

Medi-Cal Managed Care Developmental Screening Directed Payment Program Evaluation for Calendar Year (CY) 2021

Background

In accordance with Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Section 438.6(c)(2)(ii)(D), the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is required to submit an evaluation that measures the degree to which the directed payment arrangement advances at least one of the goals and objectives in the DHCS Quality Strategy. This evaluation will assess the performance and results of the Proposition 56 Developmental Screening Services Directed Payment Program implementation during the CY 2021.

The Proposition 56 Developmental Screening Directed Payment Program directs Medi-Cal managed care health plans (MCPs) to make uniform dollar add-on payments for specific developmental screening services. This directed payment program supports network providers to provide critical services to Medi-Cal managed care members.

Evaluation Purpose and Questions

The Proposition 56 Developmental Screening Directed Payment Program is expected to enhance the quality of care by improving encounter data submissions by providers to better target those areas where improved performance will have the greatest effect on health outcomes. The CMS-approved evaluation design features two evaluation questions:

1. Do higher provider directed payments for developmental screening services serve to maintain or improve the timeliness and completeness of encounter data when compared to the baseline?
2. Do higher provider directed payments for developmental screening services serve to increase the frequency of developmental screenings in the first three years of life when compared to the baseline?

Evaluation Data Sources and Measures

This evaluation addresses these questions mainly through quantitative analyses of encounter data extracted from the DHCS Management Information System/Decision Support System (MIS/DSS), spanning service dates in CY 2019.

To measure data quality improvement in encounter claim submissions, denied encounters, denied encounter turnaround times, and timeliness of submissions were assessed using the Post-Adjudicated Claims and Encounters System (PACES) data extracted via MIS/DSS.

To measure changes in utilization pattern, DHCS compared Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) rates of Developmental Screening in the First Three Years of Life (DEV-CH) for managed care members.

Evaluation Results

Encounter Data Quality

1. Denied claims and turnaround time:
 - a. Denied Encounters Turnaround Time – This measure addresses how quickly denied encounter data files are corrected and resubmitted by MCPs. Turnaround time is the time, in days, between an encounter data file denial date and the resubmission date to DHCS.

Turnaround Time	CY 2019 (Baseline Period)			CY 2021		
	Corrected Encounters	Total Denied Encounters	Percentage of Corrected Encounters per Group	Corrected Encounters	Total Denied Encounters	Percentage of Corrected Encounters per Group
0 to 15 Days	51	199	26%	42	374	11%
16 to 30 Days	-	199	0%	52	374	14%
31 to 60 Days	-	199	0%	48	374	13%
Greater Than 60 Days	148	199	74%	232	374	62%

- 62% of denied encounters were corrected and resubmitted in greater than 60 days of denial notice for CY 2021, compared to 74% for the Baseline Period.

b. Total Denied Encounters

CY 2019 (Baseline Period)			CY 2021		
Total Denied Encounters	Total Encounters	Percent of Denied Encounters per Month	Total Denied Encounters	Total Encounters	Percent of Denied Encounters per Month
1,303	58,642	2%	1,486	104,518	1%

- Total denied encounters per month reported was 1% for CY 2021, compared to 2% for the Baseline Period.

c. Timeliness (lag time): This measure reports the time it takes for MCPs to submit encounter data files. Lag time is the time, in days, between applicable Dates of Service and the Submission date to DHCS.

Lagtime	CY 2019 (Baseline Period)			CY 2021		
	Encounters per Lagtime Group	Total Encounters	Percent of Encounters per Lagtime Group	Encounters per Lagtime Group	Total Encounters	Percent of Encounters per Lagtime Group
0 to 90 days	37,793	58,642	64%	76,798	104,289	74%
91 to 180 days	13,930	58,642	24%	18,579	104,289	18%
181 to 365 days	4,796	58,642	8%	7,181	104,289	7%
More than 365 days	2,123	58,642	4%	1,731	104,289	2%

- For CY 2021, approximately 92% of encounters were submitted within 180 days of dates of service compared to 88% for the Baseline Period.

Service Utilization

Utilization: From the MCP encounter data, DHCS evaluated DEV-CH in accordance with current CMS Core Set Technical Specifications to determine the percentage of children documented to have been screened for risk of developmental, behavioral, and social delays using a standardized screening tool in the 12 months preceding or on their first, second, or third birthday as well as the combined rate for all age groups.

Age Group	CY 2019 (Baseline Period)	CY 2021
	DEV Rate	DEV Rate
Age of 1 Year	23.53%	24.71%
Age of 2 Years	28.99%	33.19%
Age of 3 Years	22.73%	26.01%
Total	25.42%	28.83%

- DEV-CH rates increased across all age groups in CY 2021 compared to the Baseline Period.
- DHCS will continue to monitor this metric in future program years.

Limitations of Evaluation:

The results presented here suggest that the directed payment programs may have had positive impacts on encounter data quality. Both percent denied claims and timeliness of claim submission showed positive improvements.

However, we cannot separate changes attributable to the directed payment programs from other secular changes such as technology advancements occurring across the health system, provider supply, or other factors.

Conclusions:

DHCS' examination of the Baseline Period and CY 2021 encounter data quality and HEDIS DEV-CH rates for managed care members indicates the following:

1. For approximately 62% of denied encounters, MCPs took longer than 60 days to review, correct, and resubmit encounter data files for CY 2021 compared to 74% for the Baseline Period.
2. The percentage of denied encounters per month is 1% for CY 2021 compared to 2% for the Baseline Period.
3. Approximately 92% of encounter data files were submitted within 180 days or less from applicable dates of service for CY 2021, compared to 88% for the Baseline Period.

4. Under Proposition 56 Developmental Screening Directed Payment Program, developmental screening rates increased for all age groups during CY 2021 compared to the Baseline Period.