



Gold Coast Health Plan™
A Public Entity

Building Community

Advocating for Members & Engaging the Community

Compassionate Care, Accessible to All, for a Healthy Community.

Dear Partners,

Welcome to Gold Coast Health Plan's new bimonthly newsletter, Building Community. We are excited to share with you the important work we are doing to ensure that our members have access to high-quality care and are connected to the resources they need, particularly now during the pandemic.

In these unprecedented times, the work we are all doing to serve our community's most vulnerable residents is critical to their well being. The community needs its safety net now more than ever and we are working with our partners to share information and resources so that we can reach as many people as possible.

When I joined GCHP as interim CEO in November, I never could have anticipated the stress that GCHP, our health care system, community, and state would be faced with. The pandemic has had a significant effect on the state budget. While Medi-Cal benefits have remained largely intact, the funding GCHP receives from the state is being reduced retroactively.

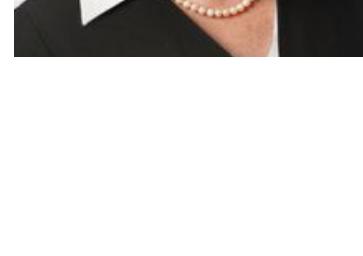
It is against that backdrop that GCHP's governing board, the Ventura County Medi-Cal Managed Care Commission, extended my contract to remain as CEO. I am grateful for and humbled by the commission's continued trust to lead the organization and provide stability during these turbulent times.

I believe wholeheartedly in the important work we are doing to serve our members and in the plans that we have put in place to get us through this pandemic and the ensuing economic crisis. I look forward to continuing to work with our community partners to keep our community healthy.

Sincerely,

Margaret Tatar
Chief Executive Officer

Meet the Leadership



Margaret Tatar Chief Executive Officer

Margaret joined Gold Coast Health Plan in 2019 with more than 30 years of public and private sector experience in managed care program and policy development, health policy, program development, advocacy, and government / legislative affairs. Under the direction of the Ventura County Medi-Cal Managed Care Commission, Margaret is responsible for all aspects of GCHP's operations including board, regulatory and community relations and is tasked with ensuring that GCHP fulfills its mission to provide access to high-quality care and services to members.

Margaret has a strong track record in managed care plan leadership and has led large-scale managed care initiatives and multi-disciplinary teams in complex operating environments. She has served in the federal government's Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), the executive and legislative branches in Colorado and California, and held a key leadership position with CalOptima, the County Organized Health System in Orange County. As acting deputy director of delivery systems for the state Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), Margaret was responsible for the network of 23 contracted health plans that deliver health care services to more than nine million Californians.

Since 2014, Margaret has been a managing principal at Health Management Associates, a Michigan-based health care research and consulting firm. It is in that capacity that she serves as CEO of GCHP.

Policy Update

State budget highlights

We have been following the budget cycle closely to see how much of an impact the COVID-19 pandemic will have on the state and what that will mean for the Medi-Cal program.

In general, the enacted FY 2020-21 state budget includes:

- An estimated \$5.7 billion to respond directly to the COVID-19 pandemic, including personal protective equipment necessary to reopen the economy, hospital surge preparation, and other expenditures to support populations at greater risk of contracting COVID-19.
- \$600 million for Project HomeKey, which purchases and renovates motels throughout the state to convert them into permanent housing for those experiencing homelessness.
- \$300 million to cities, counties, and continuum of care programs to support their efforts to reduce homelessness.

The budget maintained some Medi-Cal benefits and delayed others for an estimated 14.5 million members.

Medi-Cal will continue to cover:

- Optional benefits (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT); podiatry; optometry, physical therapy)
- Diabetes Prevention Program
- Community Based Adult Services (CBAS)
- Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP)
- Proposition 56 payments and programs for providers

The state Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) will reduce payments to Medi-Cal managed care plans by up to 1.5% from July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020 to account for decreased utilization due to the public health emergency.

Medi-Cal will delay the:

- Implementation of California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), the multi-year effort to reform Medi-Cal.
- Expansion of full-scope Medi-Cal to undocumented seniors.

If you have any questions, feel free to email me at mtorres@goldchp.org.

Sincerely,

Marlen Torres
Executive Director of Strategy and External Affairs

In the Community

Meet the GCHP Community Relations Team

The GCHP Community Relations duo of Adriana Sandoval-Jimenez and Bryan Quijada helps members understand their benefits, acts as advocates on their behalf, and serves as a liaison between GCHP and the community at large. During the pandemic, Adriana and Bryan are staying connected with GCHP's community partners to provide essential health care information to members.

If you would like to connect with them, email CommunityRelations@goldchp.org.



GCHP donates essential supplies to Oxnard school



To foster a sense of community and build camaraderie among GCHP employees while they work from home, the GCHP Employee Activities Committee partnered with Cesar E. Chavez Elementary School in Oxnard to collect much-needed supplies for families affected by the current economic crisis. Members of the committee delivered dozens of boxes of toiletries, cleaning supplies, and laundry detergent to families in need.

GCHP awards more than \$20,000 in sponsorships to Ventura County organizations

Seeing the immense need caused by the pandemic, GCHP awarded \$20,500 in sponsorships to seven organizations that are providing needed services to the community:

- **American Heart Association:** For blood pressure monitors to support the telemedicine efforts of local clinics.
- **CAREGIVERS: Volunteers Assisting the Elderly:** For grocery shopping and pharmacy pick-ups for elderly county residents.
- **Feeding the Frontline:** To provide food to essential workers in the agricultural industry.
- **FoodShare:** For pop-up food pantries.
- **LUCHA, in conjunction with Poder Popular de Santa Paula:** For food distribution to Santa Paula's agricultural workers.
- **Secure Beginnings Free Diaper Bank:** To provide diapers and wipes to families.
- **Students for Eco-Education and Agriculture (SEEAG):** For educational materials and fresh produce for the children of farmworkers.

