

Maternal and Child Health Access



Monthly (Virtual) Meeting

Thursday, February 15, 2024 - 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Where?

This is a virtual meeting



10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

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

Speaker/Topic:

**Sonya Young Aadam, CEO
CA Black Women's Health Project**

**"The Black Women's Health
Movement - Community Defined &
Community Deployed"**

Updates

**February is Black History Month American Heart Month
National Children's Dental Health Month**

Reminders:

Full-Scope Medi-Cal regardless of immigration status for ages 26-49 started on January 1. Under 25 and age 50 and over are already eligible for full scope Medi-Cal! An income requirement still exists; people must have income below 138% of poverty. This month, February, we are seeing the results of people who did not choose plans or were placed in the wrong plan.

The amount of income allowed for Medi-Cal is raised for **Cost of Living Adjustments every January**, but it takes a while to update the eligibility systems. Thus, someone could apply now and be rejected, when in fact, they are "just over" or will be included once the income limits are raised! Liz Ramirez reminds that the county will have to go back and re-evaluate everyone rejected for certain MAGI and other aid codes by around the end of this month. So let your clients know and "flag" them if they are just slightly over-income, then use the new charts out this month (ask us or look on our website – Training Materials!) and see if your clients should qualify for MC.

Kaiser Community Health Plan – Continues if insurance lost, other qualifying reasons - For children and adults truly above the Medi-Cal limits, and not eligible for Covered CA or other insurance, [Kaiser Community Health Plan \(KCHP\)](#) is open for enrollment with a Qualifying Event – the examples provided are: getting married, moving into a Kaiser Permanente Service Area or losing coverage because you lost your job. But losing Medi-Cal also qualifies. After you choose your state, California, on the drop-down,#2 “Choose the qualifying life event that best matches your situation” - 18 reasons qualify. See information here: [Do you qualify for a special enrollment period? \(kaiserpermanente.org\)](#) Please let us know if questions or you need help enrolling someone who has a Qualifying Life Event

Report the pregnancy!! Even though everyone under 138% of Federal Poverty can have full-scope Medi-Cal now, we are experiencing many cases of people being cut off Medi-Cal during pregnancy because clients don't renew or don't know to renew and the county doesn't know the person is pregnant and should not be terminated from Medi-Cal! DPSS will put the person back on Medi-Cal, and we are working to smooth this process, but the mix-ups can delay care!!

We expect to see more cases like the following: A woman with Medi-Cal for pregnancy lost the pregnancy in a miscarriage, after her 12 month post-pregnancy period her renewal came up and she was cut off Medi-Cal when she renewed because her income had increased. But she was actually pregnant again at the time. It was just early enough that she did not know and so did not know to report! We successfully had her reinstated. But it is natural that after a miscarriage people may continue trying to get pregnant, come up to their renewal period and yet not know they are pregnant. Remember that miscarriages and abortions confer 12 months coverage. If someone is pregnant at renewal they don't have to renew- but they have to inform of the pregnancy.

See [Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Information Letter No. I 23-24](#).

No More Asset Test for Medi-Cal Starting January 1, 2024, assets (resources) are no longer counted to determine eligibility! Assets are things you own, which can be counted for Medi-Cal eligibility. These items include bank accounts, cash, second vehicles and homes, jewelry, yachts, and other financial resources. If someone could not qualify before due to assets – have them reapply now!

Notes from Monthly Meeting January 18, 2024 ([website](#))

Guest Speaker: Linda Nguy, Associate Director of Policy Advocacy, Western Center on Law and Poverty California's State Budget Proposal – What's Ahead?

The Western Center on Law and Poverty is California's oldest legal services support center and plays a leadership role among advocacy organizations in Sacramento and the state. Linda spoke to us of Governor Newsom's budget proposal – the deficit that the Governor's office estimates is \$37.9 billion, vs. more than twice that much (\$68 billion) predicted by the independent Legislative Analyst's Office. Advocates have breathed a sigh of relief that newly implemented gains – i.e. Medi-Cal for all, asset test removal – and programs such as doula support and CalAIM's promise – are not cut, nor are caseloads capped. As did happen with past budget shortfalls, benefits such as adult dental care are not reduced or eliminated. However, proposed cuts to CalWORKS raise concern.

