

Maternal and Child Health Access



Monthly Virtual Meeting

Tomorrow, Thursday, May 20 2021 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Where?

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

10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

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



Speaker/Topic:

Lucy Quacinella
Multiform Advocacy Solutions
“State Budget: May Revise Update and More”

Benefits and legislative updates

Meeting Notes – Thursday April 15 - click [HERE!](#)
Please note that we have posted links and information from the Chat Box.

CA Omnibus bill (SB 65) Lynn Kersey reviewed the bill and its components – and that there is a separate budget action for postpartum continuation of care.

1. Codifying and expanding the powers and protections for California’s Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Review Committee, including having the committee investigate maternal mortality and morbidity, racial and socioeconomic disparities, Queer, Trans and Gender Non-Confirming birthing outcomes, the impact of global warming on pregnancy outcomes as well as make recommendations on best practices.
2. Requiring Medi-Cal to provide full-spectrum doula care to all pregnant and postpartum people on Medi-Cal who would like one.

3. Providing a monthly stipend to low-income pregnant and postpartum people starting at 6 months of pregnancy and continuing through the postpartum period, lasting until the child is two years old.
4. Providing further support for pregnant individuals who are very low-income with additional CalWORKS program support, as well as removing some of the punitive rules that currently limit program participation.
5. Building the midwifery workforce by providing funding to primary care medical residency and other training programs that prioritize admitting underrepresented groups and those from underserved communities.
6. Updating data collection and protocols for counties participating in the Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Process.
7. Extending postpartum benefits to 12 months for Medicaid (MediCal) recipients.

A group of Senate Democratic leadership representatives are proposing a bold set of spending priorities, noting that "...unlike in past recoveries, the budget does not need to first restore billions and billions in program cuts before making new investments". These proposals focus more on economic impacts of COVID and infrastructure investments – including broadband expansion. The health proposals include reducing deductibles and co-pays for Covered CA enrollees, expanding access to Medi-Cal immediately for 65+ immigrants and keeping 26 year-olds on benefits so that each year, a new group of young adults stays on, and figuring out how to close the gap of 26-64 year olds. The proposal would also address health inequities, including mental health, exacerbated by the pandemic. See the [plan](#) on our website.

Three resources – Debra Winski reviewed the California and City of LA Rent Relief, ending April 30, online rent relief letters, the need for which continues, as well as the Undocumented Indigenous Fund – which also continues. We have helped enroll dozens for the minimum \$500. MCHA also shared a list of COVID resources in indigenous languages. See on our posted [agenda](#) on our website

Meeting Notes – Thursday April 15
Guest Speaker: M. Lynn Yonekura, MD, Executive Director, LA Best Babies Network, Director of Community Benefits, CA Hospital Medical Center

“The COVID-19 Vaccine During Pregnancy and Lactation?”

Dr. Yonekura, or “Dr. Y” as she is affectionately referred to, gave an excellent presentation on the data so far for this topic. She also provided three articles (posted):

- [COVID-19 Vaccines and Pregnancy: Conversation Guide for Clinicians](#)
- [ACOG Practice Advisory: Vaccinating Pregnant and Breastfeeding Patients Against COVID-19](#)

- [From ACOG: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\), Pregnancy, and Breastfeeding: A Message for Patients](#)

Note that the first is a helpful conversation guide and the second two are updated periodically. The third is provided in Spanish, Simplified Chinese and Arabic as well as it is a patient page.

Dr. Y's slides start right out with the data and the risk-benefits. The data is definitely in. After reviewing over a million women with laboratory-confirmed COVID, over 400,000 of whom were symptomatic, 23,434 were pregnant. In comparison with the other COVID-positive women, pregnant women were significantly more likely than nonpregnant women to:

- Be Admitted to ICU (10.5 vs. 3.9/1,000 cases; aRR=2.9; 95% CI 2.6-3.4)
- Receive invasive ventilation (2.9 vs. 1.1/1,000 cases; aRR=2.9; 95% CI 2.2-3.8)
- Receive ECMO (extracorporeal life support) (0.7 vs. 0.3/1,000 cases; aRR=2.4; 95% CI 1.5-4.0)
- Die (1.5 vs. 1.2/1,000 cases; aRR=1.7; 95% CI 1.2-2.4)

Dr. Y pointed out the disproportionate percentages of people of color, especially Black women.

