



**Gold Coast  
Health Plan**<sup>SM</sup>  
A Public Entity

# Provider Operations Bulletin

DECEMBER 2025

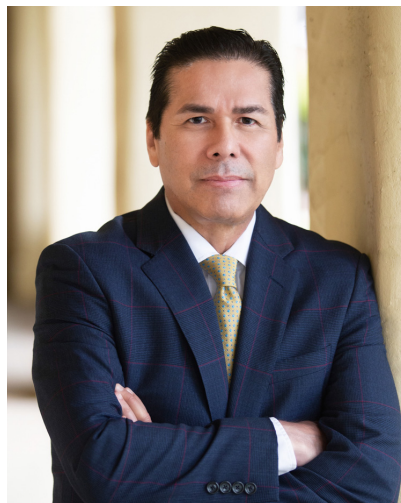
[www.goldcoasthealthplan.org](http://www.goldcoasthealthplan.org)

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# A Message from Our Chief Medical Officer



Dr. James E. Cruz  
Chief Medical Officer

This year, the policies and recommendations promoted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are significantly — and dangerously — at odds with proven, time-tested medical science. For example, misinformation is circulating about acetaminophen and pregnancy, attempting to link use of acetaminophen during pregnancy, as well as childhood vaccinations, to autism.

Here in California, Gov. Gavin Newsom has joined the governors and the departments of Public Health from the states of California, Oregon, Washington, and Hawaii to form the West Coast Health Alliance. The intent of the Alliance and the governors is to override what they describe as the “politicization of science” within HHS and the CDC and ensure that legitimate, medical science — not politics — remains the foundation of public health guidance.

Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) and now our Medicare plan, Gold Coast Health Plan Total Care Advantage (HMO D-SNP), stands firmly with the West Coast Health Alliance, along with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

GCHP has aligned its vaccination and preventive health standards with those issued by the Alliance and CDPH, rather than the current federal guidance that contradicts the research of the established scientific community.

GCHP is not alone. Respected medical associations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, all support the recommendations of CDPH and the West Coast Health Alliance.

GCHP is committed to encouraging members to talk with you, their health care providers, for accurate, evidence-based information. You are the professionals with the knowledge, training, and dedication who work every day to keep our community safe.

Sincerely,

Dr. James E. Cruz  
Chief Medical Officer

## SECTION 1:

# Holiday Closures

Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) will be closed Christmas Day (Thursday, Dec. 25, 2025) and New Year's Day (Thursday, Jan. 1, 2026). Regular business hours will resume on the Friday after each holiday.

## 2026 First Quarter Holidays

GCHP will be closed on Monday, Jan. 19, 2026, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Monday, Feb. 16, 2026, in observance of Presidents Day.

**SECTION 2:**

# Introducing Gold Coast Health Plan Total Care Advantage (HMO D-DSNP): Medicare and Medi-Cal benefits in one place!

Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) is proud to announce the launch of Gold Coast Health Plan Total Care Advantage (HMO D-SNP), a Medicare Advantage Dual Special Needs Plan, that goes live on Jan. 1, 2026.

Total Care Advantage will serve Ventura County residents who are eligible for Medicare and Medi-Cal who opt to enroll in this plan.

## Plan highlights:

- Streamlined care coordination between Medicare and Medi-Cal services
- Unified member materials, such as single ID card and handbook
- Improved provider access for dual-eligible members
- Simplified administrative process for providers
- Enhanced health outcomes through coordinated care management within GCHP

## What does this mean for existing contracted GCHP providers?

- GCHP contracted providers may receive a contract amendment about contracting with Total Care Advantage.
- Contracting with Total Care Advantage does not affect your current contract with the GCHP Medi-Cal line of business.

## Total Care Advantage Model of Care Required Training

Medicare contracted providers are required to complete Total Care Advantage Model of Care Training by Dec. 31, 2025, and are required to complete an attestation showing completion of the training. Please visit our [Welcome Providers](#) webpage for our [Model of Care Training](#) and [Attestation Form](#).

Non-contracted providers interested in contracting with Total Care Advantage can email [ProviderContracting@goldchp.org](mailto:ProviderContracting@goldchp.org).

We appreciate your continued partnership in serving our members and encourage you to participate in Total Care Advantage to better support our dual-eligible population.

For plan details and to share this information with individuals who may be eligible, visit our dedicated Total Care Advantage [webpage](#).

