

Birthing Care Pathway Overview

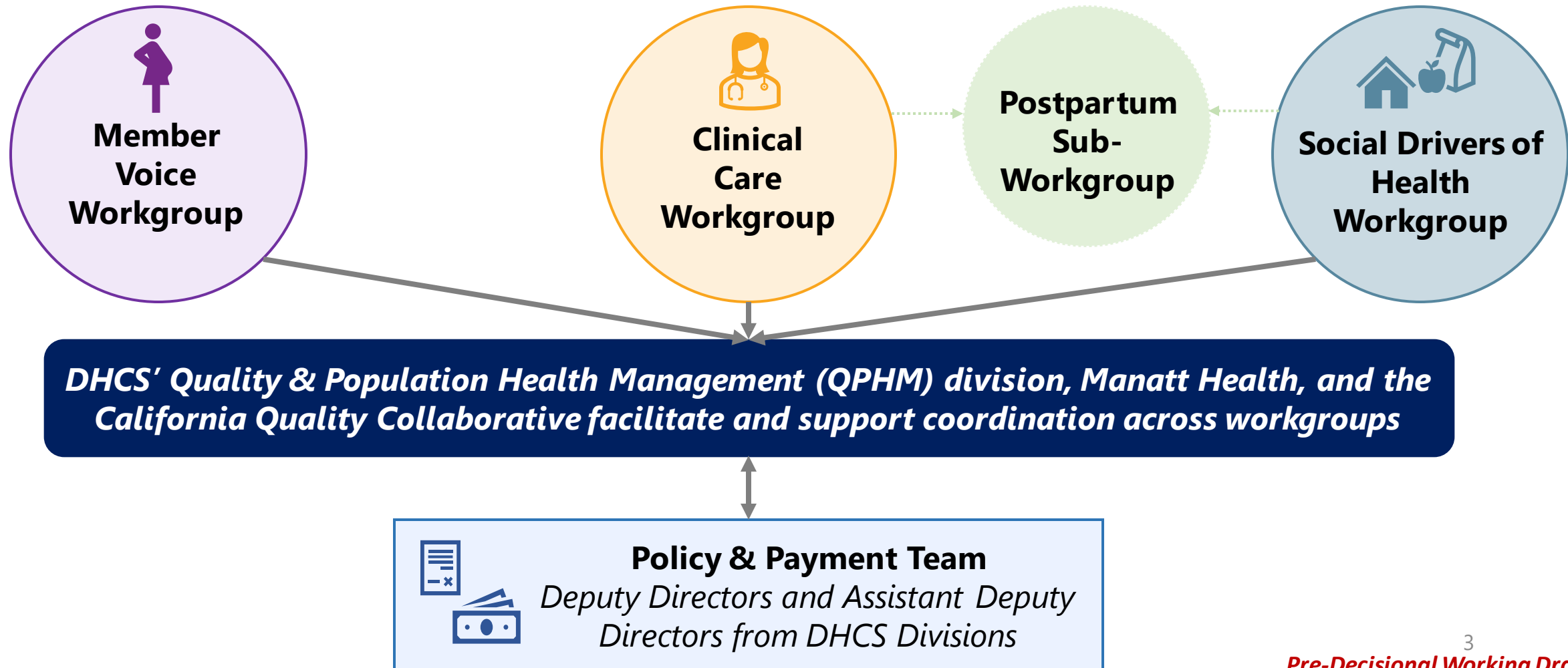
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Overview of Birthing Care Pathway

DHCS is developing a comprehensive **Birthing Care Pathway** to cover the journey of a Medi-Cal member from conception through 12 months postpartum. The Birthing Care Pathway is envisioned as a **care model** with related benefit and payment strategies in Medi-Cal to **reduce maternal morbidity and mortality** and **address significant racial and ethnic disparities** in maternal health outcomes among Black, American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN), and Pacific Islander individuals.

Birthing Care Pathway Organization Chart

To inform the design of the Birthing Care Pathway, **DHCS has created three Workgroups:** the Clinical Care Workgroup, the Social Drivers of Health Workgroup, and the Postpartum Sub-Workgroup. In addition, an internal DHCS Policy & Payment team will work alongside the Workgroups and Sub-Workgroup.



Workgroup Charges & Compositions

DHCS will develop **Medi-Cal care delivery policy and program initiatives** for pregnant and postpartum individuals that translate and promote adoption of clinical and care management guidelines and workflows across settings and will **encompass physical health, behavioral health, and health-related social needs.**

- » The **Clinical Care Workgroup** is charged with identifying what needs to happen to ensure appropriate clinical care for members, whether in a hospital, birth center, provider office, or in the community from conception through 12 months postpartum. The Clinical Care Workgroup is composed of OB/GYNs, certified nurse midwives, lactation consultants, doulas, tribal health providers, pediatricians, birth centers, behavioral health providers, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), family medicine services, managed care plans (MCPs), and representation from the Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program (CPSP) and other local public health programs.
- » The **Social Drivers of Health Workgroup** is charged with identifying programs and providers that currently address and/or are needed to address health related social needs in the perinatal and postpartum period. The Social Drivers of Health Workgroup is composed of community health workers, doulas, and other providers representing organizations addressing the social needs of birthing people, including local public health programs such as Maternal Child & Adolescent (MCAH) programs, CPSP, Black Infant Health, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), food banks, and diaper banks; tribal social service partners; violence prevention organizations; organizations addressing housing and financial insecurity; home visiting providers; and providers with Black birthing expertise.
- » The **Postpartum Sub-Workgroup** is charged with designing a clinical approach for what providers can do during the postpartum period to achieve positive birthing health outcomes and identifying pilot opportunities to test out that clinical approach in California. The Postpartum Sub-Workgroup includes cross-representation from both the Clinical Care Workgroup and the Social Drivers of Health Workgroup, as well as additional pediatricians, family physicians, and FQHC providers.

Medi-Cal Member Engagement

A foundational priority for DHCS in the Birthing Care Pathway project is to ensure the design is **shaped by Medi-Cal members with lived experience**. DHCS views members' lived experience as expertise that should inform the design of the Birthing Care Pathway, and DHCS is committed to partnering with members during this process.

- » DHCS will create a **Member Voice Workgroup** in Fall 2023 **comprised of members who are currently or have recently been pregnant or postpartum while enrolled in Medi-Cal**. DHCS will focus particularly on engaging Black, AI/AN, and Pacific Islander members for the Member Voice Workgroup given the disparities in perinatal health outcomes among these populations.
- » DHCS will also conduct **interviews** in Fall 2023 **with Medi-Cal members** who are currently or have recently been pregnant or postpartum and invite a small group of members to **journal about their individual pregnancy and postpartum experiences in Medi-Cal**.
- » The Birthing Care Pathway project will culminate with a **public report** outlining the policy recommendations for how DHCS can most effectively reduce maternal morbidity and mortality and address racial and ethnic disparities. The report is expected to be published in **Summer 2024**.

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