

## **Follow-Up Item from April 24, 2020, MCHAP Meeting**

### **COVID-19 Status and Update**

*Ellen Beck, M.D.:* For telephone visits, there are some individuals who just don't have the capacity for telemedicine. What is the plan for covering undocumented people over age 65? For medication prices, prescriptions like insulin have doubled; what is the government doing to rectify? Also, there is so much fear and misinformation in the undocumented community; how are you working in Spanish translation?

**DHCS Response:** *Brad Gilbert, DHCS:* The coverage for the over-age-65 population is still in the budget discussions. Those individuals, if uninsured, can get COVID-19 testing and treatment now. For your medications question, I haven't heard anything specific to shortages and prices. We will look into it. For your last comment on fear in the undocumented community, we will [issue information](#) for the uninsured that will clarify that they can get COVID-19 testing and treatment.

**DHCS Follow-Up:** Other than the prior redirection related to cloroquine and hydroxychloroquine, DHCS is not aware of any shortages or significant price increases.

*William Arroyo, M.D.:* Do the waivers for MH and SUD require the same documentation? I'm interested in the requirement for the client signature on a treatment plan.

**DHCS Response:** *Brad Gilbert, DHCS:* We have waived a number of in-person signature requirements and will need to get back to you on that one.

**DHCS Follow-Up:** [Behavioral Health Information Notice 20-009](#) provides guidance for counties and providers about managing signature requirements during COVID-19.

*Nancy Netherland:* I have medically fragile former foster kids that require extensive hospital-based care. My child receives home infusions. Historically, Medicaid would deem it medically unnecessary for her to go to the hospital for those infusions. Her team is reluctant to do home infusions because it would set a precedent. Limited home-based infusion is weighing out risk of infection versus risk with infusions. I'm curious about other types of services that would be affected?

*Brad Gilbert, DHCS:* We'll need to look into it at your case very specifically. We're hoping to provide guidelines on increasing access to the health care delivery system.

*Nancy Netherland:* Remote physical therapy has been great to be able to avoid some of the communal areas in hospitals and medical office buildings. The changes that have been made so far have been fantastic. I'm hoping to see

telehealth visits extended in other areas for children who need support for chronic illnesses.

**DHCS Response:** *Brad Gilbert, DHCS:* Good to know that it's actually working at the individual level. To your second point: How do we think about some of these flexibilities that have been created and are available, post-COVID-19 and ongoing potentially? This includes looking at primary care, physical therapy, and other services in a way differently than how we've thought about it in the past. We'll look at the issue around the benefit that you've described because that's applicable to many circumstances.

**DHCS Follow-Up:** Current flexibilities for children with chronic illnesses during and after the COVID-19 period are bulleted below:

- COVID-19 related guidance specific to the California Children's Services (CCS) Program can be found [here](#).
- COVID-19 related guidance specific to the Medical Therapy Program (MTP) and can be found [here](#).
- COVID-19 related guidance specific to well-child visits can be found [here](#).

Each of these guidance documents includes details on how expanded telehealth services may be used to ensure continuous access to care for the CCS population for acute health issues, for maintenance of chronic conditions, and for routine well-child care. After the COVID-19 public health emergency, DHCS expects that health care providers will continue to use telehealth to supplement face-to-face interactions when appropriate to the clinical situation.

Note that the most current versions of these documents, along with other Departmental guidance, are all located on the [CCS Letters](#) website and on DHCS' COVID-19 Response [webpage](#).