In order to sustain recent health care investments, the governor's administration seeks to increase the Managed Care Organization (MCO) tax, which was approved by the federal government in

December 2023. The MCO tax is a provider tax imposed by states on health care services that essentially reduces, or offsets, state General Fund spending on Medi-Cal. The governor's administration is seeking early action by the Legislature to request federal approval to increase the tax by \$1.5 billion for a total of \$20.9 billion from April 1, 2023 through December 31, 2026. Of this amount, \$12.9 billion would support the Medi-Cal program and \$8 billion would support provider rate increases to drive greater Medi-Cal provider participation. Other measures to address the deficit include delaying health care worker minimum wage increases and delay in behavioral health and workforce initiatives.

A new Medi-Cal benefit, a "Wellness Coach" for children and youth, is proposed for January, 2025. MCHA has worked with the Western Center and children's groups to fund and implement continuous eligibility for children to age 5 in 2025, and urges that and Share of Cost reform not be delayed or dropped. The budget does maintain prior food assistance commitments, such as California's program for CalFresh for undocumented adults 55 and over in October, 2025 and summer EBT administrative funding for EBT cards to students for free or reduced price school meals in 2024. Also maintained is a pilot program to increase the minimum CalFresh benefit from \$23 to \$50 for some recipients.

For CalWORKS, the Governor's budget proposes approximately 08% grant increase, required by law, and spends the full \$900 million in the Safety Net Reserve, created for this purpose of drawing down Medi-Cal benefits and services during an economic downturn. The budget proposal pulls back \$55 million in General Fund from the current 23-24 budget, and ongoing \$71 million pledged to Family Stabilization, as well as \$134.1 million this year and next from Expanded Subsidized Employment. These cuts undermine efforts to help families thrive and reduce deeper poverty.

Remember that this is the Governor's budget proposal. The next steps are:

Jan-May: Legislative Budget Hearings

By May 14, 2024: Governor's May Revise

By June 15, 2024: Budget Bill Pass Legislature

July 1, 2024: Beginning of New Fiscal Year

MCHA had asked Linda to speak about the new Care Court system and we may have a fuller discussion in the future. The Western Center opposed CARE Court, which creates a new court system that subjects unhoused people with mental health disabilities to involuntary treatment with no express right, no mandate to provide behavioral health treatment or housing. The Western Center feels the existing law is sufficient if someone is a danger to themselves or others. The Dec. 2023 Quarterly State Update is that nearly 200 petitions have been filed for Sept-Dec., 2023. This includes 28 petitions filed in Los Angeles in December, which implemented the program in Dec 2023.

In addition to the Care Court system, SB 43 expands the definition of "gravely disabled" to make it easier to involuntarily conserve people, especially those who are unhoused, and has much broader implications than CARE Court.

See the recent Los Angeles Times article on one person's experience with CARE Court [here](#): "She hopes CARE Court will save her husband. Two months in, she's waiting for answers."

She opened a business to deliver babies. California policies drove her out of the country

BY KRISTEN HWANG FEBRUARY 12, 2024 CAL Matters

Midwives provide many of the same services as doctors in low-risk pregnancies. A new UCSF study highlights obstacles they face doing business in California, especially when serving patients with Medi-Cal insurance.

“The entire system is not made for us,” Wisner said. “I look at Medi-Cal as the standard of care, and midwives should be part of the standard of care.”

See more [here](#):

Ways to Lower or Stop your Medi-Cal Share of Cost

The California Department of Health Care Services recently released a new consumer-focused informational letter, aimed at those Medi-Cal beneficiaries who have a share of cost. This insert was developed with input from advocacy organizations, and reviews different ways that people may be able to reduce or eliminate their share of cost, such as spousal impoverishment protections, applying for the Working Disabled Program, and other options. The informational letter can be viewed [HERE](#).

Counties are encouraged to start distributing this letter to beneficiaries with share of cost immediately. Several language translations are available with the policy letter announcement of the letter located [here](#):

MCHA comment: It should be rare to have a Share of Cost with pregnancy – reevaluate the case for MCAP!

The 2024 "State of Tobacco Control"

This report evaluates states and the federal government on laws and policies necessary to save lives from tobacco. This year's report finds that the states doing the best are California, District of Columbia and Massachusetts, while the states that need to do much more to reduce the burden of tobacco use are Alabama and Georgia. Key Findings:

- Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease in America, killing 480,000 people each year.
- No state received all “A” grades, which means every state has opportunities to improve their tobacco prevention efforts.
- The Biden White House failed to finalize rules to end the sale of menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars in December.

