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## 2016 Coordinated Care Initiative Program Improvements

April 2016

*This is one of three documents released by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) containing proposals for ensuring sustainable enrollment and improving quality in Cal MediConnect. The other two documents are “Streamlining the Cal MediConnect Voluntary Enrollment Process” and “Ensuring Sustainable Coordinated Care Initiative Enrollment” and both are available on [CalDuals.org](http://CalDuals.org). The proposals in all three documents are open for stakeholder comment. Comments are due to DHCS on April 22, 2016 and should be submitted to [info@calduals.org](mailto:info@calduals.org). Please see the text below for specific questions to guide your input.*

DHCS partners closely with stakeholders and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to identify opportunities for improvement to the Coordinated Care Initiative (CCI).

In 2016, DHCS is proposing a number of changes to improve and strengthen the program in areas of care coordination, continuity of care, and overall beneficiary experience. These proposals have been developed in response to early findings from evaluation data, beneficiary surveys and focus groups, and feedback from stakeholders. We look forward to stakeholder input to help us finalize these proposals.

### **1. Strengthening Care Coordination and Access to Long-term Services and Supports**

Care coordination is the cornerstone of Cal MediConnect. Early evaluation data shows that beneficiaries in Cal MediConnect health plans are satisfied with how their different providers are working with each other and are confident in their care. One care coordination activity Cal MediConnect health plans are responsible for is facilitating access to long-term services and supports (LTSS). LTSS includes In-home Supportive Services (IHSS), Community-based Adult Services (CBAS), Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP), and nursing home care. These supports, which help beneficiaries continue living in their home and community, are at the heart of the Cal MediConnect program.

DHCS will be taking several steps to ensure that beneficiaries in Cal MediConnect have access to coordinated care and to the crucial services they need. These proposals are intended to streamline and improve understanding of the LTSS referral processes in Cal MediConnect health plans and collect more information about both LTSS referrals and care coordination processes. This is an area that has generated significant interest from advocates and stakeholders, and that feedback has helped shape these proposals.

#### *1.a. Review Cal MediConnect Health Plan Policies and Procedures Regarding Referrals to LTSS*

DHCS, in partnership with CMS, will work to strengthen oversight of health plan LTSS referrals by requiring health plans to submit their most recent policies and procedures on how LTSS referrals are handled in the Cal MediConnect program including, but not limited to, staff training and oversight components. These policies and procedures were reviewed by as part of the robust plan readiness review DHCS and CMS conducted prior to Cal MediConnect enrollment, and ongoing

high level review has helped DHCS identify the need for changes proposed below regarding LTSS referrals. This proposed review process will be further informed by plan experience since implementation.

A major goal of this review is to ensure all beneficiaries who could benefit from LTSS (i.e., IHSS, CBAS, and MSSP) are being appropriately referred to these programs and that plans are implementing best practices developed over the course of the program to date. Health plans with any gaps or deficiencies in these policies and procedures will be required to submit a revision for approval and ultimately a performance improvement plan if appropriate changes are not made timely.

Reviewing health plan policies and procedures (as well as data reported by the health plans, see below) on LTSS referrals will also help DHCS identify best practices to share with other Cal MediConnect health plans, as well as areas for improvement.

DHCS welcomes any stakeholder input on this topic, including any best practices that have been identified by stakeholder for LTSS referrals.

#### *1.b. Standardize Health Risk Assessment LTSS Referral Questions*

After several years of Cal MediConnect health plans conducting Health Risk Assessments (HRA), DHCS and the health plans have identified best practices on how to assess beneficiaries' needs for LTSS during the assessment process. This includes the identification of questions that are more preferable for LTSS referral purposes. Standard HRA LTSS referral questions will be created and required of health plans resulting in an improved beneficiary experience and increased referrals to LTSS programs. Standardization of questions will also allow for better comparison of performance across health plans.

DHCS welcomes stakeholder input on the proposal to standardize LTSS referral questions. If DHCS moves forward with standardizing questions, DHCS will release draft standardized questions for stakeholder comment.

#### *1.c. Collect Quarterly Care Coordination and LTSS Referral Data*

During the initial development of Cal MediConnect, DHCS worked with stakeholders to develop the 22 state-specific Cal MediConnect quality and outcomes measures currently reported by the health plans (overall the plans currently report on 154 measures). Stakeholders have expressed the need to collect different and more frequent data on care coordination and LTSS referrals, as well as the need for more public reporting of this data. In response and as a method to strengthen oversight of the program, DHCS proposes to update and strengthen the data health plans report on Interdisciplinary Care Teams (ICTs), Individualized Care Plans (ICPs), and LTSS (CBAS, IHSS and MSSP) referrals. DHCS has already launched a quarterly Cal MediConnect Performance Dashboard, which will continue to be amended and updated prospectively. This increased transparency will help enhance existing oversight and understanding of beneficiary experience when accessing care coordination in Cal MediConnect.

