

DATE: December 27, 2023

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS Letter No.: 23-32
ALL COUNTY WELFARE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIAISONS
ALL COUNTY HEALTH EXECUTIVES
ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY MEDS LIAISONS

SUBJECT: Update to Health Care Options (HCO) Program
[\(Ref: ACWDL No. 12-28\)](#)

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) letter is to provide information regarding the requirement for each Medi-Cal applicant or member to be informed of their available managed care and Fee-for-Service options. These educational services are funded by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and provided by California Health Care Options (CA HCO) throughout California. In an effort to reach and assist all Medi-Cal applicants and members, DHCS encourages counties to provide CA HCO with an opportunity to offer onsite assistance to applicants and members.

Background

Pursuant to Welfare & Institutions Code (W&I) section 14016.5, California established a method for informing Medi-Cal member of the options regarding methods for receiving Medi-Cal benefits in areas where Medi-Cal managed care plans (MCPs) are operating. This process for informing members is referred to as the HCO Program. The expectation is for each Medi-Cal applicant and predetermined eligible member to be afforded the opportunity for instruction regarding their Medi-Cal managed care medical and/or dental plan choices through county referrals to onsite CA HCO staff.

HCO Program Overview

CA HCO has a presence in County Organized Health Systems (COHS) counties, Single Plan (SP) counties where Kaiser Permanente Medi-Cal health plan is an option, and MCP Choice counties (Regional, Two-Plan, and Geographic Managed Care (GMC) counties).

- **COHS counties with Kaiser Permanente include:** Marin, Mariposa, Napa, Orange, Placer, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, Sutter, Ventura, Yolo, and Yuba.
- **SP counties include:** Alameda, Contra Costa, and Imperial.

Letter No.:23-32
Page 2
December 27, 2023

- **MCP Choice counties (Regional, Two-Plan, Geographic Managed Care (GMC) counties) include:** Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Mono, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Tuolumne.

This letter outlines the benefits of having CA HCO Enrollment Service Representatives (ESRs) onsite in Choice, SP and COHS county offices to assist members and the community in navigating the Medi-Cal managed care system through the following education and outreach efforts:

- Onsite Medi-Cal Managed Care expert resource
- Transitional support services
- Disenrollment support and enrollment assistance
- Enhanced member-centered customer service support
- County-specific Medi-Cal managed care education

Implementation Information

HCO Program education is available to all social service agencies. For more information regarding HCO Program services or to learn about additional services provided by CA HCO, please contact your county's CA HCO Regional Manager by sending an email to CAHCO_FOPS_Community@maximus.com.

If you have any questions or if we can provide further information, please contact PCUResearch@dhcs.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Yingjia Huang
Assistant Deputy Director
Health Care and Benefits
Department of Health Care Services