

May 12, 2003

CCS Information Notice No.: 03-07

TO: ALL COUNTY CALIFORNIA CHILDREN'S SERVICES (CCS)
ADMINISTRATORS, MEDICAL CONSULTANTS, CHIEF/SUPERVISING
THERAPISTS, STATE CHILDREN'S MEDICAL SERVICES (CMS)
BRANCH STAFF AND REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF

SUBJECT: CARE COORDINATION SURVEY

The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities is conducting a study of care coordination for children in California Children's Services (CCS) who are in Medi-Cal and Healthy Families contracted health plans. The goal of this qualitative study is to describe what is working well and what could be improved. You will find more information about the study in the letter from the study director.

UCLA presented an overview of this study at the March 6, 2003, CCS Executive Directors meeting in Sacramento. Care coordination is an important issue to CCS. I am hopeful that the report from this project will provide an opportunity to help those outside of CCS understand our successes and ongoing challenges as well as ways that existing gaps could be filled. I know you are all busy, but would appreciate your willingness to take the time to participate in the study.

Original Signed by Maridee Gregory, M.D.

Maridee A. Gregory, M.D., Chief
Children's Medical Services Branch

Enclosures



Do your part to help California save energy. To learn more about saving energy, visit the following web site:
www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html

Children's Medical Services Branch
714/744 P Street, P.O. Box 942732, Sacramento, CA 94234-7320
(916) 327-1400

Internet Address: <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/pcf/cms>



CENTER FOR HEALTHIER CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES
UEBERROTH BUILDING, SUITE 1401
10945 LE CONTE AVENUE, BOX 956939
LOS ANGELES, CA 90095-6939

TELEPHONE: (310) 825-8042
FACSIMILE: (310) 206-3180

5/16/2003

Dear Administrator/ Medical Consultant:

We are sending this letter to ask for your participation in a qualitative study of care coordination for children in county California Children Services (CCS) programs and Medi-Cal and Healthy Families health plans. This study will describe what care coordination resources are available and how responsibility is delegated within plans. This study is funded by the California HealthCare Foundation and conducted by the UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities.

The ultimate goal of this project is to improve care coordination by CCS and by health plans. This project will identify barriers to care coordination, as well as promising strategies that health plans and CCS programs are using to solve problems and introduce innovation into care coordination. The project will culminate in a report that can inform current and future policy development around care coordination for CCS, Medi-Cal, and Healthy Families programs.

We would like to interview you or another administrator whom you designate—either in-person or by telephone—at a scheduled time in the next few weeks. The interview would take about 45 minutes to 1 hour. We are most interested in understanding the care coordination resources that are currently available; differences in how health plans have responded to California's "carve-out" of CCS services from Medi-Cal and Healthy Families contracted health plans; and how care coordination and data exchange capacities vary across counties, health plans, and CCS programs.

Participation in this research study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate in this research study will not result in any adverse consequences to you or your organization. You have the right to refuse to answer any questions asked during the interview and still remain in the study.

We will be following up this letter with a telephone call to determine a convenient time and location for the interview. We would also like to interview one or more of your care coordination staff who have frequent contact with Medi-Cal or Healthy Families health plans, if possible.

Your willingness to participate in this evaluation is very important to us, and we appreciate your participation. The enclosed Research Information Sheet describes more about the study including the confidentiality provisions. We will call your office shortly to provide more detail

on our site visit and to arrange a convenient time to talk with you further. Please contact me at (310) 794-5440 or Janel Wright at (310) 206-6699 if you have any questions.

Thank you very much. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Moira Inkelas".

Moira Inkelas, PhD

Adjunct Assistant Professor, UCLA School of Public Health

Assistant Director, UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities

Date of Preparation: 01/22/03

UCLA IRB Number: G02-10-023-01

Expiration Date:

Managed Care for Children with Special Health Care Needs: Care Coordination in Health Plans and CCS

**Funded by the California HealthCare Foundation
Maira Inkelas, PhD**

Project Summary

Care coordination can help children with complex medical diagnoses receive timely, quality health care from appropriate providers. Yet care coordination for such children is not well described or understood. Moreover, California’s “carve-out” of CCS services from Medi-Cal and Healthy Families contracted health plans leaves some discretion to plans and counties in terms of locus of coordination and referral protocols. This project evaluates how Medi-Cal/Healthy Families health plans, and California Children Services (CCS) programs, are providing care coordination to children. The project will develop a “typology” of care coordination as provided by the health plans, and by the CCS programs, across the counties and the different managed care models. It will describe the variations across plans and programs, evaluate how these variations developed, specify the nature of the relationships, outline the innovations and the continuing constraints, and lay the foundation for a future, more detailed assessment of care coordination.