[How does your state compare?](#)

RESOURCES

National Children's Dental Health Month - Landing Page and Resources

The NCDHM webpages have been updated on SmileCalifornia.org and SonrieCalifornia.org for you to easily view and download new resources and messaging. The landing pages feature [three Children's Dental Health Packages for elementary school-aged children, coloring sheets, a PowerPoint presentation for members, e-mail signature banners, website banners, social media images and captions, and more](#). You can view, download, and share all materials in English and Spanish by clicking the buttons below.

ENGLISH NCDHM WEBPAGE
SPANISH NCDHM WEBPAGE

The Reproductive Health Equity Project for Foster Youth announces “Self-Taught”, a youth podcast, back with Season 2! This podcast is by foster youth, for foster youth and is led by our fantastic Youth Advisory Board (YAB). This season, we'll be discussing a range of sexual health topics in candid conversations that our YAB wishes would have been part of their upbringing. You will love the powerful stories and educational content that we have in store. Topics this season include foster youth rights, birth control, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), prenatal care, abortion, and mental health - you can catch a glimpse of the season [here](#).

We hope these episodes will leave you and the young people in your life feeling empowered and inspired. All six episodes are now available on our [website](#) or your favorite podcast platform. We'd be grateful if you could help us spread the word by sharing them with your networks. We've created a [launch toolkit](#) to make it super easy for you to promote.

Pets can stay!! Tenants in the City of Los Angeles whose pets began residing in their rental units before February 1, 2023 can access a sample letter [here](#) **Fair Housing Facts | Housing Rights Center** to notify their landlord of their pets necessitated by COVID-19. Read more [HERE](#).

Resources for all on the links above:

- Stay Housed LA Workshops for Tenants
- Sign Up [for HRC's Emails](#)
- Housing Rights Center In-Person Clinics
- Housing Rights Center Counseling (flyer below)_____

SAVE THE DATE

Health Care: Advocacy Strategies Webinar February 15

PIF partners [CBPP](#) and [NILC](#) will host a webinar on *Strategies to Make Affordable Health Coverage Accessible to People who are Immigrants* on Thursday, February 15th from 2:30-3:30 PM ET. Participants will hear about effective messaging and advocacy strategies, as well as lessons learned from state campaigns. Featured speakers include PIF partners Lee Che Leong of Northwest Health Law Advocates and Andrea Kovach of the Shriver Center on Poverty Law. [Register](#)

Coalition for Economic Survival Tenants' Rights Clinic
Every Saturday at 10 AM PT

Via Zoom

- Individual, one-on-one counseling
- Registration required no later than 5 PM on Friday
- Serving renters in the entire Southern California area
- Accommodations for Spanish and Russian speakers provided
- **Request a registration link via email at** helpinglarenters@gmail.com

The UCLA Center for Reproductive Science, Health and Education and the Bixby Center is thrilled to announce **L.A. County Supervisor Holly Mitchell in conversation with UC Regent Dr. Elaine Batchlor** for our first Distinguished Speaker Series at UCLA.

Supervisor Mitchell will be discussing Black maternal health and care in Los Angeles. This event will be held on **Thursday, February 29th, 2024 at 3pm** in the California NanoSystems Institute (CNSI). *Reception to follow.* Please [RSVP!](#)

Thursday, February 29th from 10:00a-11:30am - Referrals for Developmental Delays. LA Best Babies Network and Harbor Regional Center.

This webinar is a collaboration between Our wonderful speakers will provide an understanding of regional centers and age-related services, milestones and delays recognition, assessment tools, making referrals into regional centers, collaboration and resource allocation. Please see the [attached flyer](#) for more details and the registration link/QR code. You can also click on [this link](#) to register:

Monday, May 6, 2024, 12:00pm - 2:00pm Virtual Event: Responding Rather than Reacting: A Body-Mind-Emotion Approach for Helping Professionals to Increase Self-Regulation and Co-Regulation with Jesse Bernal, LMFT
Sponsored by Infant Development Association of California. Non-Member: \$55
IDA Agency/Individual Member: \$40 IDA Parent/Student/New Clinician Member: \$30.
Register [here](#):

Job opportunities available!

MCHA is an Equal Opportunity Employer; women and people of color are strongly encouraged to apply.

- [Health Care/Practical Support Navigator – Women’s Health](#)
- [Project Director Reproductive and Maternal Health](#)
- [Health Programs and Benefits Trainer](#)
- [IT Support Technician](#)
- [Volunteering](#)

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