



Gold Coast Health Plan
A Public Entity

Building Community
Advocating for Members & Engaging the Community

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

September 2021

To read the Spanish version of the newsletter, [click here](#).

Para leer este boletín informativo en español, haga [clic aquí](#).

Dear Partners,

On Jan. 1, 2022, the Medi-Cal program will undergo transformative changes through expanding access, eliminating barriers, adding benefits, transitioning pharmacy services, and implementing new service models.

A primary focus of the state's budget for the 2021-22 fiscal year was confronting and overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic while ensuring adequate health care for every Californian. Consequently, California has taken the historic step to guarantee that all people over the age of 50, who would qualify for Medi-Cal regardless of their immigration status, will soon have access to high-quality health services.

In addition, the state legislature and Gov. Gavin Newsom have eliminated the Medi-Cal Asset Test. Since 1989, Medi-Cal has limited seniors and people with disabilities to assets of no more than \$2,000 for individuals and \$3,000 for couples. Assets included cash, money in a variety of bank accounts, cars, and other items. Furthermore, seniors also could not have household incomes that exceed 138% of the federal poverty line. The removal of the Asset Test moves California towards an equitable approach to delivering Medi-Cal to our most vulnerable seniors.

Pregnant and postpartum members will gain additional benefits, including coverage of doulas during pregnancy, childbirth, and post-partum. Medi-Cal eligibility will be extended for a year for mothers following the birth of their baby to ensure their health. Members also will have access to dyadic services, a service model that improves access to preventive care for children, immunization completion rates, coordination of care, child social-emotional health and safety, developmentally appropriate parenting, and maternal mental health.

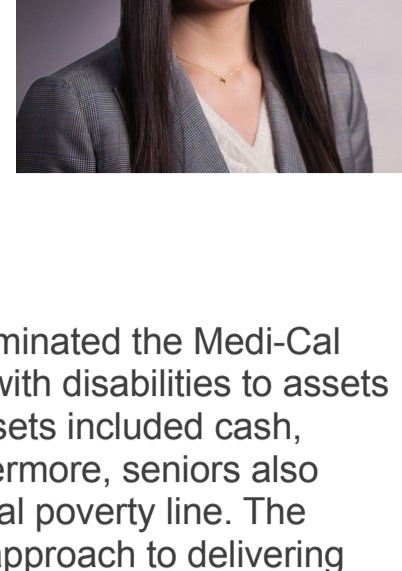
For our members living with diabetes, Continuous Glucose Monitors (CGM) will become a covered benefit. The monitors measure glucose levels every few minutes, providing users with information about changing blood sugar levels – information that helps members and their care team better manage their diabetes.

After being postponed last year, the state is moving forward with transitioning pharmacy services from health plans to the state. The program is known as Medi-Cal Rx. You can read more about it below.

Finally, the Enhanced Care Management (ECM) benefit and Community Supports (formerly known as In Lieu of Services) will be available for qualifying members. ECM is designed to provide a whole-person approach to care that addresses the clinical and non-clinical needs of high-cost and/or high-need Medi-Cal beneficiaries. The ECM benefit will help address many of the complex challenges facing our most vulnerable members, such as homelessness, insufficient access to behavioral health care, children with complex medical conditions, the growing number of justice-involved populations who have significant clinical needs, and the growing aging population. Qualifying members will also have access to Community Supports, which consist of housing navigation services, and recuperative and respite care.

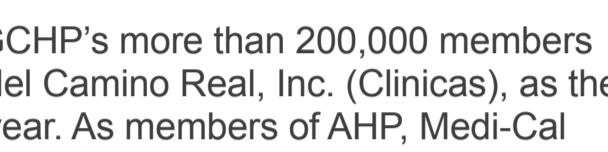
It's an exciting time for the Medi-Cal program! If you want more information about these changes and would like to schedule a presentation to your team, please email CommunityRelations@goldchp.org.

Marlen Torres
Executive Director of Strategy and External Affairs



Gold Coast Health Plan and AmericasHealth Plan partner on three-year Medi-Cal pilot program

Program would give 10,000 Medi-Cal beneficiaries in Ventura County the option of enrolling in AmericasHealth Plan in the first year



Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) and AmericasHealth Plan (AHP) announced their collaboration on a pilot program to serve Ventura County's Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

The three-year program would give up to 10,000 of GCHP's more than 200,000 members the option of choosing AHP, a subsidiary of Clinicas del Camino Real, Inc. (CINCA), as the administrator of their health care benefits in the first year. As members of AHP, Medi-Cal beneficiaries will have access to Clinicas' network of medical, dental, optical, preventive, specialty, ancillary, and institutional providers and will benefit from having their care coordinated by one entity. Members will maintain their access to GCHP's providers for pharmacy, transportation, and mental health services, and to its 24-hour advice nurse line.