Project Overview

The “organizational marriage” between CCS and health plans was brokered by California’s legislature in 1994, and left health plans and CCS programs to (1) develop a working relationship, and (2) customize their care coordination functions around the carve-out. The resulting care coordination infrastructure that CCS and health plans have put in place—ranging from the processes that support early identification and referral, to ongoing care plan development and review—is meant to provide a systematic mechanism for assuring access and quality to this vulnerable population. It is supposed to supplement and support the care coordination that physicians and hospitals provide. Yet there is little information on what care coordination CCS and health plans can, and do, provide. Despite a shared interest in improving access and coordination, CCS programs and health plans across California may differ in their perspectives on what care coordination should and can be; their familiarity with provider networks; their flexibility to innovate; their staffing constraints; and their unique organizational assets.

The goal of this project is ultimately to improve care coordination by CCS and by health plans. This will be accomplished by a qualitative description of care coordination by CCS and health plans in California, and by an analysis of gaps and the incentives necessary to provide better care coordination to this population. This project will identify barriers to care coordination, as well as promising strategies that health plans and CCS programs are using to solve problems and introduce innovation into care coordination. The project team will then describe possible strategies to improve care coordination for California’s CCS population. Interviews will be conducted with health plan and with CCS program administrators in the Medi-Cal managed care counties and in a sample of other counties.

University of California, Los Angeles

RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

**Managed Care for Children with Special Health Care Needs:
Economic and Policy Realities for the Future of CCS**

*California Children's Services (CCS)
Medi-Cal Health Plans
Healthy Families Health Plans*

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Moira Inkelas, PhD, from the UCLA School of Public Health at the University of California, Los Angeles. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are an administrator or care coordination staff in a local CCS agency, Medi-Cal health plan, or Healthy Families health plan. We are asking you to participate in our descriptive study of care coordination for children in CCS. You do not have to participate in this study. Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you can refuse to answer a question, stop the interview, or discontinue participation in the study at any time.

• **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study is being carried out to describe the care coordination activities that California Children Services (CCS), Medi-Cal contracting health plans, and Healthy Families contracting health plans are providing for children in CCS in California. The UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities is collecting data for this study. This study is being funded by a grant from the California HealthCare Foundation.

• **PROCEDURES**

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an in-person or telephone interview within the next two months, at a time convenient for you. The interview will require approximately 45 to 60 minutes. The Principal Investigator or project staff will contact you by telephone to schedule a convenient time.

During the interview, we will ask you about the types of care coordination that your organization provides for children in CCS, the resources available in your organization for coordinating care, barriers to coordinating care between CCS and Medi-Cal, and your views on how coordination

Date of Preparation: 01/22/03
UCLA IRB Number: G02-10-023-01
Expiration Date:

of care can be improved statewide. Our key questions include the following: What care coordination resources are health plans offering? What resources are provided by health plans, and what is the role of subcontracting medical groups, if any? What information capacity exists for identification of children in CCS, and for supporting care coordination? What programmatic or policy changes might make it easier for health plans, CCS, medical groups, and/or providers to extend care coordination services to children with special health care needs and their families?

- **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

No known risks are associated with individuals participating in the proposed interviews. The questions are not of an intrusive or personal nature and do not ask about sensitive topics such as personal health care experiences.

- **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

Health plans and CCS administrators may benefit from participation in this research by contributing to the analysis of strategies to improve care coordination for California's CCS population. Improved access to health services and care coordination will help children with complex medical diagnoses receive timely, quality health care from appropriate providers. CCS and health plan care coordination policies and resources can greatly influence what hospitals and physicians are able to do, and thus affect care that vulnerable children receive.

- **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

No payment will be provided to individuals for their participation.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. To protect personal privacy, you will not be identified by name. Although participating organizations and agencies will be identified in the final report, your name will not be used and you will not be identified in any way. With permission from participants in this study, interviews will be audio-taped solely to ensure the accuracy of the project report. Immediately after publication of the report, these tapes will be destroyed. Upon request during or at the conclusion of the interview, we will strike any comments made that upon reflection you prefer not to include.

Date of Preparation: 01/22/03
UCLA IRB Number: G02-10-023-01
Expiration Date:

- **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

- **IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS**

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Moira Inkelas, Adjunct Assistant Professor, UCLA School of Public Health, 10945 Le Conte Ave., Suite 1401, Los Angeles, CA 90095-6939. tel: (310) 794-5440, fax: (310) 206-3180.

- **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the Office for Protection of Research Subjects, 2107 Ueberroth Building, UCLA, Box 951694, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694, (310) 825-8714.

Date of Preparation: 01/22/03
UCLA IRB Number: G02-10-023-01
Expiration Date: