

Provider Bulletin

December 2008

Volume 12, Issue 4

To ALL Alliance Providers... We Thank You!

The Alliance would like to extend a big THANK YOU to all of our providers. Your continued efforts and commitment to provide quality care are greatly appreciated. We wouldn't be here without you! May this holiday season bring you good health, happiness and time to enjoy family and friends.



The Alliance Provider Services Department

Have You Attended an Alliance Workshop This Year?

We recently completed our second workshop series of the year titled, ABCs of Effective Case Management, which walked Primary Care Physician (PCP) office staff through a scenario with 'Chris Jones', a pseudonym for a typical Alliance linked member. Attendees were shown the basics of case managing 'Chris Jones' from the moment the member enters the office or clinic, including: eligibility verification; authorizations; health benefits and programs; Alliance resources and support; and, provider financial incentives. Providers were given tools to help them in managing members with complex healthcare needs and were reminded of the numerous resources available to them through the Alliance, including our case managers and social workers. The workshop also demonstrated ways to maximize provider payments through accurate and timely claim submission, annual incentive payment distribution, and Quality Based Incentives.

The Alliance holds 2-4 workshops per year to engage the provider community and offer helpful education, guidelines, and resources. We will kick off the new year with our first workshop beginning in late February, which will focus on our Cultural and Linguistic Services, including cultural competence, health literacy tools, and interpreter services. Stay tuned for additional details...

Do you have an idea for a workshop topic? Need additional training or assistance? Please contact the Provider Services Department at (831) 430-5540.

Changes in the Healthy Families Plan for Monterey County

In 2000, the Alliance's Healthy Families plan was launched in Monterey County. Effective February 1, 2009, the Alliance will become the sole Healthy Families plan serving Monterey County. Over 17,000 of Blue Cross' Healthy Families members are in the process of joining the Alliance's plan and in turn must select an Alliance contracted PCP. If you are currently seeing these members and would like to continue to do so, please contact your Provider Services Representative to ensure their linkage to your practice. The Alliance's Healthy Families plan reimburses at 130% of the Santa Clara County Medicare Fee Schedule and offers participation in an incentive payment plan. If you have questions about this change please call your local area Provider Services Representative, Gabriella Calderon (831) 430-5536 or Theresa Garcia (831) 430-5535.

Initial Health Assessment

PCPs are obligated to perform an initial health assessment (IHA) on new Medi-Cal members within 120 days of enrollment unless it has been determined by the PCP practice that the member's medical records contain complete and current information consistent with the health assessment criteria outlined in the "Case Management" section of your Alliance Provider Manual. Per state rules, the IHA must now include an "individual health education behavioral assessment" using the state's

Staying Healthy assessment tool, which can be found at: <http://www.ccah-alliance.org/risk.html>. This involves working with members to obtain their medical records from their previous provider(s) covering the prior 12 months of services they have received. The members may need to be reoriented on how to complete their medical records release form for submission to their previous provider(s).

Each month the Alliance provides you with a list of your newly linked members that may be due for their 120-day IHA. For members who do not respond to attempts to schedule the IHA, documentation in the patient's chart of two or more attempts, by telephone call and/or letter, will be considered as having met the Alliance's standard for completing an IHA.

Guidelines for completing the IHA, provider resources, forms, and patient handouts are available on our website. To help you use *Staying Healthy*, the Alliance offers a *Provider Resource Guide* which includes forms, counseling strategies, and local referral resources for a variety of behavioral health topics. For additional information please contact our Senior Health Educator, Lynn Meier, at (831) 430-5570.

Formulary Changes: October 2008

1. Ramipril (Altace) is on the formulary.
2. Depakote ER is not on the formulary. Please use generic Depakote (divalproex)
3. Restoril 7.5 mg strength only is no longer on the formulary. Please use 15 mg temazepam or zolpidem.
4. Singulair has been added to the formulary as Step Therapy for the treatment of asthma and in treatment failure to both antihistamines and nasal steroids in allergic rhinitis.

Claims Corner

ARTICLE CORRECTION:

We Are Here to Help You! Just a Click or Phone Call Away

Most claim issues can be resolved over the phone by calling our Claim Adjudicators, available Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, at (831) 430-5503. In addition, you may use our online Claims Resubmit feature through your Alliance Web Services Account.

New Alliance Providers

Please join us in welcoming the following new providers to the Alliance:

Monterey County

Referral Physicians / Specialists

Adian Clarke, MD - Anesthesiology

Michelle Liamidi, MD - Ob/Gyn

Pooja Sharma, MD - Internal Med

Chidi Ukatu, MD - General Surgery

John Mark, MD - Pediatric Pulmonary

Primary Care Physicians

John Ryan, MD - Family Practice

Renee Sosa, MD - Family Practice

Yanli Tao, MD - Pediatrics

Santa Cruz County

Referral Physicians / Specialists

Jodi Adams, MD - Emergency Med

David Arakaki, MD - Anesthesiology

Cesar Castillo, MD - Hospitalist/Internal Med

Pervaiz Chaudhry, MD - Thoracic Surgery

Steven Fernandez, MD - Anesthesiology

David Glenn, MD - Anesthesiology

Theresa Gurney, MD - Otolaryngology

Solmaz Nabipour, MD - Anesthesiology

Joseph Palascak, MD - Gastroenterology/I.M.

