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Welcome to the May 2021 edition of Updates from Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP), where we highlight our health care system's work in advancing health equity and social determinants of health.

Health Equity Initiative in Ventura County

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) awarded funds to一小 County to implement a multi-year initiative to address persistent health inequities and social determinants of health. The Health Equity Initiative in Ventura County (HEIVC) program was established in 2019 with the goal of reducing health disparities between communities and improving health outcomes for vulnerable and high-risk populations.

The HEIVC focuses on three areas:

1. Identify and manage member risk and need through whole-person care approaches
2. Transform the delivery and management of health care services
3. Improve quality measures.

The HEIVC is led by Phin Xaypangna, the county's diversity, equity and inclusion officer, and Ted Bagley, GCHP's chief diversity officer, working with teams from their respective organizations to research the extent to which different social determinants of health have an impact on health outcomes for vulnerable and high-risk populations. Once their research has been completed, they will work on developing strategies to reduce health disparities and improve outcomes for these populations.

Community Stakeholder Survey

The HEIVC is currently conducting a community stakeholder survey to help identify health disparities and social determinants of health. The survey is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or via email CommunityRelations@goldchp.org. Hard copies are available at the Health Equity Initiative in Ventura County office at 67 W. Los Angeles Street, Suite 110, Ventura.

The HEIVC is working with the County of Ventura to identify and address systemic racism and other barriers that contribute to health disparities.

Members of the HEIVC have been working with teams from their respective organizations to research the extent to which social determinants of health have an impact on health outcomes for vulnerable and high-risk populations. Once their research has been completed, they will work on developing strategies to reduce health disparities and improve outcomes for these populations.

Behavioral Health Treatment for Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects an estimated 1 in 50 young children in the United States. A new mandatory state policy requires managed care organizations serving Medi-Cal members to cover oxytocin therapy for autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Oxytocin is a hormone that plays a role in social bonding and communication. The policy was enacted on January 1, 2021, to improve access to evidence-based behavioral health treatments for individuals with ASD.

GCHP is committed to ensuring that all members have access to the care they need, and the new policy aligns with our mission to improve health outcomes for vulnerable and high-risk populations.

COVID-19 Rent Relief is Available

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has awarded funds to a coalition of organizations to provide rental assistance to eligible low-income tenants who are most at risk of eviction due to financial hardship resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The rental assistance program is called Rent Relief for Tenants (RRT). The program provides financial assistance for unpaid rent and utilities for eligible tenants who meet the following criteria:

- Eligible tenants must be earning 50% or less of the county median income
- Eligible tenants must have income disrupted by COVID-19
- Eligible tenants must have at least one household member 62 years old or older
- Eligible tenants must be at least 50% behind on rent or utilities

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For more information, visit www.goldcoasthealthplan.org or call 1-800-735-2929.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

About Gold Coast Health Plan

Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) is a California Medi-Cal managed care plan that serves more than 220,000 members in Ventura County. GCHP is dedicated to improving the health of its members, which include 1 in 5 county residents, 1 in 8 seniors, and 1 in 2 adults with disabilities.

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