"It's important for our members to have choices when it comes to their health care and we are excited that they will continue to have an opportunity to choose who manages their care with an additional partner," said Margaret Tatar, GCHP's chief executive officer. "We are looking forward to our partnership with AmericasHealth Plan to serve Ventura County's Medi-Cal community."

The pilot program has been approved by the state regulatory agencies that oversee Clinicas and GCHP: The Department of Managed Health Care and the Department of Health Care Services.

"We have been working on this partnership with GCHP for a very long time and now it is finally coming," said Christina Velasco, Clinicas' chief financial officer. "We will continue to offer the same high level of care that all patients deserve through this pilot program."

GCHP's governing board, the Ventura County Medi-Cal Managed Care Commission, approved the proposal on August 26, 2019.

"On behalf of the Ventura County Medi-Cal Managed Care Commission, I am delighted to see this pilot program with AmericasHealth Plan come to fruition," said Dee Pupa, chair of the commission and deputy director of managed care at the Ventura County Health Care Agency. "We are all invested in the success of this collaborative effort to continue meeting the needs of Medi-Cal beneficiaries in our community."

GCHP is mailing information about the program to its members. Members who are interested in participating in the pilot must opt in by providing their written consent on the form that is included in the mailing. Members have the right to opt out of the pilot and move back to their GCHP provider at any time by contacting GCHP's Member Services Department.

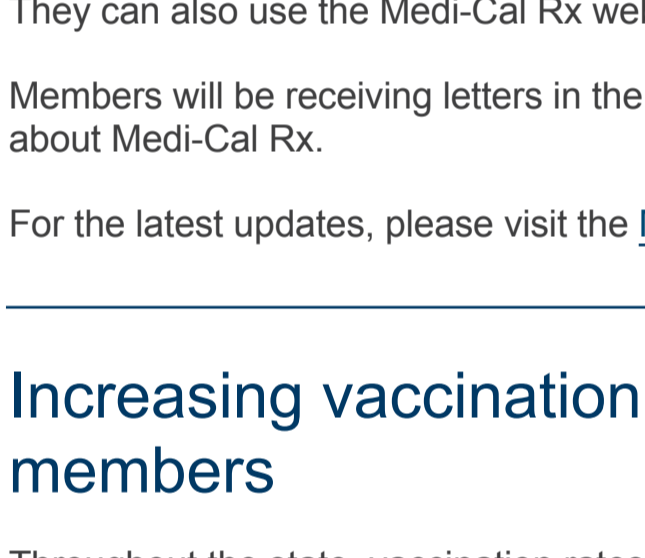
As the pilot program nears its end in 2024, GCHP's commission will review AHP's performance against predetermined quality measures and will decide whether to extend the program and increase the membership.

"Our proposal for this plan-to-plan arrangement was for GCHP to allow AHP and Clinicas to manage and coordinate the care of our Medi-Cal patients," Velasco said. "We have built a very robust network of primary care, specialty, ancillary, hospital, and institutional providers to be able to handle all of the health care needs of our patients and we are very proud of this."

Both AHP and GCHP have plan-to-plan partnerships with other health plans. Since 2016, AHP has worked with Central Health Medicare Plan, Anthem Blue Cross, Blue Shield, SCAN, and Imperial Health to provide care to people who are covered under Medicare Advantage and commercial plans in Ventura County and the San Fernando Valley. GCHP currently has a plan-to-plan agreement with Kaiser Permanente to manage the care of more than 5,500 members.

"As the cost of care continues to increase, partnering with other health plans to coordinate care for members has been one way to create efficiencies," Tatar said. "As the health care landscape evolves, forging partnerships will be the path forward for delivering high-quality care for our members."

Coming soon: Change in pharmacy services



After two delays, the state Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) will be changing how the Medi-Cal pharmacy benefit is managed. The new program is called Medi-Cal Rx. Starting Jan. 1, 2022, pharmacy services and support will be provided by Magellan Medicaid Administration, Inc.

This change applies to Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) members who currently receive their prescriptions through GCHP. For most people, nothing will change. But for some members, their doctor will need to fill out a form to get approval when they renew their prescriptions. Their doctor may need to talk to them about changing their medications.

For members who have both Medicare and Medi-Cal, the switch will not change their current Medicare Part D pharmacy coverage. Medi-Cal Rx may cover things Medicare does not. Members should talk to their doctor or pharmacy if they have questions.

Most pharmacies in the state will be part of the new system, but some will not be. If a member needs to find a new pharmacy, they can talk to their doctor about their options. They can also use the Medi-Cal Rx website to find one.