Hakima Schulz, MD - Hospitalist/Internal Med

Primary Care Physicians

Morgan Jenkins, MD - Pediatrics

Sherri Langhorne, DO - Pediatrics

James Telfer, MD - Internal Medicine

Health Programs Update

New Health Programs Coordinator



Meet Edgardo Monroy, our new Health Programs Coordinator. Edgardo started at the Alliance in September 2008. He is bilingual in English and Spanish and skilled at culturally appropriate outreach for our diverse membership.

Outreach to members focuses on increasing the use of preventive care. Our Health Programs Coordinators:

- Promote Alliance health education benefits.
- Encourage early and regular prenatal care and timely postpartum visits.
- Promote childhood immunizations and well-care visits for children and adolescents.
- Coordinate health promotion programs, including Weight Watchers scholarships, tobacco cessation, fitness, and nutrition.
- Make referrals to free and low-cost community classes and other resources.

Edgardo answers our **Member Health Education Line, (800) 700-3874 x5580** (English and Spanish). Please direct members to this number to request health education referrals, free health promotion items, such as pedometers and exercise videos, and easy-to-read materials on many health topics.

Immunizations Update

Immunizing children not only helps to protect the health of the child, but also achieves significant public health benefits and substantial cost savings. Results of a study on routine childhood immunization for a 2001 U.S. birth cohort showed for every \$1 spent, the vaccination program saves more than \$5 in direct costs and approximately \$11 in additional costs to society.¹

Alliance Immunization Outreach

In order to promote and encourage timely immunizations, the Alliance sends postcards to parents of infants ages 3 months and 9 months, reminding them to get their children's immunizations (IZs). As an additional intervention, we send PCPs a monthly list of members who are not current with their IZs so that the office can contact members directly to come in for an appointment. Through a grant from Santa Cruz County, Health Programs Coordinators also call the parents of all Santa Cruz County members ages 18-24 months to check the status of the child's IZs and make referrals to PCPs for those who are not current with their shots. Our goal is to promote full immunization for all members in the county by age 2.

Through these ongoing outreach efforts, more than 84% of all Medi-Cal, Healthy Kids and Healthy Families members under age 2 across Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties are currently immunized. For more information about the Alliance's Immunization Outreach program, contact our Health Programs Coordinators at (831) 430-5580.

Immunization Registry Underway

The Alliance is working together with Santa Cruz and Monterey counties on the development of county-wide immunization (IZ) registries. Registries are confidential, automated information systems designed to provide immediate access to a patient's IZ history. For more information about the registry, including a downloadable letter that was recently mailed to Alliance members, go to our website at www.ccah-alliance.org. Click on "Providers," then "Clinical Resources." Scroll down to "Preventive Care" and click on "Immunization Registry."

For more information about the Immunization Registry, please contact Lilia Chagolla, Health Programs Manager, at (831) 430-5569.

¹ F. Zhou, PhD., "Economic Evaluation of the 7-Vaccine Routine Childhood Immunization Schedule in the United States, 2001," *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* 159, (2005):1136-1144.

Cultural Crossroads

Tips and Resources to Help You Communicate Better with Alliance Members

Studies show that good physician-patient communication results in improved patient compliance, better medical outcomes, and fewer malpractice claims (for more on this, see *Physician-Patient Communication: Enhancing Skills to Improve Patient Satisfaction* at www.medscape.com). If you are not fluent in a patient's primary language, it is always best to use a qualified interpreter to communicate. Even if your staff is bilingual, most do not have the specialized skills that qualified medical interpreters have. The Alliance offers free interpreter services for our members, and we strongly encourage you to take advantage of these services.

Did you know that 50% of Alliance members in Monterey and Santa Cruz counties speak Spanish as their primary language? Other top languages include Vietnamese, Tagalog, Cantonese, and Korean, although in much smaller numbers. The charts below and on the next page display primary language by county for all four Alliance lines of business: Healthy Families, Healthy Kids, Alliance Care IHSS, and Medi-Cal. For questions about this data or for information about using the Alliance's free interpreter services, please contact Lynn Meier, Senior Health Educator, at (831) 430-5570 or lmeier@cchah-alliance.org.

