

Medi-Cal's Strategy to Support Health and Opportunity for Children and Families

Consisting of key initiatives already underway and newly proposed to:

- Solidify coverage for children
- Promote whole-child and family-based care
- Strengthen leadership and accountability structures
- Implement evidence-based, data-driven initiatives to support implementation

Medi-Cal's Strategy to Support Health and Opportunity for Children and Families		
Key Initiatives	Status	Implementation Timing*
 Implement a new leadership structure and engagement approach		
Identify a DHCS child health champion who will be accountable for strengthening Medi-Cal's role in serving children and overseeing implementation of Medi-Cal's Strategy to Support Health and Opportunity for Children and Families <i>(new)</i>	In Progress	March 2022
Engage with stakeholders to ensure that family voices help shape policy	In Progress	June 2022
Create a new DHCS Consumer Advisory Committee <i>(new)</i>	In Progress	Late 2022
 Strengthen the coverage base for California's children		
Reduce Medi-Cal premiums to zero for families to make coverage more accessible <i>(new)</i>	Proposed in 2022 – 23 State Budget	July 2022
Expand presumptive eligibility to make it easier for children to be quickly and efficiently enrolled in Medi-Cal <i>(new)</i>	Proposed in 2022 – 23 State Budget	July 2023

* Expected timelines as of March 2022 publication. DHCS will update stakeholders if timelines shift.

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Medi-Cal's Strategy to Support Health and Opportunity for Children and Families (Cont'd)

Key Initiatives	Status	Implementation Timing*
 Fortify the pediatric preventive and primary care foundation		
Design and implement a new population health management strategy to establish clear, enforceable requirements for plans to identify and serve children in need of care coordination (<i>new</i>)	In Progress	January 2023
Invest significant new resources in practice transformation for pediatric and other primary care providers who care for pregnant individuals, children, and adolescents (<i>new</i>)	Proposed in 2022 – 23 State Budget	July 2022
Conduct an education and outreach campaign regarding Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) for enrollees, providers, and managed care plans (MCPs) to support families (<i>new</i>)	In Progress	July 2022
Implement changes to improve the criteria and procedures used to determine when children will receive behavioral health services, including specialty mental health and substance use disorder treatment (<i>new</i>)	Complete	January 2022
Expand preventive pediatric dental benefits from a pilot program to new statewide benefits (<i>new</i>)	Complete	January 2022
Participate in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' Infant Well-Child Visits Learning Collaborative and Health Care Payment Learning and Action Network State Transformation Collaborative (<i>new</i>)	Complete	December 2021 – 2023
Continue to support the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Aware initiative and provide ACEs training grants to primary care providers	Proposed in 2022 – 23 State Budget	July 2022 – June 2025
 Strengthen access to pediatric vaccinations		
Deploy COVID-19 pediatric vaccines in an equitable manner to meet California's "Vaccinate All 58" goals	Complete	October 2021
Develop a Vaccines For Children Strategic Plan with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to ensure that there is a comprehensive effort to maximize the catch up of vaccinations, distribute vaccines, and support family engagement (<i>new</i>)	In Progress	<i>Timeline Being Developed</i>
Increase vaccination of pregnant individuals enrolled in Medi-Cal (<i>new</i>)	Complete	January 2022

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Medi-Cal's Strategy to Support Health and Opportunity for Children and Families (Cont'd)