Overall, pregnant women were at **70% increased risk of death** compared to nonpregnant women. For the fetus, COVID doesn't seem to increase congenital anomalies nor miscarriage, but there is a higher risk of prematurity. COVID can be passed to the fetus intrauterine, during delivery, or to the baby postpartum from an infected mother or person but at least one study in the UK found that neonatal infection is rare, with 5.6 cases per /10,000.

Breastfeeding – If a mother with COVID-19 breastfeeds her newborn, can she transmit COVID? As long as the mother wears a mask and washes her hands and breasts with soap and water before handling her newborn, there is no evidence that SARS-CoV-2 can be transmitted from the infected mother to her neonate via breast milk; rather, **breast milk may be beneficial by providing protective antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 infection.**

Dr. Y reviewed the vaccinations we have and how they work, which is always a good reminder and helps dispel myths, as well as side effects, and the pause with Johnson and Johnson that took place right before our meeting. Two of the manufacturers are testing COVID-19 vaccine specifically in pregnant people – an international study with over 4000 healthy pregnant volunteers in nine countries, including the US. As of early this year, there have also been over 15,000 pregnancies registered in the vaccine tracker. Most pregnant people transferred antibodies to COVID to their infant. Maternal vaccination may also be protective in breastmilk.

The presentation ended with the right to be vaccinated for pregnant people – incredibly, some people have been turned away if pregnant. ACOG and several other organizations have issued statements as to the right of pregnant people to be vaccinated – it's their own decision. Co-morbidities were listed as well as the fact there is no impact of vaccination on fertility.

Three Reminders - Medi-Cal During COVID

1. **No Negative Action through end of the year - The ONLY ways that Medi-Cal should be cut off is if a beneficiary requests, or dies, or moves out of state!**
2. **“COVID Uninsured Medi-Cal – neither income nor immigration status matter, covers COVID testing, treatment, hospitalization. No public charge for any COVID-related service.**
3. **“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 we 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.**

New Since Meeting:

Settlement Requires CA to Provide Access to Care for Medi-Cal Applicants During Lengthy Eligibility Verification Process.

Hundreds of thousands of Californians will have speedier access to health care thanks to a settlement in a seven-year lawsuit requiring California’s Department of Health Care Services to allow eligible Medi-Cal applicants to receive health coverage right away, subject to later verification of their declared income.

The lawsuit, filed in 2014, sought to end the state’s practice of leaving hundreds of thousands of eligible low-income applicants to wait for months without the health care they desperately needed. One of the plaintiffs, Frances Rivera, lost her adult son to a treatable condition while he waited for the state to approve his Medi-Cal application. Shortly after he died—and more than six months after he first applied—Rivera received a letter stating her son qualified for Medi-Cal, and that his coverage would apply retroactively.

When the lawsuit was first filed, there was a backlog of more than 350,000 Medi-Cal applicants who had been waiting significantly longer than was allowed under state and federal mandates. Cancer patients were unable to see oncologists. People with heart conditions were unable to see cardiologists. Without access to arthritis medication, one woman had to go on disability because she could no longer walk. Women with high-risk pregnancies went without the critical care they needed to keep themselves and their babies safe.

“People’s lives are in the balance—our clients knew that firsthand,” said Richard Rothschild, Director of Litigation for Western Center on Law & Poverty.

The [settlement](#), which was finalized on May 10th, ensures applicants who meet eligibility criteria have health coverage as soon as they apply, while verification and other processing are being completed.

“This victory is especially important now, with low-income essential workers and their families bearing the brunt of the pandemic’s health burdens,” said Lynn Kersey, Executive Director of Maternal and Child Health Access, whose organization was a plaintiff in the case.

Plaintiffs were represented by Bay Area Legal Aid, Central California Legal Services, Multiform Advocacy Solutions, Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County, the National Health Law Program, and Western Center on Law & Poverty.

