



Regular Meeting of the

Santa Clara County Health Authority Consumer Advisory Committee

Tuesday, December 14, 2021 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Santa Clara Family Health Plan

6201 San Ignacio Ave, San Jose, CA 95119

Minutes

Members Present

Debra Porchia-Usher, Chair
Blanca Ezquerro
Rachel Hart
Ajit Raina
Ishendra Sinha
Tran Vu

Members Absent

Barifara (Bebe) Barife
Rebecca Everett
Vishnu Karnataki
Maria Cristela Trejo Ramirez

Staff Present

Christine Tomcala, Chief Executive Officer
Chris Turner, Chief Operating Officer
Laurie Nakahira, DO, Chief Medical Officer
Laura Watkins, Vice President, Marketing and Enrollment
Chelsea Byom, Vice President, Marketing, Communications and Outreach
Mike Gonzalez, Director, Community Engagement
Thien Ly, Director, Medicare Outreach
Amber Tran, Process Improvement Project Manager
Zara Hernandez, Health Educator
Amy O'Brien, Administrative Assistant

1. Roll Call

Debra Porchia-Usher, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was established.

2. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

3. Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the September 14, 2021 Consumer Advisory Committee meeting were reviewed.

It was moved, seconded, and the minutes of the September 14, 2021 Consumer Advisory Committee meeting were **unanimously approved.**

Motion: Mr. Vu

Seconded: Mr. Sinha

Ayes: Ms. Ezquerro, Ms. Hart, Mr. Raina, Mr. Sinha, Ms. Porchia-Usher
Mr. Vu

Absent: Ms. Barife, Ms. Everett, Mr. Karnataki, Ms. Ramirez

4. Health Plan Update

Christine Tomcala, Chief Executive Officer, presented the enrollment update. The Plan's total enrollment as of December 1, 2021 is 291,097 members, an increase of approximately 7.4% since December 2020. As of December 2020, the Plan's total Medi-Cal (MC) membership is 280,666 members, an increase of approximately 7.4% since December 2020. The Plan's total Cal MediConnect (CMC) membership is 10,431

members, which is an increase of approximately 6.2% since December 2020. Our membership continues to grow as a result of the pause on redeterminations due to COVID-19.

Ms. Tomcala highlighted the 2022 Consumer Advisory Committee meeting dates. The June 7, 2022 and December 6, 2022 meetings were adjusted to the first Tuesday of the month, rather than the usual second Tuesday of the month, to avoid conflicts with other committees. SCFHP will launch Enhanced Care Management (ECM) and Community Supports on January 1, 2022, which are components of the state's Medi-Cal reform program, known as CalAIM. The MC Rx pharmacy carve-out will also launch on January 1, 2022.

5. Department of Employment & Benefit Services (DEBS)

Debra Porchia-Usher, Chair, presented an update on DEBS for the Committee. DEBS has seen significant growth in applicants since COVID-19. Assembly Bill AB 133 expands MC eligibility to individuals who are 50 years of age or older regardless of their immigration status. This change takes effect on May 1, 2022. No action on the part of MC recipients will be required, as the change will automatically take effect on May 1, 2022. Effective April 1, 2022, as part of the American Rescue Plan, Medi-Cal coverage has been extended for both the pregnancy and post-partum periods from 60 days to 12 months. A mental health diagnosis will no longer be required in order to take advantage of this benefit. Assembly Bill 133 also includes increases to the asset limits for non-MC programs. As of July 1, 2022, the state will raise the asset limit for non-MC programs to \$130,000.00 per person, with \$65,000.00 for each additional person, up to a maximum of 10 individuals.

The COVID-19 public health emergency order has been renewed for the period of October 18, 2021 through January 16, 2022. As a result, the current delay of negative actions that affect MC recipients remains in effect until further notice. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will provide all states with 60-day notice prior to the resumption of normal redetermination activities. As of December 2021, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) began to mail out notices to all beneficiaries with instructions to contact the County with any changes to their status or demographics. Current contact information needs to be on file once the emergency order has been lifted. The committee members, in particular Ms. Hart, and Ms. Porchia-Usher agreed that the coverage extension of the pregnancy and post-partum periods from 60 days to 12 months is significant.

6. COVID Vaccination Incentive

Amber Tran, Process Improvement Project Manager, presented an overview of the Plan's efforts to help increase members' vaccination rates through a vaccine rewards program. She highlighted the reward program process and timeline. Ms. Tran clarified for Mr. Sinha that this program only applies to members who have received their 1st dose from September 1, 2021 through March 1, 2022. Ms. Hart asked if it is possible for members to receive their gift cards via email, rather than through the mail, to avoid gift cards being lost or stolen. A discussion ensued as to the various ways in which members can receive their gift cards. Members who have recently changed their address should contact Customer Service to ensure the Plan has their current address. Ms. Watkins advised that the Blanca Alvarado Community Resource Center (CRC) could also be used as a location for members to pick up their gift cards. Ms. Tran clarified for Ms. Hart that this program began prior to vaccine eligibility for those in the 5-11 year old age group, although eligibility may expand in the future. Ms. Porchia-Usher suggested a family package and Ms. Tran concurred this is a good idea.