GCHP's sponsorship program supports organizations that are dedicated to serving Medi-Cal members in Ventura County. If your organization is interested in partnering with GCHP, we welcome the opportunity to hear from you. To apply for a sponsorship, please fill out the [Sponsorship Application](#).

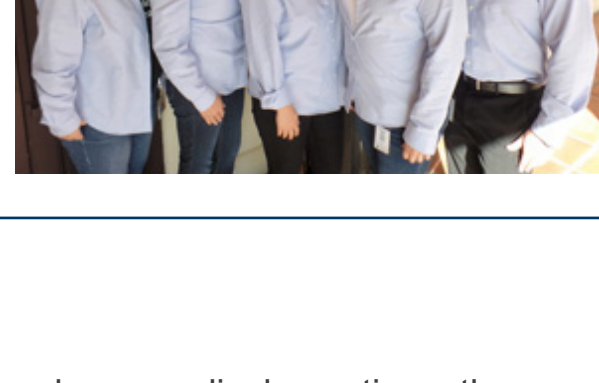
Minding the Health of Our Community

Connecting with members

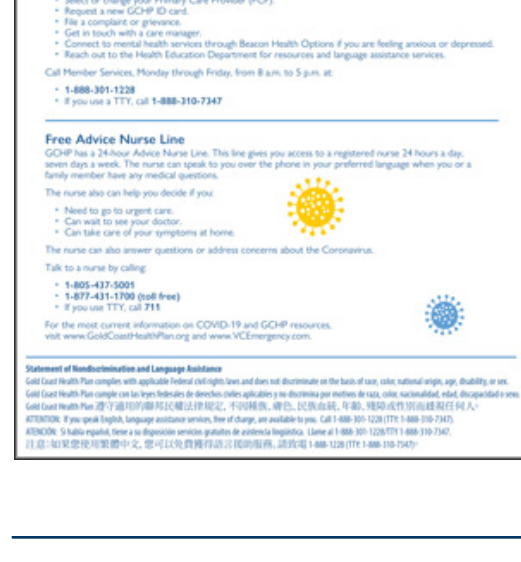
"I have had insurance with many different health insurance [companies] before and no one has ever cared to check on me."

Those are the words of a member who was happy to receive a call from a GCHP team member to check-in on her wellbeing during the pandemic. The team is reaching out to GCHP's most vulnerable members to evaluate their needs, and if necessary, connect them with health care services or refer them to community resources. The team also helps members understand their Medi-Cal benefits and how to access them.

Our Member Services team created a video for members with useful information about their benefits and the services that are available to them. We encourage you to watch the video and share it with your community. The video is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).



24-Hour Advice Nurse Line



When GCHP members have medical questions, they can now speak with a registered nurse in their preferred language 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The nurse can help them decide if they:

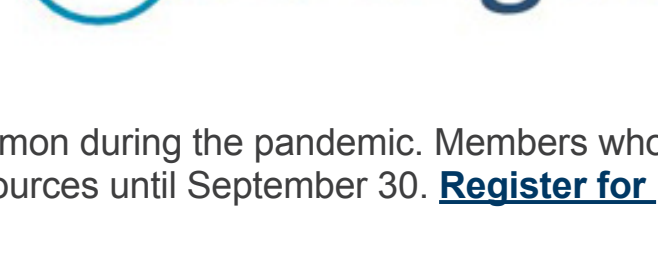
- Need to go to urgent care.
- Can wait to see their doctor.
- Can take care of their symptoms at home.

The nurse can also answer questions or address concerns about the coronavirus.

To reach the Advice Nurse Line, members can call 1-805-437-5001. The toll-free number is 1-877-431-1700. TTY users can call 711.

myStrength COVID-19 and Mental Wellness Resources

For a limited time, GCHP's mental health services provider, Beacon Health Options, is offering members and their families free access to COVID-19 and Mental Wellness resources. The myStrength website offers resources to help manage the stress, feelings of isolation and parenting challenges that have become common during the pandemic. Members who register by August 31 will have access to the resources until September 30. [Register for myStrength here](#).



Additional Resources

- **COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions for Members:** The FAQs include information on what members should do if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or if their clinic or pharmacy were to close. ([English](#) and [Spanish](#))
- **COVID-19 Resources for Members:** This flyer lists contact information for GCHP's Member Services Department and 24-Hour Advice Nurse Line and the services that are available through both. ([English](#) and [Spanish](#))
- **Telehealth Tip Sheet:** GCHP created a tip sheet to help members when they talk with their health care provider by phone or video. ([English](#) and [Spanish](#))

If you have any questions, please email CommunityRelations@goldchp.org.

About Gold Coast Health Plan

Gold Coast Health Plan proudly serves more than 200,000 Medi-Cal beneficiaries in Ventura County through its network of primary care physicians, specialists, behavioral health providers, hospitals, and pharmacies. Since it was founded in 2011, Gold Coast Health Plan has been committed to providing access to high-quality care and improving the health of its members, which include 1 in 5 county residents, 1 in 8 seniors, and 1 in 2 children up to the age of 5. To learn more, visit: www.goldcoasthealthplan.org.