



Maternal and Child Health Access

MCHA Zoom Monthly Meeting is scheduled for this Thursday, 2-18-2021

Where?

10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

This is a virtual meeting
Do Not come to our location!

After you register (at RSVP below) for this event, look for the Zoom link in your registration confirmation email

questions?
213 749 4261
info@mchaccess.org

Speaker/Topic

February is Dental Health Month!
However, our speaker is not available until next month - so we will hear from

Hermes Padilla
Community Engagement Specialist
Strategic Actions for a Just Economy

The new housing law in California and how you can assist clients

What is going on with any changes in federal immigration policy?
COVID-19 and other coverage updates

CLICK HERE TO
RSVP

Notes from our meeting Jan. 21, 2021 (see materials on [MCHA website](#)):

Guest Speaker:

Lucy Quacinella, Multiforum Advocacy Solutions - California's Health Budget
- Overview of key items for advocates

Ms. Quacinella laid out a number of key points about the budget as well as addressed some issues with the state's CalAIM proposal (no line)

- Instead of a deficit, there's an unexpected surplus - middle and higher income people continued to work (and spend \$\$) and stock market increases yielded capital gains taxes
- Legislature has an accelerated deadline for pandemic response - voting \$5 billion
- One-time \$600 directly to Earned Income Tax filers proposed
- Small grants to non-profits

- Extend eviction moratorium for tenants who pay partial (we will hear about this 2/18)
- Funding for tenants to pay back rent (we will hear about this 2/18) (no line)
- No Health 4 All - Adult and Senior undocumented Medi-Cal coverage (but there are legislative proposals, just not a budget vehicle)
- Vaccine distribution and public awareness campaign
- Continuous glucose monitoring systems added as a Medi-Cal benefit (\$4.2 million state funds, plus fed match)
- Office of Health Care Affordability to be created in the new Department of Health Care Affordability and Infrastructure
- Telehealth flexibilities to be made permanent and expanded in Medi-Cal, including implemented remote patient monitoring

CalAIM - California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal, is a state initiative that pre-dates the pandemic but which was tabled and only recently revived. It "builds upon the successful outcomes of various pilots (including but not limited to the Whole Person Care Pilots (WPC), Health Homes Program (HHP), and the Coordinated Care Initiative)" MCHA's two major concerns have to do with:

- **Citizen/LPR women** in 138%-213% Pregnancy-Related Medi-Cal to go to mandatory managed care, lose fee-for-service providers, including many major perinatal specialty centers. Leaves only the undocumented in fee-for-service: what impacts, e.g., on access and quality? On access to midwives and Alternative Birth Centers? The Department of Health Care Services acknowledges no cost savings to this move, but simply wants to "standardize service delivery".
- **Kids in Accelerated Enrollment (AE)** to go to managed care during temporary coverage; packets of information will come during the AE period and a choice of provider expected during a short 30-day window. How will this affect plan and primary care provider selection?

Medi-Cal Rx: Starting April 1, plan members would begin receiving their prescriptions through a new state Medi-Cal Rx program (postponed from last year), instead of through their plans.

Monitors and cuffs for self-monitoring blood pressure during pregnancy:

These items are most easily accessed at a local pharmacy with an e-prescription from a Medi-Cal doctor. But starting April 1, they would instead be treated as durable medical equipment (DME) and as such could be accessed only through the plan's contracted DME provider.

See MCHA's letter to the state DHCS [here](#) and let Lucy Quacinella know at lucyqmas@gmail.com if you have experienced access issues - good or bad experiences - with obtaining blood pressure cuffs for home use under Medi-Cal

Ms. Quacinella also spoke to Mental Health, CalWORKs, Housing and Homelessness and Food Security issues in the budget - see her presentation notes posted at <http://www.mchaccess.org/meetings.htm>

MCHA reviewed changes in health coverage for the pandemic, mainly in Medi-Cal. We have produced two materials on COVID-19 related care, one more text and explanation and one a piece in color in Spanish and English versions:

[Three important Medi-Cal programs to help with COVID-19 testing and treatment](#)

[\(including in-patient hospitalization\), regardless of immigration status](#)

[Medi-Cal and Medi-Cal Access Program \(MCAP\) Protections During the Public Health Crisis](#)

Your feedback and questions welcomed!

Three Reminders - Medi-Cal During COVID:

No Negative Action - The ONLY ways that Medi-Cal should be cut off is if a beneficiary requests, or dies, or moves out of state! Please note that thousands are still inadvertently or through systems issues being cut off, but the state moves to put them back on Medi-Cal. Please contact DPSS or have your client contact DPSS's Customer Service Line if this happens.

MAYBE STAYING ON MEDI-CAL IS BETTER THAN MOVING TO OTHER INSURANCE POSTPARTUM - Discuss it with the client! If there are problems using that Medi-Cal postpartum, let MCHA know! Restricted Medi-Cal covers all medically necessary services, including dental and mental health.

