



**Mental Health Policy Briefing:**  
**Raising the Priority of California Children with  
Special Health Care Needs**

May 8, 2019



Today's Moderator:

**Holly Henry** Ph.D.

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Research Program Manager

Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health

# Housekeeping

Enter questions in the GoToWebinar question box.  
A recording will be posted to [lpfch.org/cshcn](https://lpfch.org/cshcn) and shared via email.

# Today's Briefing

- Overview of Medi-Cal mental health system for children
- Current policy landscape
- Opportunities for advocacy

# Meet Our Speakers



## **Kimberly Lewis**

Managing Attorney

Los Angeles, National Health Law Program



## **Abigail Coursole**

Senior Attorney

Los Angeles, National Health Law Program





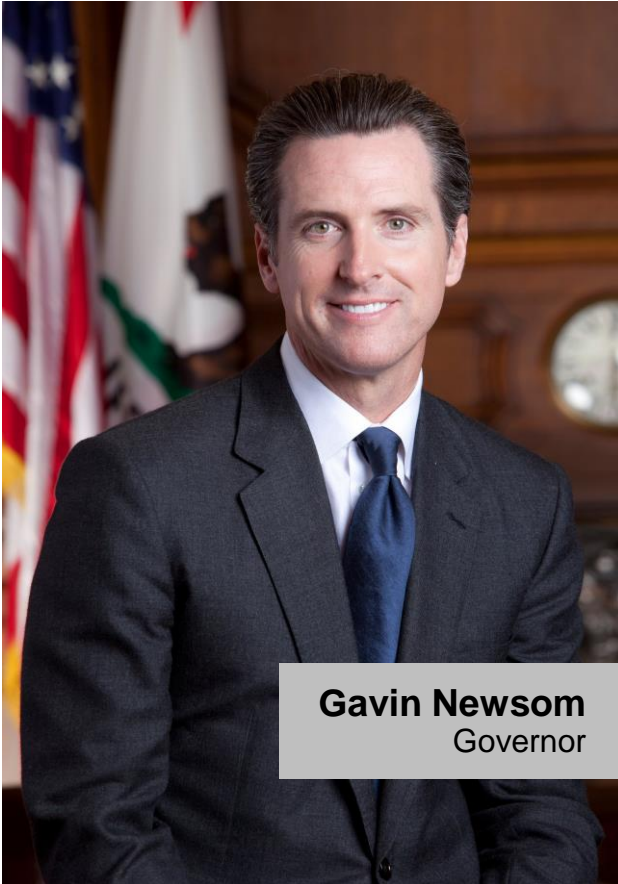
# NATIONAL HEALTH LAW PROGRAM

National public interest law firm working to advance access to quality health care and protect the legal rights of low-income and underserved people.

*Washington D.C., Los Angeles & North Carolina*

[healthlaw.org](http://healthlaw.org)

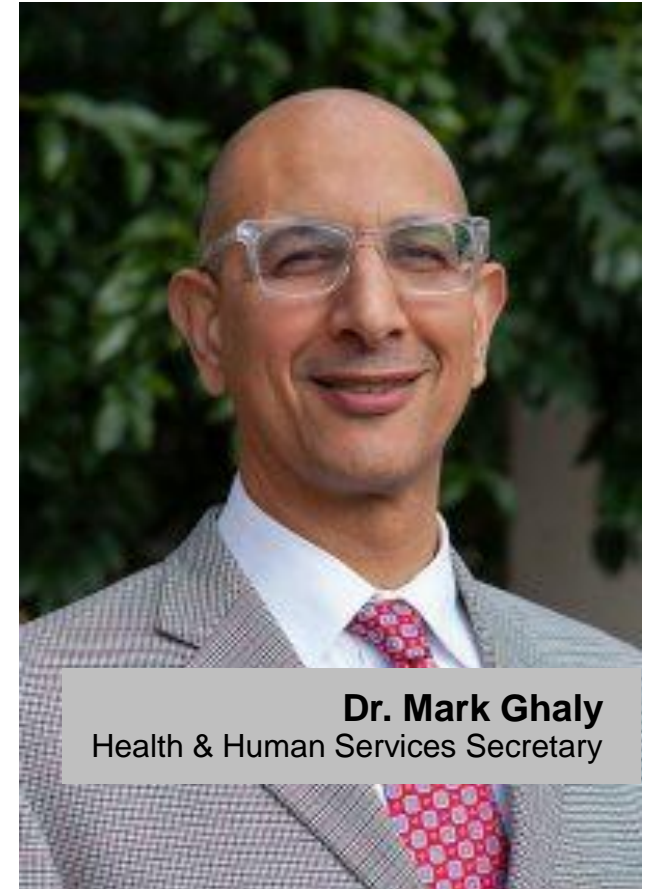
# New Leaders Prioritizing Children's Health