Members will be receiving letters in the mail from GCHP and DHCS with more information about Medi-Cal Rx.

For the latest updates, please visit the [Medi-Cal Rx website](#).

Increasing vaccination rates among Medi-Cal members

Throughout the state, vaccination rates among Medi-Cal beneficiaries lag behind the general population. As of August 22, 53.3% of Ventura County Medi-Cal beneficiaries 12 years of age and older had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, compared to 75.8% of the county's population at large – a difference of 22.5%.

It's vital that we reach high vaccination rates throughout our communities in order for us to emerge from this pandemic. Getting there will require all of us to do our part. In response to the disparities, the state Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is offering incentive payments to managed care plans to help close the vaccination gap. We developed a multifaceted plan that includes incentives for members who get vaccinated, incentives for providers who become vaccinators and vaccinate their patients, and partnerships with community-based organizations and the county Public Health Department to reach the unvaccinated pockets of our community.

Our plan was recently approved by DHCS. We will provide more information in the coming weeks as we begin to engage our partners on this effort.

GCHP's chief medical officer talks vaccines

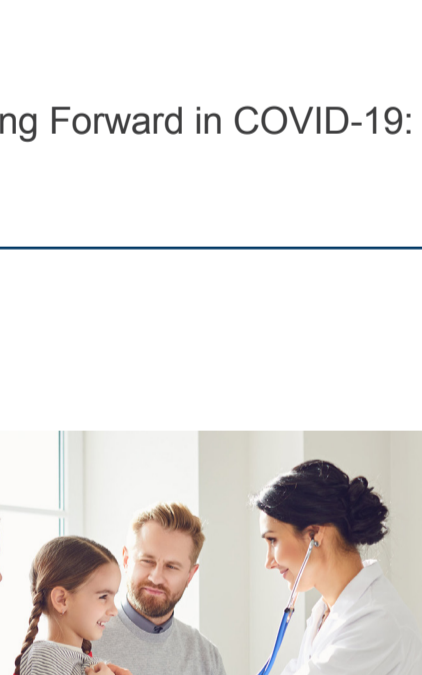
Dr. Nancy Wharfield, our chief medical officer, recently participated in a Facebook Live event hosted by our provider partner, Amigo Baby, Inc., to provide information about the COVID-19 vaccines and address some of the misinformation around the vaccines.

The events took place on three consecutive days in different languages:

1. Tuesday, Sept. 14 in [English](#)
2. Tuesday, Sept. 14 in [English/Spanish](#)
3. Wednesday, Sept. 15 in [English/Spanish/Mixteco](#)

We are looking forward to participating in more events like this to help us inform the public about the safety and efficacy of the vaccines.

On Sept. 30, Amigo Baby will be hosting a conference on "Moving Forward in COVID-19: Working Together." [Click here](#) to register.

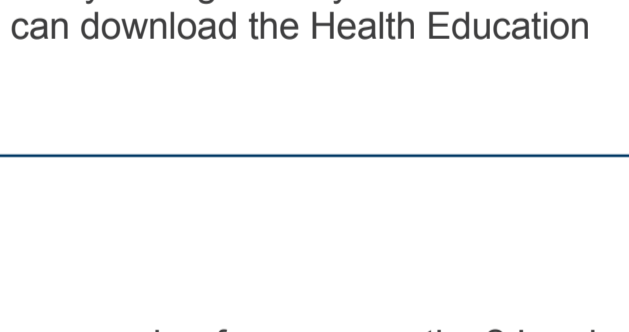


Don't delay care

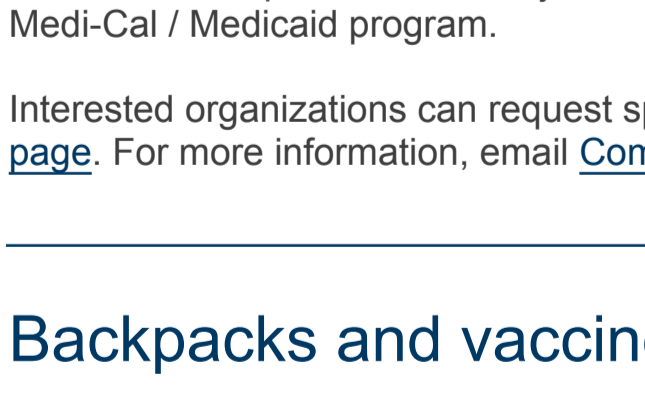
After a year of delaying health care services because of the pandemic, Gold Coast Health Plan members are encouraged to schedule any procedures or exams they may have postponed. Patients can call their primary care doctor to schedule an appointment.