DHCS welcomes any stakeholder input on this topic. DHCS is currently assessing the need for new data measures. Any new data measures will be developed in partnership with CMS and will be released for stakeholder comment soon.

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

- What data will DHCS collect from the health plans? Can stakeholder have input?
  - We are developing these new measures with CMS, and will release that for stakeholder comment.
- Will the data be publicly shared?
  - DHCS will continue to release the quarterly performance dashboard, and will look to identify ways to build on that dashboard with new data to continue to increase transparency.
- Are there plans to standardize all HRA questions across the Cal MediConnect program? Why not?
  - LTSS referrals through the HRA have been identified as potentially needing improvement, and an area where there are clear best practices to share among health plans.

## **2. Sharing Best Practices and Lessons Learned**

Cal MediConnect health plans will begin a series of meetings to share best practices. These meetings will provide health plans with an opportunity to highlight areas of care coordination where they are exceling, learn about innovative approaches, and work other health plans are undertaking. Discussions will be informed by the health plan performance data reported to NORC, the CMS contractor responsible for collecting national and CA-specific Medicare-Medicaid Plan reporting requirements, as well as additional metrics required by DHCS. DHCS believes these forums will improve collaboration and understanding among different Cal MediConnect health plans and help ensure that all health plans are delivering high-quality, coordinated care to beneficiaries. This process and structure is currently utilized on the Medi-Cal managed care side.

The first Cal MediConnect Best Practices Meeting will be held in May. DHCS welcomes stakeholder suggestions on discussion topics for convenings.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

- Will members of the public/Ombudsman/other stakeholders be allowed to attend?
  - No, we believe that keeping the meetings limited to staff from the health plans, DHCS, and CMS will be most conducive to this process.
  - As we develop best practices and lessons learned in this process, we will share those with stakeholders.
  - Stakeholders who are experts in their field may be invited to meetings to present on specific topics. It is important for plans to hear the experience of entities that interact with plans and provide services to our beneficiaries, for example the Ombudsman or other community-based organizations.

## **3. Strengthening Continuity of Care**

In order to ensure that beneficiary transitions into Cal MediConnect are smooth and do not result in disruptions in care, the CCI continuity of care policy provides beneficiaries with the right to continue seeing non-participating physicians for a limited period of time. As part of the HRA process for beneficiaries transitioning to Cal MediConnect, health plans work with beneficiaries to facilitate continuity of care.

DHCS, in partnership with CMS, is exploring two modifications to existing policy:

- a. Aligning the Medicare continuity of care timeframe with what is required for Medi-Cal providers. This will extend the current continuity of care period for Medicare services from 6 months to 12 months.
- b. Aligning the Cal MediConnect continuity of care number of specialist visits with what is required on the Medi-Cal side. This will modify the current continuity of care requirement that requires two visits with a specialist within the past 12 months to require only one visit.

These changes are being proposed in direct response to evaluation data from The SCAN Foundation-funded beneficiary focus groups. Those data indicate that beneficiaries believe the continuity of care period is currently too short and that beneficiaries want to have access to their providers(s) during a longer transition period after joining Cal MediConnect. DHCS believes the extended continuity of care period will ease the transition to Cal MediConnect for beneficiaries and give physicians and health plans a more sufficient period of time to develop a relationship, which may increase both beneficiary and provider participation in the program. DHCS also believes that reducing visit requirements for specialists will allow beneficiaries to retain access to more of their physicians under the continuity of care requirement.

DHCS welcomes any stakeholder input on this topic.

### Frequently Asked Questions

- How does this proposal build on what health plans are currently doing to identify continuity of care needs during the HRA process?
  - Health plans are actively working to improve their continuity of care procedures. This proposal will give beneficiaries access to more of their physicians for longer periods of time than currently required.

### **4. Using Opt Out Data Analysis to Target Provider Education**

DHCS has conducted a detailed analysis of beneficiaries who opted out of Cal MediConnect and their most frequently seen providers. This data allows us to identify providers (including physicians, hospitals, and medical groups) associated with large numbers of beneficiaries who have chosen not to participate in Cal MediConnect. DHCS intends to use these data to more effectively target provider education and outreach activities. These activities will both allow DHCS to engage with providers about their questions on the program, what they or their patients may want to know, and ensure that providers and beneficiaries have sufficient and accurate information about the program and its potential benefits. In addition, this analysis will allow DHCS to create

education outreach plans that are culturally appropriate for these providers. DHCS intends to share these data analyses with health plans and partner together in these efforts.

DHCS welcomes any stakeholder comment on this item.

### Frequently Asked Questions

- Will you be making this data publicly available?
  - DHCS will share this data analysis with the Cal MediConnect health plans. This data will not be shared publicly to ensure provider and beneficiary privacy. However, high-level information will be presented at public venues.