



Maternal and Child Health Access

1111 W. Sixth Street, Suite 400
Los Angeles, CA 90017-1800
Tel 213. 749. 4261
Fax 213. 745. 1040
info@mchaccess.org

Happy New Year!

MCH Access Monthly Meeting
Thurs., Jan. 20, 10 AM – 12 Noon (Third Thursday monthly)
1111 W. 6th St., Fourth Floor. Free parking in back –enter on 5th St.

Focus: Budget Update – How will the budget affect low-income people?
Speakers: Lucy Quacinella on health, TBA on welfare issues
Updates

In this mailing:

- **MCHA-California Partnership Analysis of Governor's Proposed Health Budget – An Overview of Major Issues**
- **"We've Got You Covered" has been updated!** Newest is now dated March, 2004-just released.
- **Order form for "We've Got You Covered"**
- **Children's Insurance Coverage Increases..**
- **New BIC cards – see write-up**

Distributed November 18 (no meeting in Dec; call for copies):

- **MCHA-PAC/LAC list of MCH-related legislation** and outcomes for 2004 session
- **Letter** from DHS about expansion of newborn screening to begin August, 2005.
- **New BIC Medi-Cal numbers** (enclosed)
- 11-19 "Next Ten – Budget Visioning"
- Videoconference available, "Keeping Youth Safe", at www.preventviolence.org
- Kaiser Daily Health Report, 11-10-04 re: funding to be made available to state for health projects from Wellpoint-Anthem merger.
- CHDP Provider Information 04-13 recommendation of dental referral at age one (see www.dhs.ca.gov/chdp "Letters and Notices")
- Action Alert week of 11-15 Save Section 8
- Info on Teammates for Kids Foundation
- Report on King-Drew Trauma Center, "Closing Trauma: the Wrong Medicine for King/Drew, 11-

15-04 by SEIU Local 660

Guest Speaker: Bart Diener, Asst. General Manager, SEIU Local 660, on Events at Martin Luther King Jr/Charles Drew Medical Center

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 660 represents the nurses and various other staff at MLK. SEIU's expert consultant produced a report challenging the rationale for closing the trauma center at King-Drew, point by point with the arguments made by the LAC/Department of Health Services. The hospital has already closed a variety of services, none of which the Board of Supervisors reviewed nor received a Beilenson hearing: orthopedic inpatient, neurosurgical intensive care and geriatric care unit. SEIU's concern is that closures and subsequent overloading of other county and private hospitals will continue and that the area will face further diminished availability of resources.

New BIC Cards: As a result of recent legislation and antifraud initiatives, all clients will be receiving new BIC cards over the next 6 months. The new BIC card is being changed to replace the current 10-character BIC ID with a 14-character BIC ID, which will include the issue date of the BIC card. The BIC cards replace the old BIC cards, but the old BIC cards should be accepted until such time as

the new card is sent to the client. We have heard scattered reports that the old BIC cards are mistakenly not being accepted by providers when in fact the client has not yet received a new card. Since they are rolling out statewide over 6 months, no one will know at any time who should already have their new card. Clients should attempt to call their Eligibility Worker, or the DPSS Hot Line, (877-597-4777) or the Health Consumer Center (HCC) of Los Angeles: 800-896-3203. If you or clients see posted messages about not accepting the old cards, please let us, the Hot Line or HCC know.

New since last mailing:

MLK Update:

MCH Access has followed primarily the NICU issues. For additional information, see Board Communications at www.ladhs.org; *Health Matters* publication of Community Health Councils at www.chc-inc.org, and the California Endowment's www.calendow.org. LAC/DHS continues to recommend that MLK's NICU be downgraded and its Pediatric Intensive Care Unit be eliminated. MCH Access has serious concerns about the long-term effect of this proposal on the communities surrounding and using MLK. The county's contracted consultants, Navigant, released preliminary recommendations for acute hospital care in early January, available on the www.ladhs.org website. Their recommendations mirror those of DHS for the NICU and PICU, despite noting the existence of a high-risk OB population. It is a huge report, but can be read section by section. Navigant will make recommendations about ambulatory care by Feb.1.

- LAC/DHS's final appeal to JCAHO is being considered this month and findings are expected around the middle of February
- It is expected that the Centers for Medical Services will post a letter of intent to withdraw funding, to which LAC/DHS will respond.
- At the most recent Board of Supervisors meeting, Jan. 11, the Board voted in a motion by Supervisor Knabe "to prepare and submit for Board consideration within 90 days a draft Health Authority Blue Print which would address various issues and serve as a workable plan for the possible implementation of a health authority to run the County's entire hospital system, along with a proposed action plan, timetable and

budget; also review and cite all available previous studies and reference materials and consult with key contributors to past studies and other knowledgeable authorities."

First 5 LA Announces RFP:

First Five LA (Prop. 10 Commission) will be releasing this month a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Healthy Births Initiative Best Babies' Collaboratives Planning Grants. The Planning Grants are intended to provide the necessary time and support to agencies to develop a structured and functional Best Babies Collaborative and an operational plan for implementation. For more information, see their website: www.prop10.org

Nurse-Patient ratios: As you receive this mailing, a hearing will be taking place in Sacramento concerning whether the second phase of nurse-patient ratios requirements, to provide 1:6 ratio of nurses in medical-surgical units, should be delayed until 2008 rather than start this year, as provided in legislation passed in 1999. These ratios took four years to develop, receive public comment on, and implement. For more information, visit: www.unionvoice.org/campaign/save_our_ratios_now Or www.calnurse.org

Look it UP!

- See page 6 of the enclosed budget memo for reference to National Bureau of Economic Research's analysis of fee-for-service Medi-Cal managed care "reduced the quality of prenatal care and increased low birth weight, prematurity, and neonatal death. Our results suggest that the competitive FFS [fee-for-service] system provided better care. . . [¶] Ultimately, it appears that these poor, uneducated women did a better job of navigating the FFS system than the government was able to do for them." Aizer, Currie, Moretti, *Competition In Imperfect Markets: Does It Help California's Medicaid Mothers?*, National Bureau of Economic Research (April 2004) (at pp. i and 4). www.nber.org/papers/w10429
- American Journal of Public Health, January, 2005, Vol. 95, No. 1, "Infant Mortality and Income in 4 World Cities: New York, London, Paris and Tokyo". Results: Only in New York was income and infant mortality rate linked (in other cities – it doesn't matter if you're poor; birth outcomes still as good as higher income, statistically).