## SECTION 3:

# Portal Tip: Viewing Authorizations

When searching for authorizations in the GCHP TruCare/ProAuth Portal, authorizations will not automatically populate in the Dashboard.

Providers will need to:

1. Select Dashboard
2. Click on Provider Filter

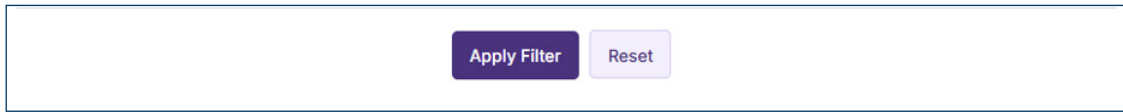
Note: The **Filter By** criteria must always include, at minimum, a **Date of Service**, if you are not populating Member ID, Authorization Number or Service Types.

The screenshot shows the 'Dashboard' page of the TruCare ProAuth Gold Coast Health Plan Provider Authorization Portal. The page includes a sidebar with 'Dashboard' and 'Member Search' options. The main content area has a 'Filter By' section with input fields for Member ID, Authorization Number, Date of Service From Date (11/18/2025), Date of Service To Date, Inpatient Service Types, and Service/Procedure Service Types. There are also checkboxes for 'Include Closed' and 'Requested By Me'. Below the filters are two summary tables: 'Inpatient Authorizations Summary' and 'Service / Procedure Authorizations Summary'. Both tables show columns for Member Name, Authorization #, Determination Status, From Date, To Date, Servicing Facility, Diagnosis Code, and State. Both tables currently display 'No records found'.

3. Click on **Provider List**

The screenshot shows the 'Provider List' page of the TruCare ProAuth Gold Coast Health Plan Provider Authorization Portal. The page includes a sidebar with 'Dashboard' and 'Member Search' options. The main content area has a 'Provider List' section with a search bar and a loading spinner. The search bar has a 'Provider Filter' dropdown set to 'Q41052' and a 'Search by NPI' input field. The 'Provider List' section is currently empty, showing a loading spinner.

4. Click on **Apply Filter** (located at very bottom of Provider List)

A screenshot of a web interface showing the bottom of a list. At the bottom center, there are two buttons: a dark purple button labeled 'Apply Filter' and a light purple button labeled 'Reset'.

Please allow enough time for all authorizations to populate on Dashboard under Authorization Summary.

If you have any questions, please email [ProviderRelations@goldchp.org](mailto:ProviderRelations@goldchp.org).

## SECTION 4:

# Importance of Managing and Treating Hypertension

Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) annually reports the Controlling Blood Pressure (CBP) measure, which evaluates the percentage of members 18 to 85 years of age who are diagnosed with hypertension and whose blood pressure (BP) was adequately controlled at < 140/90 mm Hg in the measurement year (MY). The table below shows how GCHP's CBP rates compared to the national Medicaid percentiles between MY 2019 through 2024. Except for MY 2020, when the CBP rate declined due to the COVID-19 pandemic, GCHP's rates have consistently improved, but have remained trending at the 50th percentile, indicating a need to improve blood pressure control in patients diagnosed with hypertension.

Measurement Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
CBP Rate	61.07	54.26	55.96	60.34	62.29	66.67
CBP National Medicaid Rank	50 <sup>th</sup>	25 <sup>th</sup>	50 <sup>th</sup>	50 <sup>th</sup>	50 <sup>th</sup>	50 <sup>th</sup>

According to the 2025 American Heart Association Statistic Update, nearly half of adults in the United States are living with high blood pressure, which is a leading preventable risk factor for heart disease, stroke, vision loss, kidney failure and other health conditions.

GCHP offers the following resources and tips to help providers improve management and treatment of hypertension.

[Blood pressure monitors and cuffs](#) offer significant benefits for patients with hypertension, including continuous home monitoring, improved patient engagement, improved adherence to treatment plans, and overall better health outcomes. Providers can also make more informed treatment decisions and timelier adjustments to medication. These devices are covered with a prescription through Medi-Cal Rx and GCHP's durable medical equipment (DME) benefit. Members can pick up a blood pressure monitor from a participating pharmacy or have it delivered to their home address. To learn more about coverage options for blood pressure monitors and cuffs [click here](#).

[Member-reported blood pressure values documented during telehealth](#) visits is an important component of managing patients with hypertension. Member-reported blood pressure values taken with a digital blood pressure monitor that are documented in the medical record with a clinician's date and signature can also be used for reporting blood pressure values for the CBP measure.

[GCHP's Blood Pressure Tool Kit](#) includes resources and educational material for providers and members, including:

- Guidance on prescribing blood pressure monitors and cuffs covered by Medi-Cal Rx and DME
- Collecting blood pressure values during telehealth visits
- Member education material on how to correctly check and track blood pressure
- Referral forms for GCHP Health Education and Care Management Services

[GCHP's Health Education webpage](#) offers additional health education resources on high blood pressure and [free workshops](#) to learn skills on managing chronic conditions, including hypertension.



## SECTION 5:

# Measurement Year 2024 Quality Superhero Awards

Each year, Healthcare Quality Week gives Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) an opportunity to reflect on our community-wide collaborative efforts to enhance the quality of the health care provided to our members. We have made significant strides in closing our targeted care gaps and ensuring members get the preventive services they need. In measurement year 2024, almost 8,000 more total care gaps were closed. Over 3,000 more women received cervical cancer screenings, more than 1,000 more mammograms were completed, almost 900 more members with high blood pressure had a reading under 140/90, and 643 more members had a follow-up visit after an emergency department visit for substance use or mental health compared to the prior year.

Thanks to your collective dedication and hard work, we have implemented targeted initiatives, including expanding member incentive programs, improved data sharing, and meeting members where they are through mobile mammography and health fairs.

GCHP celebrates the significant collaborative efforts and strengthened provider partnerships that demonstrated impressive results in improving member health outcomes and ensuring a high-quality member experience.

To recognize contributors for their outstanding achievement in quality, the Quality Superhero Awards were announced at this year's Quality Improvement Collaboration meeting on Oct. 20. Awards were based on performance on Managed Care Accountability Set (MCAS) measures for measurement year 2024. Quality Superhero Kudos to the following award recipients:

- Outstanding MCAS Performance
  - » Ventura County Medical System
- Most Improved MCAS Performance
  - » Clinicas del Camino Real
- Best in any one Domain: Behavioral Health
  - » Community Memorial Healthcare
- Quality Superhero
  - » Kiara Robles, Health Center Manager  
Clinicas del Camino Real
- Best Performance by an Independent Provider: Well Care Visits
  - » Buena Medical Clinic

Congratulations to all awardees and thank you for your passion, your knowledge, and your commitment to making a difference in the lives of GCHP members!

## SECTION 6:

# Changes to the 2026 Measurement Year (MY) Managed Care Accountability Set (MCAS) Measures

Managed Care Accountability Set (MCAS) is a set of performance measures selected by the state Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) that Medi-Cal managed care plans must report annually. MCAS includes measures that are required to meet a DHCS-established minimum performance level (MPL) benchmark to ensure Medi-Cal plans meet a baseline quality standard, with sanctions for failing to meet the MPL, and report-only measures to monitor performance without sanctions. DHCS updates MCAS annually to support the DHCS Quality Strategy initiatives to improve health outcomes and reduce health disparities.

For measurement year (MY) 2026, DHCS made substantial changes to MCAS that include reducing the list from 31 measures (MY 2025) to 22 measures (MY 2026). The table below summarizes the MCAS changes.

## MY 2025 and MY 2026 Comparison of Measures Held to MPL and Report Only

Measures held to MPL Increased from 18 (MY 2025) to 20 (MY 2026)	Report only measures Decreased from 13 (MY 2025) to 2 (MY 2026)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 measures removed               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asthma Medication Ratio (AMR)</li> <li>Chlamydia Screening in Women (CHL)</li> </ul> </li> <li>4 measures added that were formerly report-only               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colorectal Cancer Screening (COL-E)</li> <li>Depression Screening and Follow-Up for Adolescents and Adults (DSF-E) -Screening</li> <li>Prenatal Depression Screening and Follow-Up (PND-E)</li> <li>Postpartum Depression Screening and Follow-Up (PDS-E)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 measures moved to MPL (see column 1)</li> <li>1 measure added               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow-Up After Acute and Urgent Care Visits for Asthma (AAF-E)</li> </ul> </li> <li>8 measures removed               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adults' Access to Preventive / Ambulatory Health Services (AAP)</li> <li>Depression Remission or Response for Adolescents and Adults (DRR-E)</li> <li>Low-Risk Cesarean Delivery (LRCD)</li> <li>Pharmacotherapy for Opioid Use Disorder (POD)</li> <li>Plan All-Cause Readmission (PCR)</li> <li>Number of Outpatient ED Visits / 1000 Long Stay Resident Days (HFS)</li> <li>Skilled Nursing Facility Healthcare Associated Infections (SNF HAI)</li> <li>Potentially Preventable 30-Day Post Discharge Readmission (PPR)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

