



State of California-Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Care Services



Important News About Your Pediatric Palliative Care Services

Dear Medi-Cal member,

You are receiving this letter because you or your child may be getting Pediatric Palliative Care (PPC) services through the PPC Waiver program. The PPC Waiver will end December 31, 2018. The way you get PPC services will change on **January 1, 2019**.

Starting **January 1, 2019**, you will get your PPC services the same way you get your other Medi-Cal services, either from your managed care health plan or through Fee-For-Service (Regular) Medi-Cal. This change is **only** for PPC services. The way you get your other Medi-Cal services will **not** change.

Why is the PPC Waiver ending?

The PPC Waiver was only approved to last for a certain number of years. That time ends on December 31, 2018. Since most PPC services are a State Plan benefit, the waiver is no longer needed.

What are palliative care services?

Palliative care services are treatments to improve quality of life. They treat and manage pain and symptoms for serious illness and medical conditions. You may also choose to get treatment that may cure your illness or medical condition.

What is Medi-Cal?

Medi-Cal is California's Medicaid program. It gives medical, dental, mental health, alcohol and drug use treatment, and vision care to millions of Californians. In Regular Medi-Cal you can get services from any provider that accepts Medi-Cal.

In Managed Care Medi-Cal, a health plan provides services through provider networks that emphasize primary, preventive, and specialty care. You can learn more about Medi-Cal at www.dhcs.ca.gov.

What will change?

Medi-Cal covers medically necessary PPC services for all Medi-Cal members under age 21. Only the way you get PPC services will change:

- If you are now in a Medi-Cal managed care health plan, you will get PPC services through your plan starting **January 1, 2019**.

If you now get Medi-Cal services in Fee-For-Service (Regular) Medi-Cal, you will get your PPC services through Regular Medi-Cal starting **January 1, 2019**. Medi-Cal PPC services are not exactly the same as PPC Waiver services. Medi-Cal covers these PPC Waiver services when medically necessary for members who meet Medi-Cal PPC eligibility rules or are covered under a similar Medi-Cal service:

PPC Waiver services covered by Medi-Cal	Yes	No
Pain and symptom management	X	
Personal care services	X	
Family counseling (see below)	X	
Care coordination (see below)	X	
Family training (see below)	X	
Respite care in and out of home		X
Expressive therapies (art, music, and massage)		X
24/7 palliative care phone consultation access (see below)		X

Family counseling:

Services are available through the managed care health plan, the county mental health plan, and/or social services benefit as psychotherapy, bereavement counseling and medical social services.

Care coordination:

Coordination of care is available in managed care health plans and by your PPC provider. Care coordination is available in Regular Medi-Cal to the extent that the PPC service provider will work to coordinate the specific service(s) they are providing but is not a separate billable service. Care coordination may be less intensive in Regular Medi-Cal because there are no managed care supports. Beneficiaries enrolled in managed care receive the care coordination by the managed care health plan.

Family training:

Although family training is not a Medi-Cal covered service, a similar service is covered through the Palliative Care Assessment and Consultation service.

24/7 palliative care phone consultation access:

Although 24/7 palliative care phone consultation access is not a Medi-Cal covered service, many managed care health plans have nurse advise lines to use.

Will my palliative care provider change?

Your PPC provider might change.

- If you get your health care services through a managed care health plan, ask your PPC provider if he or she works with your plan. If your provider does, you can keep the provider. If the provider does not work with your plan, you can call your plan and ask to keep your PPC provider if the provider and Medi-Cal health plan can work together. This is called continuity of care. Otherwise, you will need to choose a new provider in your plan's provider network.
- If you get your health care services through Fee-For-Service (Regular) Medi-Cal, you can get PPC services from any enrolled Medi-Cal provider. Ask your provider if they are enrolled as a Medi-Cal provider. If they are not, then you will need to choose another provider who is enrolled in Medi-Cal to keep getting the PPC services.

Will my treatment plan change?

It might, based on available services and your medical needs. You will work with your PPC provider on your treatment plan.

What happens next?

You will get more information in the next 30 days to help you with this change.

What if I need more help?

For questions about this change:

- If you are in a managed care health plan, call your plan's member services. Tell them you have a question about your Pediatric Palliative Care services.
- If you are in Fee-For-Service (Regular) Medi-Cal, call **1-800-541-5555**.

If you need more help, call the Department of Health Care Services Ombudsman toll free Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at **1-888-452-8609**.