“Some 84% of Medi-Cal applicants are in households with low-wage workers whose jobs don’t provide health insurance for them or their children,” said Lucy Quacinella of Multiform Advocacy Solutions, lead counsel for the plaintiffs. “This settlement will prevent suffering and help address significant racial disparities in health.”

As the pandemic tore through Los Angeles’ low-income neighborhoods, a lack of access to healthcare led to extraordinarily high levels of serious illness and death—much higher than in wealthier areas.

“Medi-Cal is supposed to be the great healthcare equalizer,” said Neighborhood Legal Services’ Jackie Dai. “This settlement moves us a little closer to that promise.”

Thanks Public Counsel - Resources for AAPI Heritage Month:

Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month is an opportunity to celebrate the contributions and influence of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans on the history, culture, and achievements of the United States, as well as to acknowledge the discrimination and injustices AAPI communities have endured. As we approach nearly 40 years since Congress designated May AAPI Heritage Month, we have a lot to reflect on. A number of tragic events over the past year have put a spotlight on both the rise in individualized instances of AAPI hate and racial violence, as well as the systems of exclusion faced by AAPI communities, amplifying the national dialogue around interconnected issues like misogyny, colonialism, and migration. Below are justice organizations in Los Angeles and statewide, and readings and other resources:

- [Asian Americans Advancing Justice](#)
- [API Small Business Program](#)
- [Asian Pacific Planning & Policy Council](#)
- [Asian Resources, Inc.](#)
- [Chinatown Community for Equitable Development](#)
- [Center for the Pacific Asian Family](#)
- [Korean Immigrant Workers Association](#)
- [KtownForAll](#)
- [Little Tokyo Service Center](#)
- [PACE LA](#)
- [Pilipino Worker Center](#)
- [Southeast Asian Community Alliance](#)
- [South Asian Network](#)

- [Thai Community Development Center](#)

Recommended Resources

To Read:

- [Crossing Race and Nationality: The Racial Formation of Asian Americans, 1852-1965](#) by Bob Wing
- [From colonialism to Covid: Viet Thanh Nguyen on the rise of anti-Asian violence](#) by the Guardian
- [What This Wave of Anti-Asian Violence Reveals About America](#) by the New York Times
- [We Need to Put a Name to This Violence](#) by the New York Times
- [Minor Feelings](#) by Cathy Park Hong
- [Chinaman's Chance](#) by Eric Liu
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To Watch / Listen:

- [Why It's Taken Us So Long to Talk About Anti-Asian Racism](#) by Sway
- [Representation, the value of labor, and activism in the AAPI community](#) by KCRW
- [Docu-series: "Asian Americans"](#) by PBS
- [Passing Poston](#)
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Additional resources:

- [Asian Nation](#)
- [Smithsonian APA](#)
- [South Asian Helpline And Referral Agency \(SAHARA\)](#)
- [Stop AAPI Hate](#)

COVID-19 vaccine campaign

Please see focused videos for African American audiences and the rollout of same for Latinos. The campaign features short, focused videos of one minute or less on different questions, presented by doctors and health care workers.

The Spanish/English for the Latino campaign comes out this Thursday, May 20 after the 8 AM webinar.

The current COVID-19 vaccine campaign for [Black and African American communities](#) is live and was supported by the California Health Care Foundation.

Thursday, May 20 Web Event - 11am - 12pm ET / 8-9am PT

Listo? Ready? Let's Talk about the COVID-19 Vaccines and the Latinx Community! Join [KFF](#) and [UnidosUS](#) for a [webinar on Thurs. May 20th at 8am PT / 11am ET](#) to hear what's working and what barriers must be overcome to ensure equitable access of the COVID vaccines for Latinx in the U.S.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra is providing opening remarks.