GCHP's Quality Improvement (QI) Department has developed MCAS tip sheets, a quick reference guide, and frequently asked questions (FAQs) to help providers understand the MCAS measure specifications and how data is collected and rates reported. Each MCAS tip sheet includes the measure description, applicable billing codes and best practices guidelines to help improve their rates. These resources can be found on the GCHP website under the Quality Improvement Managed Care Accountability Set webpage.

If you have any questions, please contact the Quality Improvement Department at [QualityImprovement@goldchp.org](mailto:QualityImprovement@goldchp.org).

## SECTION 7:

# Health Education

## Doula Services

Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) offers [doula services](#) for members as a covered benefit for women who are pregnant and/or receiving postpartum care. Doulas help with physical, emotional, and non-medical support before, during, and after birth. Doula services may:

- Lower the risk of problems during pregnancy.
- Lower the risk of a C-section.
- Lower the need for medicine during birth.
- Improve mental well-being.
- Improve health results for parents and babies.

Due to [DHCS standing recommendations](#), no authorization is needed.

The initial recommendation for doula services includes the following:

- One initial visit.
- Up to eight additional visits that can be provided in any combination of prenatal and postpartum visits.
- Support during labor and delivery (including labor and delivery resulting in a stillbirth, abortion, or miscarriage).
- Up to two extended three-hour postpartum visits after the end of a pregnancy.

### Do you need doula support?

Doula services are available for Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) members!

**What is a doula?**  
A doula is a birth worker who provides support before, during and after childbirth. Doulas can provide:

- Birth planning
- Mental health support
- Breast-feeding help
- Education
- Health navigation
- Links to local resources

**What are the benefits of doula services?**  
Doula services may:

- Lower the risk of problems during pregnancy.
- Lower the risk of a C-section.
- Lower the need for medicine during birth.
- Improve mental well-being.
- Improve health results for parents and babies.

**Who can get services?**  
As a GCHP member, you can get doula services if:

- You live in Ventura County AND
- You are pregnant or were pregnant within the past 12 months.

**What is included?**  
**The first 90-minute visit:**

- At this visit, the doula will answer questions and discuss a birth plan.

**Up to eight more visits:**

- These visits can be pre-birth and after-birth.
- The doula can be there at the time of labor / birth to offer support.
- Pregnancy that ends in a stillbirth, abortion, or miscarriage is covered.

**Up to two additional after-birth visits:**

- You can talk to the doula about breast-feeding, mental health, sleeping patterns or any other concerns.
- Visits can last up to three hours.

**Do you want more information?**  
For questions, please call GCHP Member Services at 1-888-301-1228, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (except holidays). If you use TTY, call 711.  
For information about language assistance and GCHP's nondiscrimination notice, visit <https://www.goldcoasthealthplan.org/for-members/nondiscrimination-notice/>.



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Rev 10/2024

All visits are limited to one per day, per member. Providers are encouraged to identify members during prenatal visits, who may benefit from doula services. Members can self-refer. Physicians can also refer and connect members to doula services as needed.

Refer to the [Doula Directory](#) for a list of contracted doulas. To learn more about the doula benefit, visit [GCHP's Doula Services webpage](#).

## Breast Pumps

GCHP members can qualify for a free breast pump, doula services, and lactation support even at the hospital. Connect, prescribe, and/or refer members to these benefits and services to make a difference in successfully breastfeeding, combination feeding, or using donor human milk. Here are additional community resources:

- [Ventura County WIC](#)
- [La Leche League of Ventura County](#)
- [Breastfeeding Coalition of Ventura County](#)
- [UC San Diego: Human Milk Institute](#)

GCHP's Health Education Department has additional resources to support your patients that includes prenatal and postpartum packets, health education material from GCHP Healthwise library, Dairy Council, and community presentations. Patients can also talk directly to health educators and health navigators. For more information, contact GCHP's Health Education Department at **1-805-437-5961 (TTY: 711)**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (except holidays).