Members who need help can contact our Health Navigators who can assist in scheduling preventive, routine, and procedural appointments. In addition, our Health Education Team works with local clinics, providers, and hospitals to provide quality health education to our members.

For additional information or to request health education assistance, contact GCHP's Health Education Department at 1-805-437-5718, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or email HealthEducation@goldchp.org. You can download the Health Education Referral Form [here](#).



New speakers bureau



Looking for a speaker for your meeting? Inquire about our new Speakers Bureau. In June, we launched a Speakers Bureau to coordinate speaking engagements for our subject matter experts with the goal of creating awareness about Gold Coast Health Plan and our mission in the community.

Our team of speakers will meet with our providers, community partners, and other organizations throughout the county – both virtually and in person – to provide information about our services, along with current and upcoming Medi-Cal initiatives, including California Advancing & Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), Medi-Cal Rx, and health equity and population health. Depending on the audience, our speakers also may discuss state and federal policies that would impact the Medi-Cal / Medicaid program.

Interested organizations can request speakers through our new Speakers Bureau [web page](#). For more information, email CommunityRelations@goldchp.org.

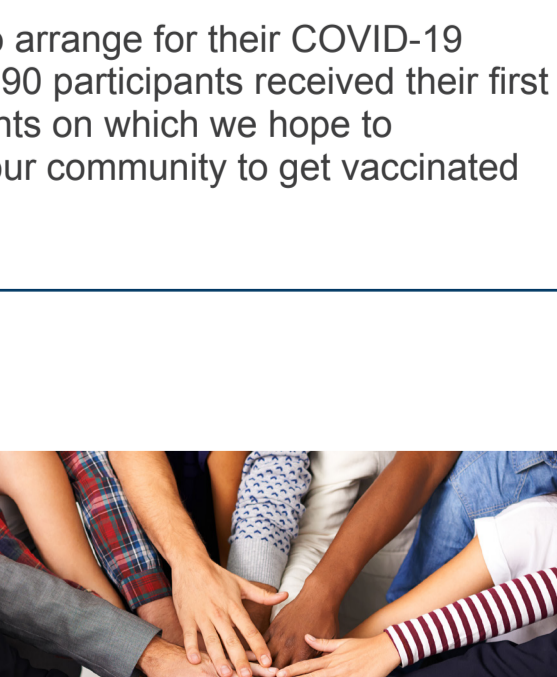
Backpacks and vaccines

The start of the 2021-2022 school year looked a little different this year, but Ventura County families were able to find support through back-to-school events.

Last month, Gold Coast Health Plan sponsored the Oxnard Police Activities League's annual school supply and resource distribution event. More than 200 families got a great start to the school year with the necessary school supplies. We were happy to support our partner by providing tote bags, pencils, pencil pouches, coloring books, and crayons for the kids.

Westminster Free Clinic, in partnership with GCHP and other community partners, also hosted its annual back-to-school events in the cities of Oxnard and Thousand Oaks last month. In addition to the distribution of backpacks and other school supplies, the events provided local families with opportunities to receive dental services, healthy food, gently used clothing, and COVID-19 vaccines.

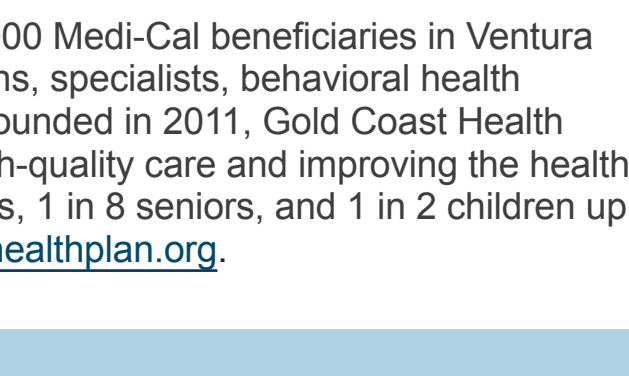
We worked with the county Public Health Department to arrange for their COVID-19 vaccine mobile clinic to be present at the events. About 90 participants received their first or second dose of the vaccine. This is one of many events on which we hope to collaborate with our community partners to encourage our community to get vaccinated against COVID-19.



Supporting our community

Since our fiscal year began on July 1, we have provided \$11,000 in sponsorships to nine organizations to support their community events and programs:

- Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association, Inc
- American Cancer Society
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ventura County
- Food Share of Ventura County
- Interface Children and Family Services
- Oxnard Police Activities League
- Secure Beginnings
- Ventura County Medical Resource Foundation
- Westminster Free Clinic



Organizations interested in partnering with GCHP should contact our Community Relations team at CommunityRelations@goldchp.org.

About Gold Coast Health Plan

Gold Coast Health Plan proudly serves nearly 240,000 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.