And (drumroll, please) we'll also debut 75+ videos that will expand THE CONVERSATION / LA CONVERSACIÓN to reach Latinos in the U.S., featuring Latinx doctors, nurses and promotoras/community health workers answering common questions about the COVID-19 vaccines in English and Spanish. [RSVP](#)

Health Care Coverage In Order to Enter the Country Revoked

President Biden has revoked a Trump-era order that banned immigrants from obtaining visas if they couldn't prove they could obtain health insurance or pay for health care. The 2019 order denied visas to those seeking entry into the U.S. who were deemed a "financial burden" on the health care system. See the news article [here](#) and background and a statement by the American Immigration Lawyers Association [here](#).

Attorney General Rob Bonta released a consumer alert on Friday, April 30 regarding Healthcare Sharing Ministries (HSMs).

HSMs claim to provide more affordable health insurance coverage to Californians who would otherwise be eligible to purchase insurance through Covered California. However, HSMs often fail to cover pre-existing conditions and are not required to cover essential health benefits like as required for Covered California options. These options can be particularly harmful for aging adults 50-64 and individuals with disabilities who are more likely to have pre-existing conditions.

[Read more](#) in this alert from AG Bonta and share with your networks

Resources

Please help spread the word.

The Federal Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Program Starts on Wednesday, May 12, 2021: Affordable broadband internet service for low-income households

The Emergency Broadband Benefit is a temporary [FCC program](#) to help families and households struggling to afford broadband internet service during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program opens on May 12th and provides eligible households:

§ Up to \$50/month discount for broadband service;

§ Up to \$75/month discount for households on qualifying Tribal lands; and

§ A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet purchased through a participating provider if the household contributes more than \$10 but less than \$50 toward the purchase price.

The Emergency Broadband Benefit is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household.

Who is Eligible?

A household is eligible if a member of the household:

- § Participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, or [Lifeline](#);
- § Receives benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, or did so in the 2019-2020 school year;
- § Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- § Experienced a substantial loss of income due to job loss or furlough since February 29, 2020;
- § Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating broadband provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program; or
- § If the household has an income that is at or below 135% of the **Federal Poverty Guidelines**.

Check out www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit for a **Consumer FAQ** and other program resources.

Three Ways to Apply

1. **Contact your [preferred participating broadband provider](#)** directly to learn about their application process.
2. **Go to GetEmergencyBroadband.org** to apply online and to find participating providers near you.
3. **Call 833-511-0311 for a mail-in application**, and return it along with proof of eligibility to: Emergency Broadband Support Center
P.O. Box 7081
London, KY 40742

For more help regarding the Emergency Broadband Benefit program, **Call 833-511-0311 or find more information about the Emergency Broadband Benefit at www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit.**

Vaccine Ready – Older Adults and People with Disabilities

The California Foundation for Independent Living Centers ([CFILC](#)) and [DOnetwork](#) want to ensure that older adults and people with disabilities are healthy and safe from COVID-19. We are working with our membership and stakeholders to offer important information, resources, and access to the COVID-19 vaccine and tests.

We can help and provide support in many ways.

- Scheduling your vaccine appointment;
- Locating an accessible vaccine site nearest you;
- Securing accessible transportation needs;
- Arranging an in-home vaccine appointment.

If you have friends or family that need assistance in obtaining a vaccine, please encourage them to contact us or their [local Independent Living Center](#).

Please email the DOnetwork at DisabilityOrganizing@cfilc.org or call us at 1-877-427-0387.

Save the Date

May 26, 1:30 PM: Drug Policy Alliance hosts webinar on how the drug war obstructs public benefits

DPA will be hosting [an online discussion on Public Benefits, the Drug War, and Denial of Benefits on May 26](#). This webinar is one in a [series of six](#), part of our [Uprooting the Drug War initiative](#), which exposes the consequences of the drug war in nearly every sector of civil life – education, employment, housing, child welfare, immigration, and public benefits.

Read our report, [The Drug War Obstructs Public Benefits](#), which details the way that drug war policies have restricted access to public benefits.

May 27, 2021:

PAC/LAC - We are 7 days away from our Annual Conference. Get your tickets! This event will award participants 6.5 CME, 8 RN-CEU, 5 CHES & 5 LCSW/LMFT.

Register Now: <https://paclac2021.eventbrite.com>

For more information, please visit our website at <https://paclac.org/paclacconference/>

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