## Tobacco Cessation

Refer patients to Kick It California, a hotline that is available to help individuals quit smoking or vaping. Members can call **1-800-300-8086** (for Spanish **1-800-600-8191**) or go online [kickitca.org](https://kickitca.org). They are available Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For TTY, members can call **711**.

**No Cost Medicines**  
to Help You Quit Tobacco



**Medi-Cal covers over-the-counter\* or prescribed medicines approved by the Food and Drug Administration.**

**Talk to a doctor for a prescription or consult a pharmacist about your medicine options.**

\* Prescription required for Medi-Cal to cover the cost of the medication.

To learn more, call Gold Coast Health Plan Member Services at 1-888-301-1228 (TTY: 711), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (except holidays). For information about language assistance services and GCHP's nondiscrimination notice, visit [www.goldcoasthealthplan.org/for-members/nondiscrimination-notice/](https://www.goldcoasthealthplan.org/for-members/nondiscrimination-notice/).



**Free Help to Quit Smoking or Vaping**



Kick It California has free resources to help you quit smoking, vaping, and using hookah and smokeless tobacco.

- One-on-one coaching (phone or chat)
- Self-help materials
- Texting program
- Mobile apps for smoking and vaping

You may be eligible for a two-week supply of nicotine patches to be mailed to you. Call 1-800-300-8086 today! Help is available Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For additional support or resources, visit [www.kickitca.org](https://www.kickitca.org) and sign up.

**KICK IT**  
California 1-800-300-8086

To learn more about tobacco cessation or vaping, or to request resources, call GCHP's Health Education Department at 1-805-437-5961 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (except holidays). If you use a TTY, call 711.

If you have any questions about Nicotine Replacement Therapy, visit your local pharmacy or call Medi-Cal Rx 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-800-977-2223. If you use a TTY, call 711.

For information about language assistance and GCHP's nondiscrimination notice, visit: <https://www.goldcoasthealthplan.org/for-members/nondiscrimination-notice/>.



## Lung Cancer Screening

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in California and the United States, with more people dying of lung cancer than those that die from colon, breast, and prostate cancer combined. ***But lung cancer screening can help change this!***

Members who smoke now or used to smoke can get screened with an annual low-dose CT that is quick and painless and can catch lung cancer early, when treatment is more likely to be successful. Help members who may be at higher risk by sharing screenings that are available. [Learn more](#) and spread the word: **lung cancer screening saves lives!**



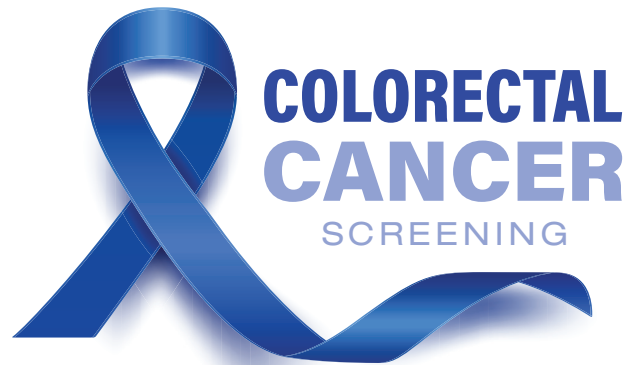
The United States Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends annual screening for lung cancer with low dose CT (LDCT) scan for lung cancer screening in adults 50 to 80 years of age who have a 20 pack-year smoking history and currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years. Screening should be discontinued once a recipient has not smoked for 15 years or develops a health problem that substantially limits life expectancy or the ability or willingness to have curative lung surgery.

View all billing and reimbursement policies on the official [Medi-Cal Provider Manuals and Bulletins](#). Refer to the relevant sections (e.g., Radiology, General Medicine) for specific rules.



## Colorectal Cancer Screening

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, yet it's one of the most preventable. While the overall incidence of colorectal cancer has decreased, cases are increasing in adults under age 50 and the [US Preventive Services Task Force](#) recommends to start screening at age 45. Colorectal cancer screenings can help detect and prevent cancer. Early detection can lead to a survival rate over 90%, and screenings can prevent cancer by removing pre-cancerous polyps.



Providers can assess the appropriate type of colorectal cancer screening (stool-based or direct-visualization) for a patient by performing an individual risk assessment that includes shared decision-making, patient preferences, and assessing individual health factors.



For more information about colorectal cancer screenings and other preventive care to provide to your patients, visit [GCHP's Health Library - Healthwise](#).