Mr. Sinha asked if the Plan has information on the specific dosages for each group. Dr. Nakahira advised that she will provide this information in time for our next meeting on March 8, 2022. A discussion ensued amongst the committee members as to the various ways the vaccines and the boosters can be mixed and matched.

Dr. Nakahira left the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

7. Community Outreach Program

Mike Gonzalez, Director, Community Engagement, presented an overview of the Community Outreach Program to the committee. He highlighted the Plan's outreach events from 2019, 2020, and 2021 and our year-to-date accomplishments. Mr. Gonzalez also discussed the outreach planning initiatives and strategies that are in place for 2022, in alignment with the plan's organizational objectives. He also facilitated a discussion on questions that pertain to where committee members get their health information, in-person activities they participate in, how they hear about community events, and what motivates them to attend these events. Ms. Hart asked how the Plan engages the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community. Ms. Hart also remarked that, because she lives outside East San Jose, it is a challenge for her to receive information on events and opportunities in East San Jose. Mr. Gonzalez agreed that reaching the BIPOC community is important, and the Plan gives a lot of thought on ways to engage this community. Mr. Sinha concurred that the Plan should focus on reaching members outside the East San Jose area, and he advised that the County does a good job with outreach efforts. Mr. Gonzalez advised that the Plan is in regular discussion as to the ways in which we can engage our members who live within the Northern part of the County. Mr. Sinha suggested the Plan use ambassadors to disseminate information to the Northern San Jose community.

Ms. Hart mentioned that the homeless population also tends to fall through the cracks, and she asked if the Plan goes out to the homeless encampments. Mr. Gonzalez agreed that it is important to engage with the homeless encampments. The Plan relies on our community partners and organizations who are better equipped for engagement with the homeless community. Ms. Hart responded that this topic is important because many of the workers who currently do engage with the homeless population lack empathy, and this makes it difficult to establish trust. Ms. Porchia-Usher added that the Office of Supportive Housing has increased its outreach efforts, and they may prove to be a good partner for SCFHP. Ms. Porchia-Usher also suggested the Plan consider partnership with cities such as Cupertino, Mountain View, Los Gatos, and Gilroy as a means to further engagement. Mr. Gonzalez encouraged Mr. Sinha and Ms. Hart to continue to interact with their friends and neighbors to ensure health education information is available within their communities.

8. Cal MediConnect (CMC) Plan Overview

Thien Ly, Manager, Medicare Outreach, presented the committee with an overview of the benefits and services available through our CMC plan. Mr. Ly discussed the eligibility requirements and the options that are offered through this plan. There are no monthly premiums or copays, with the exception of the copays for prescription drugs. He also gave an overview of the vision, hearing and fitness benefits available through the CMC plan. Mr. Ly highlighted the transportation benefit offered to members, as well as the details on how to request transportation to and from appointments. Mr. Sinha asked for clarification on how much advance notice the Plan requires for transportation. Mr. Ly encouraged Mr. Sinha to contact Customer Service for any special situations where advance notice may not be possible, and they will always do their utmost to accommodate special circumstances. Ms. Turner added that Customer Service has specific criteria they can use to make exceptions to the advance notice policy. Ms. Porchia-Usher suggested we ask a representative from Customer Service to speak on this issue during the March 2022 meeting.

Mr. Ly continued with a breakdown of the prescription copays and our network of pharmacies. Mr. Ly clarified for Ms. Hart that our network includes the Costco pharmacy, and no Costco membership is required to use their pharmacy. Ms. Byom clarified for Ms. Ezquerro that COVID vaccinations administered by any California provider or pharmacy that reports their immunization data to the California immunization registry are eligible for our member vaccine rewards program.

Mr. Ly also discussed the Plan's extensive provider network. Mr. Sinha remarked that CMC is a good benefit plan; however, it can be difficult to find doctors who accept SCFHP, and Mr. Raina agreed. Mr. Ly replied that, prior to enrollment, the Plan confirms if the member's primary care doctor, or any specialists, are in-network. The Plan also offers continuity of care to allow a new CMC member to see a doctor who is out-of-network for up to 12 months in specific situations. CMC members are also encouraged to call Customer Service who will reach out to the provider to resolve any miscommunication issues. Ms. Porchia-Usher added

that it may also be an issue with our directory. Mr. Sinha stated that Physicians Medical Group does not accept SCFHP, and PAMF does not accept new patients. He also has trouble being seen by El Camino Hospital. He stated that there is a lot of confusion as to the in-network coverage for urgent care versus emergency care. Mr. Ly explained that PAMF is specific to existing patients only. Mr. Ly confirmed that any emergency care services, even with non-contracted providers, are covered. Mr. Ly will reach out to our Provider Network Operations team to share Mr. Sinha's feedback.