Membership by Language, County, and Line of Business - 2008	
Healthy Families	
Healthy Families Santa Cruz County	
Arabic	0
Chinese	5
English	477
Japanese	0
Other	2
Spanish	1,087
Tagalog	0
Vietnamese	2
Total	1,573
Healthy Families Monterey County	
Arabic	2
Chinese	7
English	523
Japanese	0
Other	7
Spanish	1,382
Tagalog	10
Vietnamese	8
Total	1,939
Healthy Kids (Santa Cruz County Only)	
Chinese	1
English	74
Spanish	1,472
Tagalog	0
Total	1,547
Alliance Care IHSS (Monterey County Only)	
English	409
Portuguese	0
Spanish	18
Total	427

Cultural Crossroads

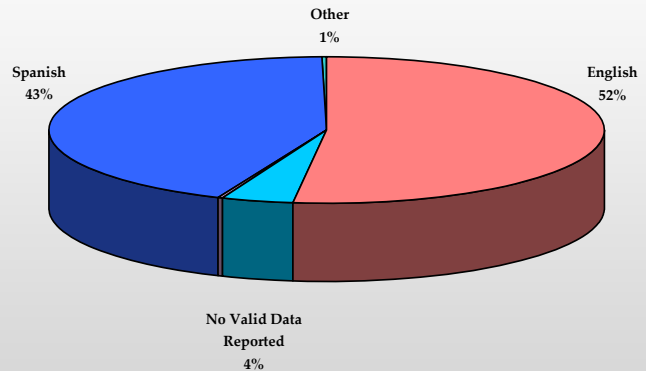
Tips and Resources to Help You Communicate Better with Alliance Members

Membership by Language, County, and Line of Business - 2008

Medi-Cal

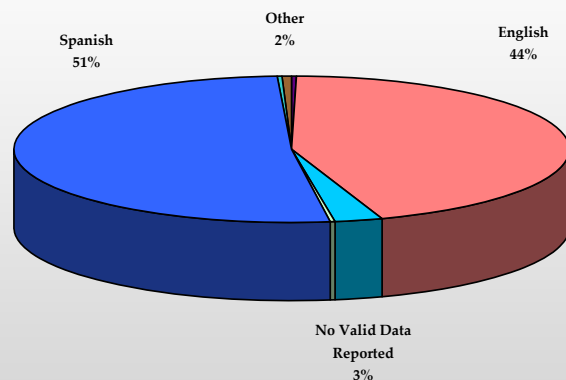
Medi-Cal Santa Cruz County

American Sign Lang (ASL)	8	0.03%
Arabic	6	0.02%
Armenian	1	0.00%
Cambodian	3	0.01%
Cantonese	24	0.08%
English	16,081	51.69%
Farsi	20	0.06%
French	1	0.00%
Hebrew	0	0.00%
Hmong	2	0.01%
Ilacano	3	0.01%
Italian	0	0.00%
Japanese	0	0.00%
Korean	10	0.03%
Lao	0	0.00%
Mandarin	11	0.04%
No Valid Data Reported	1,278	4.11%
Other Chinese Languages	15	0.05%
Other Non-English	20	0.06%
Other Sign Language	1	0.00%
Polish	1	0.00%
Portuguese	24	0.08%
Russian	7	0.02%
Samoan	16	0.05%
Spanish	13,524	43.47%
Tagalog	25	0.08%
Thai	3	0.01%
Turkish	2	0.01%
Vietnamese	23	0.07%
Total	31,109	100%



Medi-Cal Monterey County

American Sign Lang (ASL)	14	0.02%
Arabic	30	0.05%
Armenian	6	0.01%
Cambodian	1	0.00%
Cantonese	75	0.13%
English	25,379	44.42%
Farsi	11	0.02%
French	1	0.00%
Hebrew	3	0.01%
Hmong	5	0.01%
Ilacano	6	0.01%
Italian	2	0.00%
Japanese	12	0.02%
Korean	54	0.09%
Lao	1	0.00%
Mandarin	5	0.01%
No Valid Data Reported	1,565	2.74%
Other Chinese Languages	15	0.03%
Other Non-English	34	0.06%
Other Sign Language	1	0.00%
Polish	2	0.00%
Portuguese	7	0.01%
Russian	22	0.04%
Samoan	2	0.00%
Spanish	29,434	51.52%
Tagalog	108	0.19%
Thai	2	0.00%
Turkish	4	0.01%
Vietnamese	333	0.58%
Total	57,134	100%



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Upcoming Meetings

Managed Medical Care Commission Meetings

January 28, 2009	February 25, 2009
March 25, 2009	April 22, 2009

All Managed Medical Care Commission meetings are open to the public. Contact Administrative Specialist at (831) 430-5609 for meeting location or cancellation information.

Physicians Advisory Group

Next meeting date is TBD, Green Valley Grill, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Santa Cruz County Member Services Advisory Group

February 10, 2009, Alliance Office, 1600 Green Hills Road, Suite 101, Scotts Valley, 10 am-12 pm

Monterey County Member Services Advisory Group

Next meeting date is TBD, the Alliance Salinas Office; 1000 S. Main Street, Salinas, 12 pm-1:30 pm

Alliance Holiday Office Hours – Central Coast Alliance for Health will be closed to observe the following holidays:

Christmas Holiday - December 24-25, 2008
 New Years Day - January 1, 2009
 Martin Luther King Jr. Day - January 19, 2009

Changing your address, NPI or Tax ID #?

To prevent a delay in payment, please contact your Provider Services Representative as soon as possible.

1600 Green Hills Road, Suite 101
Scotts Valley, CA 95066-4981

**FOR HEALTH
ALLIANCE
CENTRAL COAST**

