

2014-15 Budget News – MCH Access

The Governor's Proposal

- Overall, according to California Budget Project, the Governor's proposal prioritizes paying down debt and rainy-day fund. Modest steps are taken toward reinvesting in future.
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- Budget generally maintains prior cuts made to provider payments and counties health care safety net; partially rolls back the retroactive portion of the provider payment cut.
- MRMIB is proposed to be eliminated and Access for Infants and Mothers (AIM), MRMIP for pre-existing conditions, and the County Health Initiative Matching Fund, which provides comprehensive health benefits through county-sponsored insurance programs – transferred to DCHS July 1.
- Pediatric Dental and Vision Services outreach - \$17.5 million to increase dental outreach activities for children ages zero to three years, and an undisclosed improvement of utilization and quality of children's vision benefits.
- Pregnancy coverage – Medi-Cal beneficiaries with incomes under 100 percent of FPL will receive full scope benefits.
- Five percent increase in CalWORKs grant proposed in 2013-14 is reflected in this budget; would take effect March 1, 2014. Cash grants for most families will remain below the 50% of the federal poverty level.
- Six-county Parent/Child Engagement Demonstration Pilot – to provide additional targeted assistance to CalWORKs families who face multiple challenges to finding employment. It would help about 2000 families access child care and training.
- The budget does not restore child care slots lost in recent years – since 2007-8, the state has cut child care and preschool by 40%, for a loss of about 110,000 child care and preschool slots.
- Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) grants help low-income seniors and people with disabilities afford food and basic necessities. The Governor's proposed budget does not restore the annual state cost of living adjustment for SSI/SSP grant eliminated in 2009.

The Democratic Proposal

- Make Transitional Kindergarten universal for all 4 year-olds
- Strengthen early care programs serving 0-3 and wrap-around care for children over 4
- Similar modest CalWORKs grant proposal increase is proposed, but also expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit and increase amount CalWORKs recipients can work and still get grants.
- Create CalFresh “add on” to provide additional food for poorest children
- Phase in Medi-Cal rate increases for providers
- Restore public health programs – early mental health, asthma public health, Black Infant Health
- Expand child care slots and CalWORKS job training

Information For New Medi-Cal Applicants

Due to the large number of Medi-Cal applications received through the Covered California website, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is giving temporary Medi-Cal eligibility to many individuals and families. This gives you Medi-Cal coverage starting on January 1, 2014, while county human services offices work to finish your application and review your state residency, citizenship, immigration status, and income.

Since you have already received your Medi-Cal Benefits Identification Card (BIC), your coverage began on January 1, 2014. While you have this temporary Medi-Cal eligibility, you can get health care services from an enrolled Medi-Cal provider. Those who accept Medi-Cal fee-for-service (FFS) will be able to help you. Make sure you ask if they accept FFS before you make your appointment. If they don't, you should contact another provider.

In the event you have a medical emergency before you find a doctor, contact 9-1-1 or go to the emergency room at your nearest hospital. Medi-Cal does cover emergency services for enrolled beneficiaries and if you show your BIC to staff at the emergency room, Medi-Cal will pay for the services you get.

Here are some ways you can get the care you need while your application for Medi-Cal is finalized:

Public Hospitals (Not DHCS)

Some counties have a public hospital system that lets you get care at a hospital. You can find out which counties and which hospitals are in this program at this site: <http://safetynetinstitute.org/californias-public-hospitals-and-clinics/>

Community Health Centers/Clinics (Not DHCS)

Another way you can get care is to go to a clinic called a Federally Qualified Health Center. Here is a link to find one of these health centers in your area: http://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/Search_HCC.aspx

Find a doctor on a managed care health plan website

When your Medi-Cal application is finalized, you will be able to join a managed care health plan. Until then, you can find a doctor on the websites of those Medi-Cal managed care health plans. Click the name of your county to find the plans that serve your area. When you find a doctor, call and make sure that they accept Medi-Cal FFS. If they do not, you should contact another doctor on the list found here:

<http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/Pages/MMCDHealthPlanDir.aspx>

Health Care Options (Not DHCS)

This DHCS program has information to help you make choices about Medi-Cal benefits and how you can get them. Visit the website for help finding a doctor or dentist, and for more information about Medi-Cal managed care health and dental plans.

<http://www.healthcareoptions.dhcs.ca.gov/HCOCS/HCOCSP/Home/>

County Human Services Offices

Your county human services agency may be able to help you find a doctor or a list of doctors in your area. You can find out how to reach the county offices by clicking this link: <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/Pages/CountyOffices.aspx>

Dental Providers

To find a dental provider, go to the Denti-Cal website at www.denti-cal.ca.gov and click the "Find a Dentist" link, or call 1-800-322-6384.

Pharmacy Benefits

If you need a prescription filled you can contact your local pharmacies to see if they accept Medi-Cal. For frequently asked questions on Medi-Cal pharmacy benefits please visit this link: <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/PharmacyBenefitsFrequentlyAskedQuestions.aspx>

Emergency Rooms

As stated above, if you have an emergency and you cannot find a doctor right away, you can go to the emergency room at any hospital. If you show your BIC to staff at the emergency room, Medi-Cal will pay for the services you get.

Yellow Pages (Not DHCS)

The Yellow Pages contain lists of local health care providers. Only providers who are enrolled as Medi-Cal health care providers will be paid by Medi-Cal for treating you. Ask the provider if they accept Medi-Cal FFS before you make your appointment.

Thank you for allowing DHCS to serve you.