine”

L.A. Care understands that now, more than ever, it is imperative that we continue to improve the care we offer to culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

This one-hour online CME course, “**Unconscious Bias in Medicine**,” is free and is available on L.A. Care’s website. Visit: [lacare.org/providers/provider-central/provider-programs/classes-seminars/cultural-and-linguistic-training](https://lacare.org/providers/provider-central/provider-programs/classes-seminars/cultural-and-linguistic-training).

Offered by the Stanford University School of Medicine, the course explores case studies related to unconscious bias and provides self-assessment opportunities. It also explores strategies to deal with unconscious bias and enable providers and their staff to understand how to bring the content into their own unique environments.

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## Interpreting Services

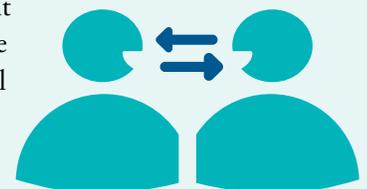
During these challenging times, L.A. Care wants to ensure that all our members have access to the information they need to protect themselves, their families and their communities. Please call **Member Services** at **1.888.839.9909** (TTY 711) to request no cost, face-to-face interpreting services, including American Sign Language.

Over the phone, interpreting services are also available at no cost:

**Providers:** Call **1.855.322.4034**

**IPAs:** Call **1.855.322.4022**

Please remember to document members’ language preference in the medical records, as well as requests for and/or refusal of interpreting services.







# 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).

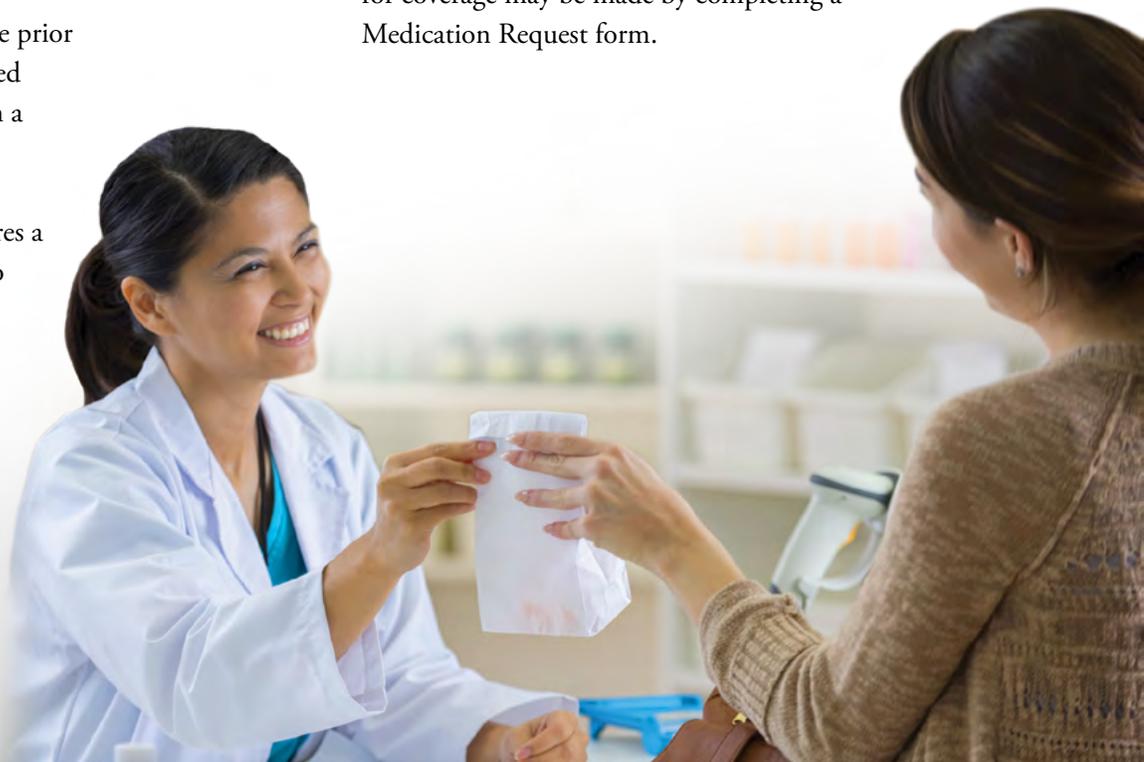
### How to Use the Formulary

Medicines on the Formulary are listed in alphabetical order and by class or category. L.A. Care covers both brand-name and generic medications. However, FDA-approved generics should be used when available. Generics are generally more cost-effective than brand-name 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.

Any drug not found in the Formulary listing published by L.A. Care Health Plan shall be considered a non-Formulary drug. A prescriber may request an exception to coverage for a non-Formulary drug if the prescriber determines that there is a documented medical need. This type of request for coverage may be made by completing a Medication Request form.



## Vaccinate Your Patients Against the Flu



Providers are the most trusted source of vaccine information and advice. For that reason, please offer flu vaccination during each office visit and encourage patients six months of age and older to get their flu shot.

