

Maternal and Child Health Access



Where?

ONLINE!



**Thursday, February 19, 2026
10:00 am to 12:00 pm**

(After you register, look for
the Zoom link in your
registration confirmation
email)

Speaker/Topic:

**Lucy Quacinella
Multiforum Advocacy Solutions**

**CA Governor's 2026 Budget
Challenges & Opportunities**

Plus, MCHA Program Updates!



Minutes from our January 16, 2026 meeting:
www.mchaccess.org/meetings.htm

David Pisani presented the March of Dimes 2024 California Report Card, highlighting that California's preterm birth rate of 9.1% ranked 7th out of 52 regions, with significant disparities by race and ethnicity, particularly higher rates among Black mothers. The presentation covered trends over the past decade, showing a decline from B+ to B- grades, and discussed factors including the impact of COVID-19 and access to care in rural areas.

Data on preterm birth rates and infant mortality in California, highlighting improvements in coastal counties and a decrease in infant mortality over the past decade, was also presented, and a discussion regarding disparities in infant mortality rates among different ethnic groups, with Pacific Islander mothers experiencing the highest rates, was held. Birth defects remained the leading cause of infant mortality, followed by sudden unexpected infant death and preterm birth. The presentation also covered inadequate prenatal care, with Pacific Islander mothers having twice the state rate of inadequate care. California's maternal mortality rate improved to 10.1%, but severe maternal morbidity rates were higher than the national average, likely resulting from California's progress in maternal and infant health policies, highlighting areas of strength such as Medicaid expansion, doula benefits, and paid family leave. However, California is not meeting one of the six conditions for maternal mental health screenings during well-child visits. David also addressed concerns about the impact of H.R.1 on Medicaid programs, urging states to maintain or expand eligibility and benefits. He emphasized the

importance of increasing access to care, particularly in rural areas, and providing sufficient reimbursement to providers.

David also presented data on preterm birth rates and infant mortality across U.S. states, highlighting that half received D or F grades, with the South performing worst. He noted that states like New Hampshire and Vermont received better grades, while California, Idaho, and Washington received B grades. He expressed concern about the overall decline in preterm birth rates from 2014 to 2024, with rates remaining stable at 10.4% from 2022 to 2024. He also discussed disparities in preterm birth rates by race and ethnicity, with Black mothers experiencing significantly higher rates, and emphasized the need for improved maternal and infant health outcomes, particularly for Black mothers and their babies.

Last, David Pisani presented data on infant and maternal mortality rates, noting that while California's rates were better than national averages, there were concerning trends such as increased inadequate prenatal care. He highlighted the success of policies such as extended Medicaid benefits and doula reimbursement, while expressing concern about delays in accessing prenatal care. David also discussed the recent folic acid legislation in California, which he co-sponsored with ACOG, to reduce neural tube defects among Hispanic mothers. The presentation concluded with a call for continued monitoring of these trends and support for similar policies at the national level.

[For a copy of David's presentation, please visit our website.](#)

Medi-Cal Immigration Benefits Restructuring

Liz presented updates on changes to Medi-Cal and Kaiser Community Health Care Program. She explained that people without satisfactory immigration status over 19 will have their full-scope benefits frozen, and new restrictions on asset tests for those over 65 were introduced. Liz also discussed upcoming changes to Medicare eligibility for certain immigrants and highlighted the importance of retaining benefits due to reduced federal flexibilities in renewals.

Materials This Month

Proposed Sales Tax Increase in LA County

LA County voters will vote on a proposed 0.5% sales tax increase in the June 2, 2026 primary election. This tax would fund healthcare services and follows a Board of Supervisors vote in February 2026. If approved, the "Essential Services Restoration Act" would raise the county sales tax to 10.25% until October 1, 2031, to help make up for federal funding cuts.

The tax is expected to raise about \$1 billion each year for healthcare services, such as hospitals and clinics, to address federal funding cuts.

<https://calmatters.org/health/2026/01/la-sales-tax-medical-ballot/>

Justice in Aging Webinar March 10, 2026

Protect Medicaid: State Revenue Strategies for Aging & Disability Advocates

This webinar will include a discussion about what the H.R. 1 funding cuts mean for the programs that older adults and people with disabilities rely on to meet their basic needs and provide strategies for how advocates can engage with their states to protect them. Presenters will provide a high-level overview of state budget processes and revenue options and will share practical steps that aging and disability advocates and providers can take.

[Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

2026 National Health Law Program Health Advocates Virtual Conference

This online gathering brings together leading health advocates and attorneys from across the country to address health care issues impacting low-income and underserved communities.

This year's virtual conference will help participants stay ahead of the curve, providing policy insights, advocacy resources, and tools to support communities navigating changes in care. The discussions will focus on practical strategies and policy solutions that protect care for all.

[Home - 2026 National Health Law Program Health Advocates Conference](#)

Southern CA Legal Alliance for Reproductive Justice

A pro bono legal network founded in 2023 and managed by UCLA Law's Center on Reproductive Health, Law, and Policy (CRHLP). SoCal LARJ provides confidential, free legal support to health care providers, patients, and advocacy organizations advancing reproductive rights and justice across a wide range of legal matters. They can assist with civil and criminal matters affecting access to abortion and other reproductive health care, risk management, compliance with applicable laws and regulations for the provision of health care, business and contract law, copyright law, and employment law.

[Southern California Legal Alliance for Reproductive Justice | UCLA Law](#)

Health Care Countable Monthly Income Comparison Chart

Effective January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026

The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) income guidelines for your clients with Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) Medi-Cal have changed effective January 1, 2026. MAGI Medi-Cal programs include applicants and beneficiaries who are parent/caretaker relatives, children, pregnant women and other non-Medicare recipients up to age 65. For individuals who are eligible for Medi-Cal's Non-MAGI programs (these include the Aged, Blind and Disabled FPL, 250% Working Disabled and Medically Needy SOC programs), the effective date of the revised FPL figures remains April 1, 2026.

Click [HERE](#) to download your 2026 Income Comparison Chart

MCHAs Next Monthly Meeting
April 16, 2026
10 am- 12 noon
NO MEETING IN MARCH

Maternal and Child Health Access

350 S. Bixel St., Suite 150
Los Angeles, CA 90017
213 749 4261 phone
213 745 1040 fax

www.mchaccess.org
info@mchaccess.org



Maternal and Child Health Access | 350 S. Bixel St. Ste. 150 | los angeles, CA 90017 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)