**Gavin Newsom**  
Governor



**Dr. Nadine Burke Harris**  
Surgeon General



**Dr. Mark Ghaly**  
Health & Human Services Secretary

# Medi-Cal Mental Health Services

For Children with Special Health Care Needs



# Medi-Cal Mental Health Delivery Systems

## Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans (MCP)

### Target Population

Children and adults eligible for outpatient non-specialty mental health services (adults: mild to moderate conditions)

### Non-Specialty Mental Health Services

*Carved-in Effective 1/1/14*

#### Mental Health Services

- Individual and group mental health evaluation and treatment (psychotherapy)
- Psychological testing when clinically indicated to evaluate a mental health condition
- Outpatient services for monitoring drug therapy
- Outpatient laboratory, medications, supplies, and supplements
- Psychiatric consultation

#### Alcohol Abuse Services

- Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment

## County Mental Health Plan (MHP)

### Target Population

Children and adults with disabling conditions that require mental health treatment (children; adults w/ severe cond.)

### Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health Services

#### Outpatient Services

- Mental Health Services (assessments, plan development, therapy, rehabilitation and collateral, medication support)
- Day Treatment services and rehabilitation
- Crisis intervention and stabilization
- Targeted Case Management
- EPSDT specialty mental health services

#### Inpatient Services

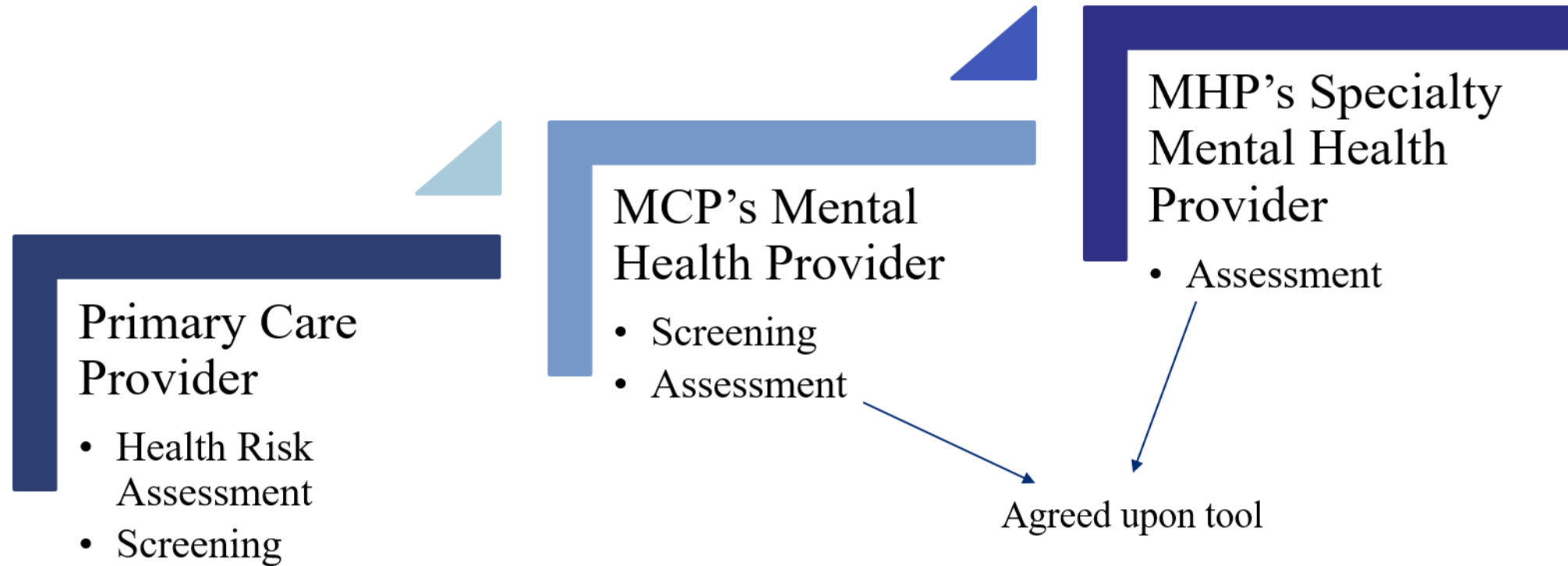
- Acute psychiatric inpatient hospital services
- Psychiatric Health Facility services
- Psychiatric Inpatient Hospital Professional Services if the beneficiary is in a FFS hospital

# Access to Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS)

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- Included diagnosis
- Condition not responsive to physical health care treatment
- Meet medical necessity

# Screening and Referral Pathways



# Special Medi-Cal Rules for Children Under 21

Early & Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment

# Early & Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT)

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- *Medicaid is an entitlement:* mandatory services for Medi-Cal eligible children and youth up to age 21
- State (MCPs) must screen all children on Medi-Cal for health and behavioral health needs
- Covers ALL treatment necessary to “*correct or ameliorate physical and mental illnesses and conditions,*” even if a service is not covered under the Medicaid State Plan

## Specialty Mental Health Services (from lawsuits)

Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS)

Intensive Care Coordination (ICC)

Intensive Home Based Services (IHBS)

Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC)

# Current Policy Goals

Legislative and Administrative

# AB 1175: Improving the relationship between County Mental Health Plans and Medi-Cal Health Plans

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- **Stronger requirements for coordination of care**  
When moving between plans, including requirement to track referrals
- **More data collection**  
What happens when people move between plans, and when services are denied
- **Requirements that both plans provide continuity of care**  
With an existing provider where appropriate
- **Stronger requirements for resolving disputes**  
When neither plan will accept responsibility for providing mental health care



## Other Bills to Watch this Year

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- **AB 763:** Streamlines paperwork required for pediatric mental health providers who participate in Medi-Cal
- **AB 512:** Requires Mental Health Plans to report on cultural competency, and the state to monitor mental health disparities
- **AB 1676:** Allows expanded use of telehealth to ensure access to mental health services during pregnancy and post-partum period
- **SB 10:** Requires state to establish a peer, parent, transition-age (youth), and family support specialist certification program
- **SB 12:** Establishes an Integrated Youth Mental Health Program (under MHSA OAC) to establish integrated service centers for youth ages 12-25 and their families

## **Administrative Advocacy**

Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)

- **Medi-Cal (Waiver) Stakeholder Advisory Group**  
Oversees the Medi-Cal program as a whole
- **Medi-Cal Managed Care Advisory Group**  
Opportunity to give input on health plan issues
- **Medi-Cal Children's Health Advisory Panel**  
Focus on children's issues in Medi-Cal
- **Behavioral Health Stakeholder Advisory Committee**  
*Just announced*

### **NHeLP Policy Priority:**

Implementation of SB 1287 (EPSDT Medical Necessity standard)

# Ways to Engage in Policy and Advocacy

Action and Opportunities

# How can you get involved?

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## **Boards or Commissions**

- Local Health Plan
- Local Mental Health Plan
- Local Board of Supervisors
- Provider organizations

## **Stakeholder Meetings**

- State Medi-Cal meetings
- MHSA Community Planning Process; Oversight & Accountability Commission
- Plan or Provider organization Advisory Groups

## **Share Your Story**

- Press stories
- Letters to the Editor
- Op-Eds

# Resources and Groups to Follow

Stay Informed

# **Advocates for Children**

Groups You Should Know About

## **Health Consumer Alliance**

[healthconsumer.org](http://healthconsumer.org)

## **Disability Rights California**

[disabilityrightscalifornia.org](http://disabilityrightscalifornia.org)

## **California Children's Trust**

[cachildrenstrust.org](http://cachildrenstrust.org)

## **Family Voices**

[familyvoicesofca.org](http://familyvoicesofca.org)

## Additional Information

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From National Health Law Program ([healthlaw.org/resource-library](http://healthlaw.org/resource-library)):

**Medi-Cal Mental Health Services**, *January 2017*

**Access to Mental Health Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs: Analysis and Recommendations**, *August 2017*

**Navigating The Challenges of Medi-Cal's Mental Health Services in California: An Examination of Care Coordination, Referrals and Dispute Resolution**, *November 2018*

**Substance Use Disorders in Medi-Cal: An Overview**, *February 2019*

DHCS Model Beneficiary Handbook :

- **Specialty Mental Health Services**
- **Managed Care Plan Services**

# Stay in Touch

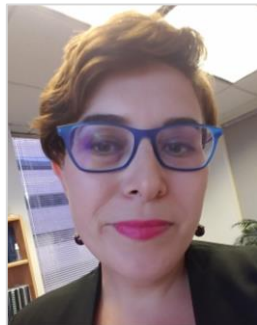


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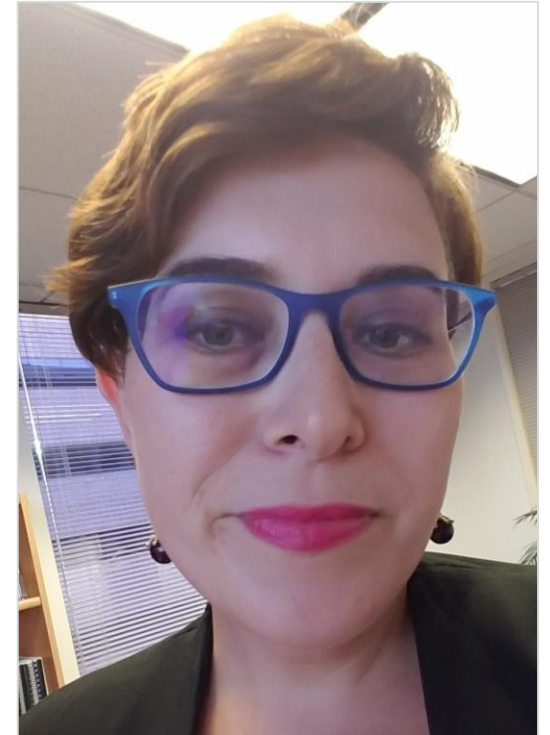
# Submit your questions in the Question Box



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