

**DATE:** December 22, 2025

**CCS Information Notice:** 25-05

**TO:** All California Children’s Services Program Administrators

**SUBJECT:** Coverage of Community Health Worker Services in the California Children’s Services Program

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this Information Notice (IN) is to provide guidance to County California Children’s Services (CCS) Programs about Community Health Worker (CHW) services. CHW services are a covered benefit for CCS members as clarified in this notice.

**BACKGROUND:**

California state law defines a CHW as “a liaison, link, or intermediary between health and social services and the community to facilitate access to services and to improve the access and cultural competence of service delivery. A CHW is a frontline health worker either trusted by, or who has a close understanding of, the community served.”<sup>1</sup>

CHW services are a covered benefit under Medi-Cal as delineated in the Medi-Cal Provider Manual, Part 2.<sup>2,3</sup> This coverage is under the authority of Social Security Section 1905, (a)(13).<sup>4</sup> CHW services support individuals’ health-related social needs and preventive care needs, as well as needs related to living with chronic health conditions.<sup>5</sup> Numerous studies have documented improved outcomes when CHWs

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<sup>1</sup> [National Academy for State Health Policy - California State Community Health Worker Policies](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Provider Manuals - Department of Health Care Services](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Community Health Worker \(CHW\) Preventive Services](#)

<sup>4</sup> [United States Social Security Act §1905](#)

<sup>5</sup> [About Chronic Diseases | Chronic Disease | CDC](#)

provide support for individuals with chronic conditions such as asthma, sickle cell anemia and type 1 diabetes.<sup>6, 7, 8, 9</sup>

CCS fee-for-service (FFS), including CCS state-only and managed care plan (MCP) members receive treatment by CCS-paneled pediatric specialists at Special Care Centers (SCC) and specialty clinics to correct or ameliorate their CCS eligible medical condition(s). These CCS members may be authorized to receive any CHW service described in the Medi-Cal Provider Manual when the following criteria are met:

1. A licensed healthcare provider – which may include a physician, nurse, social worker, dietitian, or other licensed team member – has determined that the CCS member would benefit from CHW services.
2. The requested CHW services are medically necessary to correct or ameliorate the CCS eligible condition(s).
3. The physician-directed plan of care clearly delineates the CHW services that support the management of the CCS eligible condition(s).
4. The services are provided under the oversight of one or more CCS-paneled pediatric specialty physicians at a CCS-approved SCC or other outpatient facility.
5. CHWs meet the necessary minimum qualifications, as outlined in the CHW Preventive Services section of the Medi-Cal Provider Manual.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> [Smaldone, A., Manwani, D., Aygun, B., Smith-Whitley, K., Jia, H., Bruzzese, J. M., Findley, S., Massei, J., & Green, N. S. \(2019\). HABIL efficacy and sustainability trial, a multi-center randomized controlled trial to improve hydroxyurea adherence in youth with sickle cell disease: a study protocol. BMC pediatrics, 19\(1\), 354. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12887-019-1746-6>](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Coutinho, M. T., Subzwari, S. S., McQuaid, E. L., & Koinis-Mitchell, D. \(2020\). Community Health Workers' Role in Supporting Pediatric Asthma Management: A Review. Clinical practice in pediatric psychology, 8\(2\), 195–210. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cpp0000319>](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Martin, M., Pugach, O., Mosnaim, G., Weinstein, S., Rosales, G., Roy, A., Pappalardo, A., Walton, S. \(2021\). Community health worker asthma interventions for children: results from a clinically integrated randomized comparative effectiveness trial \(2016-2019\). AJPH, 111, 1328-1337, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2021.306272>](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Lipman, T., Smith, A., Hawkes, C. \(2019\). Community health workers and the care of children with type 1 diabetes. Journal of Pediatric Nursing. Vol. 49, 111-112, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pedn.2019.08.014>.](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Community Health Worker \(CHW\) Preventive Services](#)

CHWs providing these services to CCS members may be employed by county public health departments, MCPs, and other provider groups. Coverage of the CHW benefit is subject to the criteria outlined in the Medi-Cal Provider Manual and the contractual policies specified in the MCP contract and All Plan Letter (APL) 24-006 or any superseding APL.<sup>11, 12</sup>

A CCS Provider or County cannot provide and claim for CHW services under the CHW benefit when a member is receiving Enhanced Care Management (ECM).<sup>13</sup> ECM is a comprehensive Medi-Cal MCP care management that is inclusive of all of the services within the CHW benefit. CCS members qualify for and may choose to receive ECM services when they have at least one complex social factor influencing their health.<sup>14</sup> CHWs are often part of interdisciplinary ECM care teams; however, when CHW services are provided as part of ECM, ECM billing and coding practices should be used. The CHW benefit may be used as outlined in this IN:

- Before a member receives ECM services,
- To perform outreach to engage a member in ECM,
- After a member graduates from ECM, or
- If a member declines ECM.<sup>15</sup>

If a member who is not already receiving ECM has a need that may be addressed by either the ECM or CHW benefit, the member chooses which benefit to receive.

CCS-paneled pediatric specialty physicians are responsible for oversight of the CHWs in the same manner as they oversee other SCC team members who implement the member's plan of care.

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<sup>11</sup> [DHCS CHW Preventive Services Provider Manual](#)

<sup>12</sup> [APL 24-006](#), or any superseding NL

<sup>13</sup> [DHCS FAQ on CHW Benefit](#), Question 10.

<sup>14</sup> Examples of complex social factors include (but are not limited to) lack of access to food, lack of access to stable housing, difficulty accessing transportation, high measure (four or more) of Adverse Childhood Experiences screening, history of recent contacts with law enforcement or crisis intervention services related to mental health and/or substance use symptoms. For additional details, see: [DHCS Enhanced Care Management Policy Guide](#), pg. 44-48.

<sup>15</sup> [APL 24-006](#), or any superseding NL

For FFS members, CHW services that are part of the treatment plan are included. A CCS Provider or County must not claim for CHW services when a CCS member is enrolled in a MCP.<sup>16</sup>

For CCS members residing in a Whole Child Model (WCM) County and enrolled in a MCP, the WCM MCP is responsible for CHW services.<sup>17</sup> For CCS members in Classic Counties enrolled in a MCP, the MCP is responsible for CHW services. The responsibility and oversight for CHW services for Classic County FFS members falls to providers and County CCS Program staff. In Classic Counties, there is a critical need to align County CCS case management and ECM/CHW case management efforts through clear communication and planning.

Refer to the DHCS CHW Preventive Services Provider Manual for billing codes.<sup>18</sup>

For any questions regarding this IN, please contact the Integrated Systems of Care Division's Medical Policy team at [ISCD-MedicalPolicy@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:ISCD-MedicalPolicy@dhcs.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

**ORIGINAL SIGNED BY**

Joseph Billingsley  
Assistant Deputy Director for Integrated Systems  
Health Care Delivery Systems  
Department of Health Care Services

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<sup>16</sup> [APL 24-006](#), or any superseding NL

<sup>17</sup> [APL 24-006](#), or any superseding NL

<sup>18</sup> [DHCS CHW Preventive Services Provider Manual](#)