Mr. Ly concluded with information on enrollment and disenrollment from CMC. Members can enroll at any time, not just during the annual Medicare open enrollment period from October 15 through December 7. Ms. Porchia-Usher had two discussion requests for the March 2022 meeting. She requests the Plan provide clarification on coverage for in-network and out-of-network emergency and urgent care services. She also requests that the Plan provide clarification on whether or not we regularly check in with our providers to confirm if they are accepting new patients. She also added that there are continual communications with providers as to whether or not they are accepting new patients. Mr. Sinha also remarked that communication with providers' offices is often inefficient.

9. Blanca Alvarado Community Resource Center

Mike Gonzalez, Director, Community Engagement, presented the Committee with an update on the recent activities at the Center. Mr. Gonzalez introduced the new Supervisor of the CRC, Trinh Nguyen. Mr. Nguyen began in October 2021, and his background includes extensive prior experience with supervising and developing programming for community centers, with a particular emphasis on senior programming. Mr. Gonzalez advised that there are currently Medicare Outreach team members working at the CRC, and the plan is to also staff the center with Customer Service Representatives and Case Management team members. Mr. Gonzalez highlighted the current and upcoming programming schedule, including monthly Open Houses. COVID-19 safety protocols remain in place.

Mr. Gonzalez discussed the impact the CRC has already had on the community. He shared the number of monthly visitors from July 2021 through October 2021. Though the CRC's doors continued to remain locked until November 8, 2021 due to COVID, no residents who knocked on the door were turned away. The CRC has also provided many services regarding Covered California and MC application assistance, along with resource navigation regarding food, housing, healthcare, and COVID-19. These numbers are expected to grow now that the CRC is fully open. Mr. Gonzalez also shared the monthly calendar of activities, including Dia de Los Muertos, for November 2021.

Mr. Gonzalez highlighted the elements and strategies of the community-led CRC Planning Process and the process roadmap. This planning process included a community survey targeted to residents within 6 specific zip codes in East San Jose. There was a great response to the survey, with 770 respondents, all with valuable feedback on their vision of the CRC's purpose. A special thanks goes to our CRC Resident Advisory group who play a major role in developing the CRC, with their grassroots approach to a community-led engagement process. The next Open House is on Saturday, December 18, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and includes a staff meet-and-greet, a tour, an overview of programs and services, and a Health Fair.

Mr. Sinha asked for the address and location of the CRC. Mr. Gonzalez described the location and provided the address, 408 N. Capitol Avenue, San Jose. Mr. Gonzalez clarified the role of the CRC Resident Advisory Group for Ms. Hart. Ms. Porchia-Usher shared that Angela Shing, the Director of Employment and Benefits Services, is excited to partner with SCFHP.

10. SCFHP Member Communications

Chelsea Byom, Vice President, Marketing, Communications, and Outreach gave an overview of the member communications completed since the September 2021 meeting. The Fall newsletter was mailed out at the end of October. In response to the upcoming 2022 MC Rx carve-out, the Plan is in the process of mailing out new ID cards to our entire MC membership. The mailing also included a letter about Enhanced Care Management. Mr. Sinha asked when he can expect to receive his new ID card. Ms. Byom replied that the mailing began in late



November and is ongoing until are ID cards are mailed out. Ms. Byom clarified the difference between the old ID card and the new ID card. Ms. Byom highlighted the fact that, as part of the vaccine rewards program, members are starting to receive their gift cards. Outbound calls to new MC members have begun to encourage them to attend the Member Orientations. Ms. Byom highlighted the SCFHP website which is updated with meeting materials, and member materials such as the Formulary, Provider directory, newsletters, and COVID-19 vaccine information. Updated provider directories and provider search tools are always available on the Plan's website. Ms. Byom concluded with a list of the events the Plan participated in as of December 2021.

11. Future Agenda Items

Ms. Porchia-Usher asked for feedback as to future agenda items. Suggested topics include Customer Service and the process to arrange for transportation to and from appointments; the Plan's provider network, and the process that surrounds encouraging Providers to accept new patients; an update on COVID-19 and the Omicron variant; COVID vaccinations and COVID testing locations; and the accuracy of the results from in-home COVID test kits.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m. The next Consumer Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

DocuSigned by:

Debra Porchia-Usher

Debra Porchia-Usher, Chairperson
Consumer Advisory Committee