Mental Health Policy Briefing:

Raising the Priority of California Children with Special Health Care Needs

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Today’s Moderator:

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Housekeeping

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Today’s Briefing

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

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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
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

**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

*Carved-in Effective 1/1/14*

## 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

Source: California Department of Health Care Services
Access to Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS)

• Included diagnosis

• Condition not responsive to physical health care treatment

• Meet medical necessity
Screening and Referral Pathways

Primary Care Provider
- Health Risk Assessment
- Screening

MCP’s Mental Health Provider
- Screening
- Assessment

MHP’s Specialty Mental Health Provider
- Assessment

Agreed upon tool
Special Medi-Cal Rules for Children Under 21

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

• *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

- **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

• **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)
How can you get involved?

**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

Disability Rights California
disabilityrightsca.org

California Children’s Trust
cachildrenstrust.org

Family Voices
familyvoicesofca.org
Additional Information

From National Health Law Program (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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Thank you for joining us!

Learn more: lpfch.org/cshcn
Submit your questions in the Question Box

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