Tips for your practice:

- Remind patients by phone, text, mail, and/or email to get vaccinated
- Emphasize the vaccine is:
  - Needed every year
  - Free for L.A. Care members
  - Very important to protect children, seniors, and high-risk patients
  - Offer vaccinations as soon as possible (typically in September)

- Every in-person visit is an opportunity to educate and vaccinate.
- Telehealth visits are opportunities to promote the availability of flu vaccination at local pharmacies or community flu events. Visit [lacare.org/flu](https://lacare.org/flu) to find community flu clinics near your patients.
- Although flu activity typically peaks between December and February, be sure to keep the vaccination stocked as flu season can last through May.

L.A. Care actively 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 especially given the current COVID-19 pandemic. This is also an opportunity to provide the pneumococcal vaccine to patients 65 years and older.

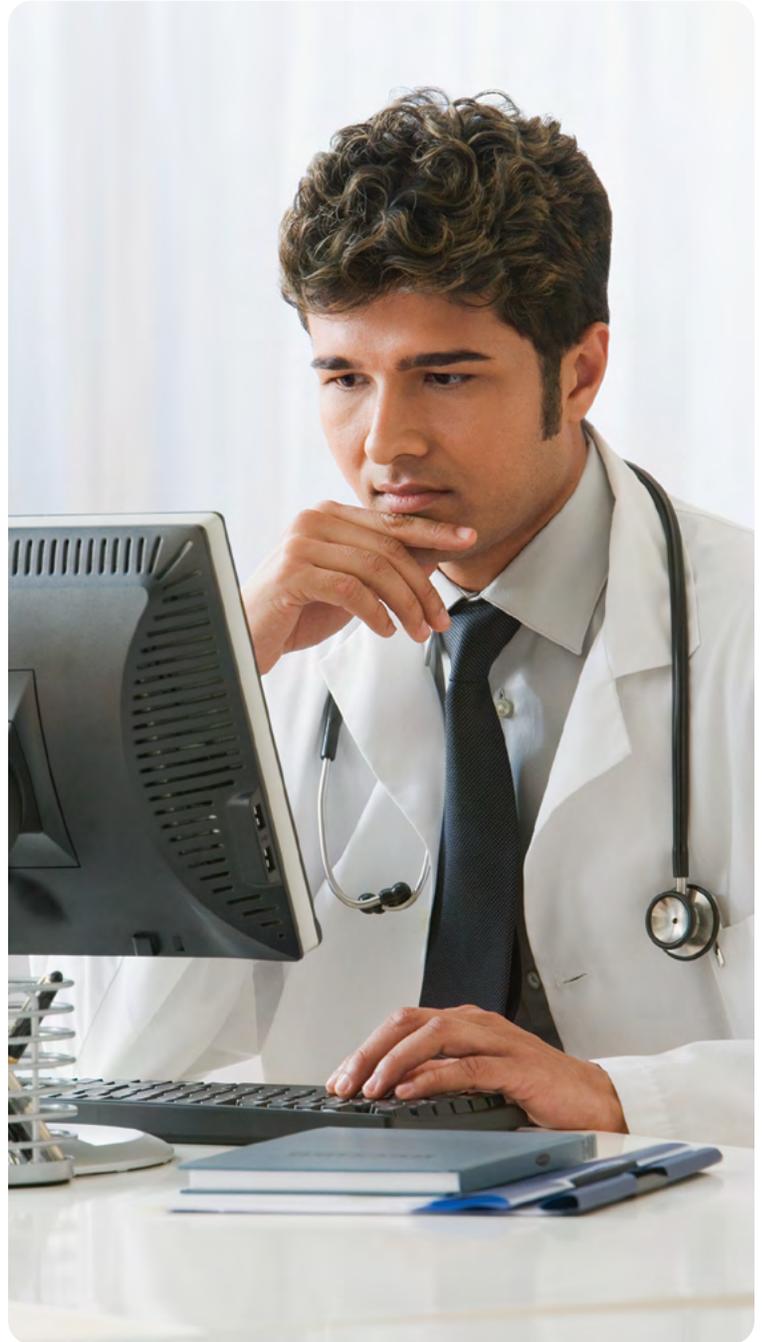


# Vital Signs

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

L.A. Care's website has information about many different topics that might be helpful to you. It provides a useful way to get information 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
- Case 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 recordkeeping 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)**.

## 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 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](https://www.lacare.org)**, **[lacarecovered.org](https://www.lacarecovered.org)**, and **[calmediconnectla.org](https://www.calmediconnectla.org)**.

# California Immunization Registry Revises Policy for Sharing Information



The California Immunization Registry (CAIR) has made changes to their information sharing policy. Providers must disclose to patients their intent to submit patient data to CAIR2 before it is submitted. If a patient chooses to lock a record, it cannot be shared with anyone except the provider - CAIR cannot share 'locked' records with other CAIR users or with health plans. Remember to disclose to patients and be mindful of accidentally locking records. More information on the data sharing policy can be found on [cairweb.org/cair-disclosure-policy](http://cairweb.org/cair-disclosure-policy).

