

NEW REPORT SHOWS INCREASE IN NUMBER OF CALIFORNIANS BENEFITTING FROM EXPANDED MEDI-CAL SERVICES

In the first 12 months, 109,004 Medi-Cal members across the state received the Enhanced Care Management benefit, and 36,391 members received 80,859 Community Supports services.

Housing supports are the most popular Community Supports offered. More than 40 percent of members who received Community Supports received housing transition navigation services that helped them find, secure, and maintain stable housing.

SACRAMENTO — The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) released a new [report](#) highlighting a notable increase in the number of Californians accessing and utilizing the wide array of benefits and services provided by the Medi-Cal program's Enhanced Care Management (ECM) and Community Supports, which DHCS launched in January 2022 under Governor Newsom's California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) initiative.

"California is transforming Medi-Cal to provide members with better access to more coordinated, person-centered, and equitable care. The first year of implementation represents just the beginning of our transformation journey," said **Jacey Cooper, State Medicaid Director and DHCS Chief Deputy Director for Health Care Programs**. "As we connect eligible members who would benefit from Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports, we anticipate these numbers will continue to increase in the coming months and years, and we are committed to making policy improvements so Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports are more accessible to members and providers across the state."

WHY THIS MATTERS: The report outlines the positive impact of ECM. More than half of Medi-Cal members enrolled in ECM in 2022 were individuals who were at risk of avoidable hospital or emergency department visits, more than 42,000 were members with serious mental health/substance use disorder needs, and more than 36,000 members were individuals experiencing homelessness. DHCS expects even more Californians to use these expanded Medi-Cal services in 2023 and 2024 as eligibility expands to new members or populations of focus, and as more providers contract with Medi-Cal managed care plans (MCPs) to deliver these vital services.

ABOUT THE EXPANDED SERVICES:

- **The ECM** benefit provides high-touch, person-centered care management to Medi-Cal members with the most complex medical and social needs. Eligible members referred to ECM receive access to a single lead care manager who helps them coordinate care and services among the physical, behavioral, dental, developmental, and social services delivery systems, making it easier for them to get the right care at the right time in the right setting.
- **Community Supports** are 14 services provided by Medi-Cal MCPs to help members address their health-related social needs, such as access to safe housing or healthy meals to aid in their recovery from illness, avoid higher and costlier levels of care, and live healthier lives.

"We are proud to see more Medi-Cal members taking advantage of the valuable benefits and services offered by our Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports services. We remain committed to making them more inclusive and accessible to all. Our Medi-Cal transformation isn't just a programmatic or operational change, but a cultural shift in how and where care is offered to build a healthier, stronger California," said **Palav Babaria, DHCS Chief Quality Officer and Deputy Director of Quality and Population Health Management.**

MOST POPULAR SUPPORTS: Community Supports have proven to be a crucial safety net for Californians, with housing-related Community Supports being the most utilized services in 2022:

- More than 40 percent of members who received Community Supports received **housing transition navigation services** that helped them find, secure, and maintain stable housing.
- Another highly utilized support was the **housing tenancy and sustaining service**, which provides members with landlord coordination assistance, eviction prevention resources, and the annual housing recertification process.
- The third most utilized housing-related support was **housing deposit assistance**, which helps members pay for housing security deposits, first and last month's rent, and first month of utilities and related setup fees. Members can also receive funding for medically necessary items like air conditioners, heaters, and hospital beds to ensure their new home is safe for move-in.

NEXT STEPS:

- This year, Medi-Cal MCPs are partnering with DHCS to expand access to and utilization of ECM and Community Supports across the state, focusing on including children and youth and members eligible for long-term care. Next year, ECM will expand to include justice-involved individuals and high-risk pregnancies.

- In addition, DHCS is taking [several steps](#) to improve standardization and streamline program design to reduce administrative burden for ECM and Community Supports providers. For example, all Medi-Cal MCPs are required to use consistent standards to determine member eligibility for ECM. Also, DHCS now will require plans to contract with specific types of community-based organizations that have experience working with eligible populations. With these specific changes, DHCS expects to reduce barriers for community-based providers to engage and participate as ECM and Community Supports providers.
- Finally, DHCS is working to ensure that members, providers, and Medi-Cal MCPs are aware of ECM and Community Supports services, and that providers and plans are explaining them accurately to members who may be eligible for them. An initial set of updated policies were reflected in each program's policy guide in July 2023 and are now available on the DHCS [website](#) at the following links: [ECM Policy Guide](#), [Community Supports Policy Guide](#), and a "[Cheat Sheet](#)" for ECM and Community Supports policy.

BIGGER PICTURE: While ECM and Community Supports have helped improve health outcomes for thousands of Californians, it is essential to acknowledge the challenges faced in their inaugural year. The COVID-19 pandemic presented unforeseen obstacles that tested the resilience of the health care system as well as providers. Despite these challenges, Medi-Cal MCPs and health care providers are moving to swiftly train new staff, build capacity, and develop new infrastructure to reach more members. To support this, DHCS' \$1.85 billion Providing Access and Transforming Health ([PATH](#)) initiative is building the capacity and infrastructure of on-the-ground partners, such as community-based organizations, public hospitals, county agencies, tribes, and others.

LEARN MORE: DHCS will host two public webinars this month to review updated policies for ECM and Community Supports; interested parties can register for the webinars below:

- [ECM After Year One](#): Implementation Progress and Policy Refinements (August 14, 2-3 p.m. PDT)
- [Community Supports After Year One](#): Implementation Progress and Policy Refinements (August 18, 9:30-10:30 a.m. PDT)

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