Key Initiatives	Status	Implementation Timing*
 Enhance accountability for high-quality and equitable care for children		
Improve MCP oversight and accountability and strengthen value-based payments to MCPs by adjusting base capitation rates based on quality and equity; requiring MCPs to report on primary care expenditures; requiring MCPs to report alternative payment arrangements with providers; and strengthening Medical Loss Ratio requirements <i>(new)</i>	In Progress	2023 – 2025
Increase pediatric and maternity care performance standards for MCPs <i>(new)</i>	Complete	January 2022
Support the local education agency-billing option program (LEA-BOP) by providing resources to support and expand the program, including an outreach campaign, training materials, and technical assistance for LEAs	In Progress	April 2022
Support MCP and LEA partnerships in delivering a statewide continuum of care by requiring MCPs to provide Medi-Cal services, including preventive services and adolescent health services provided in schools or by school-affiliated health providers <i>(new)</i>	In Progress	January 2024
Enhance and sustain payments to pediatric providers to increase use of key preventive and screening services for children and families <i>(new)</i>	Proposed in 2022 – 23 State Budget	July 2022
Streamline DHCS pediatric dashboards to enhance transparency and increase usability <i>(new)</i>	In Progress	January 2023
 Apply a family-centered approach		
Strengthen coverage and care for pregnant and postpartum individuals by extending postpartum eligibility to 12 months postpartum and participating in quality improvement initiatives	In Progress	April 2022
Implement coverage of services provided by community health workers (July 2022) and doulas (January 2023)	In Progress	2022 – 2023
Implement dyadic services for families with children	In Progress	January 2023

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Key Initiatives	Status	Implementation Timing*
 Apply a family-centered approach (cont'd)		
Clarify family therapy as a behavioral health benefit	Complete	July 2020
Develop a strategic plan with CDPH and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) partners to maximize enrollment of eligible Medi-Cal children and families into the CalFresh program and the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children <i>(new)</i>	In Progress	January 2023
Increase enrollment, in partnership with CDPH and CDSS, of Medi-Cal covered pregnant individuals and families into CDPH/CDSS home visiting programs known to reduce costs of services to children who have benefitted from these programs <i>(new)</i>	In Progress	<i>Timeline Being Developed</i>
Partner with California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to better support children who have both an intellectual disability diagnosis and behavioral health need <i>(new)</i>	In Progress	<i>Timeline Being Developed</i>
Launch Enhanced Care Management in a manner that recognizes the unique needs of children and builds on EPSDT requirements <i>(new)</i>	Complete for WPC/HHP [^] counties, families experiencing homelessness, justice-involved families	January 2022
	In Progress for non-WPC/HHP counties	July 2023
 Address the child and adolescent behavioral health crisis		
Establish a behavioral health services virtual platform to facilitate behavioral health services and referrals for children	In Progress	January 2024
Implement a State-defined all-payers fee schedule for behavioral health services provided at schools	In Progress	January 2024
Support behavioral health workforce development, including a new role of Behavioral Health Coach <i>(implemented by the California Department of Health Care and Access Information)</i>	In Progress	2022 – 2023

[^] Whole Person Care (WPC) and Home Health Program (HHP) counties.

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Key Initiatives	Status	Implementation Timing*
☁️ Address the child and adolescent behavioral health crisis (cont'd)		
Provide grants to expand evidence-based, community-defined behavioral health programs and practices for children and youth	In Progress	September 2022 – January 2023
Provide direct grants to build infrastructure partnerships and capacity statements to increase school-based behavioral health services	In Progress	September 2022 – January 2023
Implement the Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program, which includes expanding treatment facilities for children and families	Complete for Round 3: Launch Ready Request For Application Release	January 2022
Launch pediatric primary care training for managing behavioral health conditions, including targeted strategies for adolescent behavioral health conditions	In Progress	2023 – 2024
Continue and expand the CalHOPE Student Support program, currently funded through Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025	In Progress	2022 – 2025
Conduct a public education campaign that is culturally and linguistically appropriate to reduce stigma surrounding the use of behavioral health services <i>(implemented by CDPH and the Office of the Surgeon General)</i>	In Progress	2022 – 2023
Implement a Medi-Cal managed care incentive program to increase access to preventive, early intervention, and behavioral health services provided by school-affiliated health providers	Complete	January 2022
👤 Next steps on the foster care model of care		
Continue to work with CDSS and stakeholders to develop a new model of care centered on establishing an accountability framework across systems, advancing equity, and integrating services and care	In Progress	Late Summer 2022

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