For more information on colorectal screenings, connect and refer members to GCHP's Health Education Department at **1-805-437-5961**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (except holidays). If you use a TTY, call 711. You can also email [HealthEducation@goldchp.org](mailto:HealthEducation@goldchp.org).

## Five New Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)

Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) is committed to improving the health and well-being of our members. GCHP has established five new memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with key partner agencies to strengthen communication, transparency, and accountability. The five key partners include:

1. [Ventura County Women, Infant, & Children \(WIC\)](#): Provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and supplement foods to low-income pregnant women, new mothers, and children under 5.
2. [First Five Ventura County](#): Promotes early development and family well-being from birth to age 5.
3. [Ventura County Behavioral Health \(VCBH\)](#): Offers mental health and substance use services for Ventura County residents.
4. [Ventura County Public Health \(VCPH\)](#): Leads in health initiatives to protect and promote the health and well-being of everyone in Ventura County.
5. [Tri Counties Regional Center](#): Provides services and supports to individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities in Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo counties.

These MOUs align with GCHP's ongoing efforts to provide whole-person centered care. **Providers are encouraged to screen patients for nutritional, developmental, behavioral, and other health needs and connect them to the appropriate agency.** By leveraging the MOUs, as a healthcare team, we will be able to reduce gaps in care and improve the health outcomes for our members and their families.

For additional support, connect and refer members to GCHP's Health Education Department at **1-805-437-5961**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (except holidays). If you use a TTY, call **711**.

To learn more about the MOUs, joint agency meetings, and annual reporting, [click here](#).

## SECTION 8:

# Medi-Cal Rx and Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) Pharmacy Services Updates

## Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) website and Pharmacy Newsletter

Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) provides Medi-Cal Rx updates in the Provider Pharmacy Services section of our website. GCHP Pharmacy Services also publishes a quarterly newsletter that includes important Medi-Cal Rx updates and useful articles and tips. Click [here](#) to view the most recent edition of our newsletter.

## Medi-Cal Rx Changes to the Contract Drugs List (CDL) & Covered Products Lists

Please check the [Contracted Drugs List \(CDL\)](#) for the most recent changes to the medications and other covered products lists. These updates typically occur at the beginning of every month. You may also view the Medi-Cal Rx [Drug Lookup Tool](#). This easy-to-use feature has been upgraded and now allows you to look up drugs by brand or generic name. It also lists the NDC and available dosages, any restrictions, and whether prior authorization is required. There is also a link to CoverMyMeds to submit an electronic prior authorization (ePA). For instructions on how to use this feature, [click here](#).

For more information regarding Medi-Cal Rx, please click on the [Medi-Cal Rx Education & Outreach page](#) and look for any new updates under [Medi-Cal Rx's Bulletins & News](#) to be sure that you are up to date on the changes.

The state Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has a website for [Medi-Cal Rx](#) that contains the most accurate, up-to-date information. Please bookmark this website today and sign up for the [Medi-Cal Rx Subscription Services \(MCRxSS\)](#). The website includes an overview and background information, frequently asked questions (FAQs), [Bulletins & News](#), [Contract Drugs List \(CDL\)](#), [Medi-Cal Rx Provider Manual](#) and other helpful information.

For assistance regarding a pharmacy claim or prior authorization, please contact the Medi-Cal Rx Customer Service Center at **1-800-977-2273**. Agents are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year.

For pharmacy billing, claims will process under: **BIN 022659, PCN 6334225, Group MEDICALRX.**

For assistance regarding submitting a prior authorization or appeals for a pharmacy claim to Medi-Cal Rx, please fax to **1-800-869-4325**.

To locate a Medi-Cal Rx contracted pharmacy, please [click here](#).

## Medi-Cal Rx Physician Administered Drugs (PADs) Policy Change

The [Medi-Cal Rx Pharmacy Reimbursable Physician Administered Drugs](#) has been archived effective Oct. 17, 2025.