L.A. Care has two **NEW** 'Missing Vaccine' reports available on the provider portal. Each report details how many doses of each antigen are missing for each patient and includes information on which records are locked. Please note: some 'Missing Vaccines' could be due to locked CAIR members. If there are locked CAIR members in the 'Missing Vaccine' reports, please submit your immunization data to L.A. Care through other routes. For questions on these reports, contact [quality@lacare.org](mailto:quality@lacare.org).



# Population Needs Assessment



L.A. Care recently conducted its first ever Population Needs Assessment (PNA) to better understand members' health care needs. The data for the PNA came from health care usage reports and member focus groups.

Key PNA findings include:

- Most of L.A. Care's members are women and children
- The largest racial groups are White/Caucasian, which encompasses Hispanics/Latinos, (46%), Asian (23%), and Black/African American (7%)
- The most frequently spoken languages are English (57%), Spanish (23%) and other (4%)
- Blacks receive less preventive care services in comparison to the overall population:
  - Well-child visits 3-6 years (57.9% vs. 69.1%)
  - Breast cancer screening (52.5% vs. 61%)
  - Timeliness of prenatal care and post-partum visit (65.2% vs. 68% and 44.9% vs. 54.5%)
  - Asthma medication ratio ages 51-64 (48.4% vs. 57.8%)
  - Comprehensive diabetes care measures (62% vs. 64.2%)
- Top health conditions for adults include hypertension, diabetes, asthma, and depression
- Asthma, respiratory infections, viral infections, and ear problems are the top health issues in children under 10 years old
- Top conditions for older adults include heart disease, diabetes and hypertension

Twelve Executive Community Advisory Committee (ECAC) members provided input into the development of the PNA. Overall, members are satisfied with L.A. Care services. Members asked for improved services in:

- Nutrition classes, either in the community or online
- Education about the flu shot – specifically that the shot does not cause the flu
- Provider cultural competency, particularly around assumptions of preferred language based on last name

Based on the report, L.A. Care will address improving services and resources related to postpartum care, asthma medication compliance, and flu vaccination uptake.

L.A. Care's **Health Education and Cultural & Linguistic Services Department** offers multiple services and resources to help providers meet their patients' needs and can be reached at **1.855.856.6943**.



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)

**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**

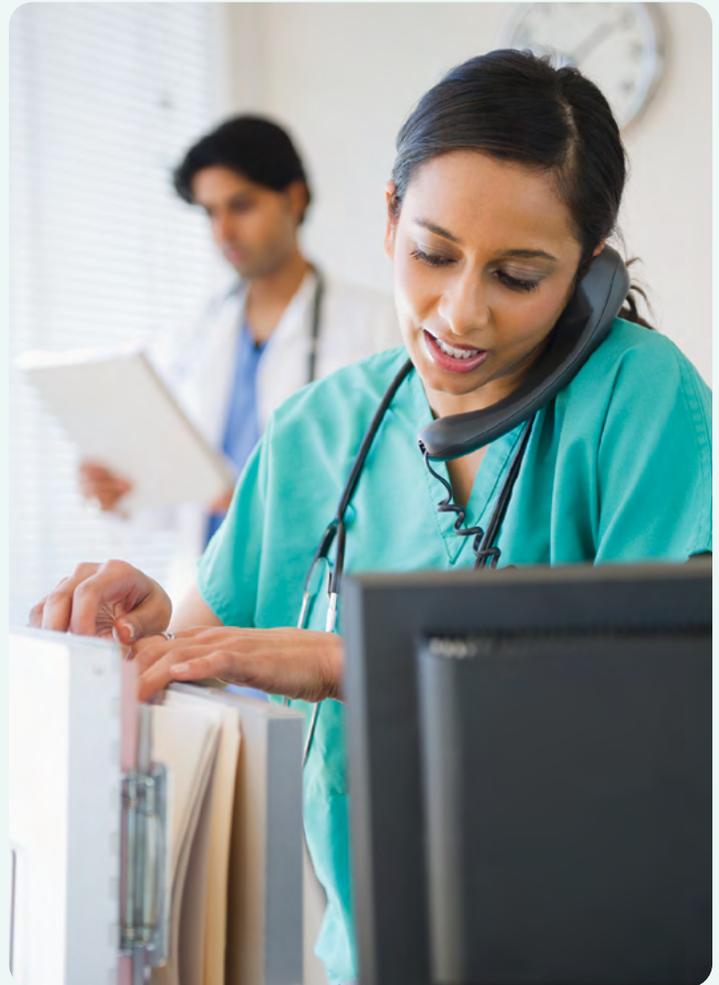
Anthem Blue Cross – **1.800.224.0336**

**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®

### L.A. Care Health Plan

1055 West 7th Street, 10th Floor

Los Angeles, CA 90017

**lacare.org**

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