"COVID Uninsured - neither income nor immigration status matter, covers COVID testing, treatment, hospitalization. No public charge for any COVID-related service. See the state's page [here](#), but also MCHA's information above.

"Waive", or Get Rid Of, Medi-Cal Premiums During the Pandemic Few Medi-Cal enrollees know that during the public health emergency, premiums paid monthly can be waived for MCAP, Optional Targeted Low-Income Children's Program and the Medi-Cal Access Infant Program (infants born to a person covered by MCAP for the pregnancy), County Children's Health Initiatives and the 250% Working Disabled Program. MCHA and other advocates have made suggestions about the posting, language and distribution of notices regarding the waived premium issue. The clearest link right now is this one: Premium Waiver Due to COVID-19 - November 4, 2020 on the [COVID-19 page](#). But no one has to HAVE COVID in order to get the waiver

Here is a link to the notice MCAP enrollees should be getting:

[Monthly Contribution Waiver for Medi-Cal Access Program](#)

New Since Meeting

Black History Month - some little-known websites. MCHA honors and supports all the organizations doing work to support Black lives and maternal health. We support moms in home visitation, and improve access to health care through our policy work in maternal and child health. Black Lives Matter!

- Buying products from Black-owned beauty brands is a powerful way to support the Black community directly. To make finding their beauty products easier, including clean options, the Environmental Working Group has added [a new filter](#) to its popular Skin Deep® database that allows consumers to search through almost 3,300 products in the database from 140 Black-owned brands.

[A new museum in Nashville chronicles 400 years of Black music](#)

18 ways to honor [Black History Month](#) around L.A.

and see Black Women for Wellness's #SomeofUsAreBrave Campaign - honoring Black authors and historical figures at www.bww.org and sign up for these [blog posts](#):

Federal movement for "Momnibus" - also, watch for California efforts soon! Thanks to the Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance (MMHLA) for this information:

This week, members of Congress introduced the [Black Maternal Mental Health Momnibus](#), a collection of bills to address the disproportionate impact of maternal mortality on Black women and other Women of Color. MMHLA, along with over [190 other organizations](#), endorse the Momnibus. Learn more [HERE](#).

The Momnibus seeks to comprehensively address every dimension of the maternal health crisis in America, with legislation that will:

1. Make critical investments in **social determinants of health** that influence maternal health outcomes, like housing, transportation, and nutrition.
2. Provide funding to **community-based organizations** that are working to improve maternal health outcomes and promote equity.
3. Comprehensively study the unique maternal health risks facing **pregnant and postpartum veterans** and support VA maternity care coordination programs.
4. Grow and diversify the **perinatal workforce** to ensure that every mom in America receives culturally congruent maternity care and support.
5. Improve **data collection processes and quality measures** to better understand the causes of the maternal health crisis in the United States and inform solutions to address it.
6. Support moms with **maternal mental health** conditions and substance use disorders.
7. Improve maternal health care and support for **incarcerated moms**.
8. Invest in **digital tools** like telehealth to improve maternal health outcomes in underserved areas.
9. Promote **innovative payment models** to incentivize high-quality maternity care and non-clinical perinatal support.
10. Invest in federal programs to address the unique risks for and effects of **COVID-19 during and after pregnancy** and to advance respectful maternity care in future public health emergencies.
11. Invest in community-based initiatives to reduce levels of and exposure to **climate change-related risks for moms and babies**.
12. Promote **maternal vaccinations** to protect the health and safety of moms and babies.

[Experts: Prevention Critical as Dental Visits Plummet During Pandemic](#)

February 16, 2021

SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- Pediatric dentists are pleading with families to redouble their efforts to get the kids to brush and floss regularly, especially during the pandemic.

Most dental practices are back open but the [American Dental Association](#) estimates

dental-care spending in the U.S. dropped 38% last year and could drop another 20% this year.

Maternal Infant Health Assessment Survey

The Maternal Infant Health Assessment (the state's postpartum survey of recent births) is seeking feedback on questions for the MIHA 2021 survey. Spanish speakers welcome! Click [here](#):

MIHA plans to do phone follow-up interviews with select web respondents who agree; otherwise, the survey is anonymous. MIHA won't compensate those who take the survey, but they will send those we talk to on the phone \$20 Target gift cards for their time on the call. [The survey is live now](#) and it will be open until March 5. MIHA includes questions about respectful maternity care and COVID vaccination that they would really like input on, especially from Black and Latina pregnant people. Questions? Email Miranda.brillante@ucsf.edu. [See this CDPH page for info on MIHA.](#)

Medi-Cal Managed Care Network Certification Reports

DHCS posted the 2020 Annual Network Certification (ANC) results of Medi-Cal Managed Care Health Plans' (MCPs) Alternative Access Standards (AAS) and Corrective Action Plan (CAP) reports on Monday, February 8, 2021. Plans request AAS when "they have exhausted all reasonable options to meet the applicable (time and distance) standard." DHCS-approved AAS requests are valid for one contract year and must be resubmitted to DHCS for approval annually (no later than 105 days before the start of the next Annual Network Certification), or any time a network change results in the MCP no longer meeting time and distance standards.