- Drugs eligible for coverage via Medi-Cal Rx, including specific PADs, will be found in the [Medi-Cal Rx Approved NDC List](#) and the [Medi-Cal Rx Contracts Drugs List \(CDL\)](#).
- Drugs identified by Medi-Cal Rx as medical benefit PADs will not be included in the Medi-Cal Rx Approved NDC List or the CDL.
- Medical benefit PADs will deny at pharmacies by Medi-Cal Rx with Reject Code 816 – Pharmacy Drug Benefit Exclusion with the supplemental message to *“Submit claim for medical benefit. This is excluded as a pharmacy benefit unless a prior authorization exception is obtained.”*

- Effective Oct. 30, 2025, any denied PAD claims initially submitted on or after Oct. 17, 2025, for which there was a prior claims within the 450-day look back period should be resubmitted to Medi-Cal Rx. If the claim continues to be denied, submit a new prior authorization request.
- For PADs with reject code 816 from Medi-Cal Rx without any prior claims within the 450-day look back period, please submit to Gold Coast Health Plan. For details on GCHP's process for medical benefit drugs or PADs, please see below, **GCHP Medical Benefit Drugs or Physician Administered Drugs**.

## Medi-Cal Rx Benefit Changes Effective Jan. 1, 2026

- Over the counter COVID-19 antigen tests will require a prior authorization except when written by CCS paneled provider for members < 21 years of age
  - » PA requests need to include
    - ✓ ICD 10 code
    - ✓ Signs & symptoms
    - ✓ Date of most recent COVID-19 test taken
    - ✓ Documentation of medical necessity, such as recent exposure, active signs and symptoms, previous diagnosis, or suspected ongoing infection
- Drugs used for **weight loss and weight loss-related-indications (including GLP-1)** will be **excluded** benefit from Medi-Cal
  - » DHCS issued letters directly to members at the end of October
  - » GLP-1 drugs indicated for type 2 diabetes or other non-weight loss-related indications will continue to be covered
- Continuing care for certain drugs and products that are currently paying as continuation of care exceptions will no longer be covered without an approved PA demonstrating medical necessity.
  - » Affected products:
    - ✓ Chlorpromazine 25 mg/ml and 50 mg/2 ml ampules and vials
    - ✓ Fluphenazine 2.5 mg/ml vial
    - ✓ Haloperidol deconate 50 mg/ml and 100 mg/ml ampules
    - ✓ Haloperidol lactate 5 mg/ml ampules, vials, and syringes
    - ✓ Timolol 0.25% and 0.5% gel-solution
    - ✓ Timolol maleate 0.25% and 0.5% eye solution
    - ✓ Bimatoprost 0.03% eye drops
    - ✓ Adhansia XR (methylphenidate) 25 mg, 35 mg, 45 mg, 55 mg, 70 mg, and 85 mg capsules
- Coverage policies for select OTC products for members 21 years of age and older under Medi-Cal Rx will be updated as follows:
  - » Multivitamin combination products will no longer be covered.
  - » Certain single-ingredient vitamins and dry eye products will require a prior authorization demonstrating medical necessity.
  - » First- and second-generation antihistamines coverage are restricted to generic formulations.

- OTC prenatal vitamins will be limited to use during pregnancy or lactation conditions for members between 10 and 60 years of age.
- For further information, please refer to the State Budget Policy Updates on [Medi-Cal Rx Education & Outreach](#).

## GCHP Medical Benefit Drugs or Physician Administered Drugs

This section serves as a reminder that PADs include all infused, injectable drugs provided or administered to a member that is billed by a provider on a medical claim by a Procedure Code (i.e. J-Code). These providers include, but are not limited to, physician offices, clinics, outpatient infusion centers, and hospitals.

GCHP maintains risk for PADs and with few exceptions these medications are not billable under the California Medi-Cal pharmacy benefit program (Medi-Cal Rx). Certain PAD drugs require prior authorization to ensure medical necessity prior to receiving the drug therapy. Any request for a PAD medication (administered at a provider's office or infusion/hospital facility) via Procedure Code (i.e. J-Code) requiring a prior authorization must be submitted as a [Prior Authorization Treatment Request Form](#) to GCHP to be considered for coverage under the medical benefit. For the most part PADs are covered under the medical benefit and billed by the provider on a medical claim to GCHP. The provider will need to purchase the drugs from their wholesaler, distributor, or manufacturer (or another internal process at their site of practice) and then administer to the member and later bill GCHP for reimbursement.

GCHP with direction from DHCS/State Medi-Cal and the Pharmacy & Therapeutics (P&T) Committee updates the PAD list quarterly. The PAD list and its clinical guidelines are posted on GCHP website, [Medical Drug Benefit for Providers](#).



**Gold Coast  
Health Plan**<sup>SM</sup>  
A Public Entity

## **Provider Operations Bulletin**

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For additional information, contact Customer Service at 1-888-301-1228.  
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