Due to the change in enforcing the standard to Time **and** Distance, DHCS received a significant increase in the required AAS requests as compared to previous years. In the 2020 Annual Network Certification period, DHCS received approximately 15,000 individual AAS requests.

Both reports are available on the DHCS website using the links below:

[AAS Report](#) - [CAP Report](#): If you have any questions regarding the posting of approved AAS, please email MCQMDNAU@dhcs.ca.gov.

Resources

Free Tax Prep

Angelenos will again be able to rely on the Citywide FamilySource Centers (FSCs) to assist them with their tax filings through the Free Tax Prep Los Angeles (FTPLA) Program. The FTPLA program has been an effective program helping working families and qualifying individuals claim their cash refunds.

The FTPLA assists income-qualified residents in claiming their tax refunds. Also, for the first time ever, immigrant filers with an [ITIN](#). (Individual Tax Identification Number) are eligible for California's Earned Income Tax Credit and the Young Child Tax Credit; receiving up to \$10,000 in tax credits when combined

- City residents can visit: <https://hcidla2.lacity.org/community-resources/free-tax-prep> to find the nearest locations and hours of operation.
- Tax filers can also use secure drop-off services which require appointments. Assistance is available in English, Spanish and Korean at various locations.
- Self-filers! Tax filers can file their own simple returns for free online with services in English and Spanish at <https://www.myfreetaxes.org/>

For additional resources visit <https://hcidla2.lacity.org/covid-19>

SMILE California - SMILE is California's campaign for good oral health and to help remind Medi-Cal members that dental care is included in their Medi-Cal benefits. SMILE CA has amazing materials and has recently released a pregnancy video and flyers. Their website www.smilecalifornia.org has a Spanish toggle in upper right hand corner, and a "FIND A DENTIST" link.

Sign up for the SMILE California texting program!

- [English](#), or OR text SMILECA to 31996 to subscribe
- [Spanish](#), OR text SONRIECA to 31996 to subscribe

English materials:

- [Smile, California Pregnancy Video](#)
- [Smile, California Pregnancy Brochure](#)
- [Smile, California Pregnancy Flyer](#)

[Returning to the dentist during COVID-19 video](#)

Spanish materials:

- [Smile, California Pregnancy Video](#)
- [Smile, California Pregnancy Brochure](#)
- [Smile, California Pregnancy Flyer](#)

New ANSIRH website - Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health (ANSIRH), the amazing organization that brought us the Turnaway Study, showing that women experience harm from being denied a wanted abortion, has just re-launched its website to be more user-friendly and research-friendly. Please check it out: <https://www.ansirh.org/>
 In particular, you may find the "Research and Tools" tab helpful - this is intended for researchers, or folks who know what topic or issue they want to dig into. The topic pages might be a useful resource for those who are newer to reproductive health topics.

Nurses Call on Biden Administration to Tackle Environmental Racism During COVID19 Pandemic

The Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments released its latest report, Nurses on the Frontlines: Unmasking the Influence of Air Pollution, Health Disparities, and Oil and Gas Development on COVID-19, examining how air pollution may put some communities at greater risk of death from COVID-19. The report also outlines the implications of the oil and gas industry on communities in three western states (Colorado, Montana, and New Mexico) that have experienced high COVID-19 morbidity (infection/illness) and mortality rates. [Download the full report](#) and read about it in [The Hill](#).

SAVE THE DATE

Thursday, February 18th at 1:30 pm PST The Women's Foundation sponsors authors and activists [Anna Malaika Tubbs](#) and [Alicia Garza](#) in conversation as they gather together to honor Black women and radical acts of mothering.

Thursday, Feb. 25 - 1 PM EST; 10 AM Pacific Time - [Social Determinants of Oral Health in Practice and Education](#)

Maternal Mental Health Now:

We are thrilled to announce a groundbreaking conference for Black-identifying birth workers, providers and clinicians in the Los Angeles County area.

The "2021 Perinatal Mental Health Conference for Black Birth Workers, Providers, and Clinicians" will take place virtually over four weeks, 4/30, 5/7, 5/14, and 5/21, from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm each day.

This training aims to build the capacity and competency of Black clinicians and providers in Los Angeles County in order for Black families to find specialized perinatal providers who look like them and with whom they can relate. This conference will provide foundational knowledge on perinatal mental health care through a culturally-informed lens to help providers build concrete skills and tools to more adequately address the mental health needs of Black women and birthing people specifically within the Los Angeles County area.

Tickets are free to Black birth workers in the Los Angeles area. In compliance with the grant funders for this project, we are currently only able to offer conference seats to those working in Los Angeles County or serving communities Los Angeles County. We hope to extend the training and content to others in various ways over the upcoming year.

For questions please contact Erin Sricharoon at erin@maternalmentalhealthnow.org

Maternal and Child Health Access

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