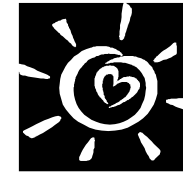


# BOARD OF GOVERNORS

## Children’s Health Consultant Advisory Committee

### Meeting Minutes – September 19, 2023

1055 W. Seventh Street, Los Angeles, CA 90017



**L.A. Care**  
HEALTH PLAN

#### Members

Tara Ficek, MPH, Chair	Gwendolyn Ross Jordan
Felix Aguilar-Hernandez	Lynda Knox, PhD
Sameer Amin, MD	Nayat Mutafyan*
Edward Bloch, MD	Hilda Perez
Maria Chandler, MD, MBA*	Maryjane Puffer, BSN, MPH
James Cruz, MD*	Diana Ramos, MD*
Rebecca Dudovitz, MD, MS	Ilan Shapiro, MD, FAAP*
Rosina Franco, MD*	Diane Tanaka, MD*
Toni Frederick, PhD	

#### Management

Sameer Amin, MD, Chief Medical Officer  
 Alex Li, MD, Chief Health Equity Officer  
 Phinney Ahn, Executive Director, Medi-Cal Product Management  
 Karla Lee Romero, Director, Medi-Cal Product Management

\*Absent \*\*Present, but not quorum

AGENDA ITEM/ PRESENTER	MOTIONS / MAJOR DISCUSSIONS	ACTION TAKEN
<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>	Tara Ficek, MPH, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. without a quorum.	
<b>APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA</b>	<p><i>(Member Frederick and Member Dudovitz joined the meeting)</i></p> <p><i>The committee reached quorum at 9:17 A.M.</i></p> <p><b>The Agenda for today’s meeting was approved as submitted.</b></p>	<p><b>Approved.</b></p> <p><b>9 AYES (Aguilar-Hernandez, Amin, Bloch, Dudovitz, Ficek, Jordan, Knox, Perez, Puffer)</b></p> <p><i>(Member Frederick was present, but did not cast a vote)</i></p>
<b>PUBLIC COMMENT</b>	No public comment was submitted.	

**APPROVED**

AGENDA ITEM/ PRESENTER	MOTIONS / MAJOR DISCUSSIONS	ACTION TAKEN
<b>CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT</b>	<p>Chairperson Ficek gave the following report:</p> <p>She stated that she would not discuss the current happenings in Medi-Cal. Instead, she shared an insight from a podcast interview with Jose Andres, a world-famous chef and founder of the nonprofit World Central Kitchen. The organization provides meals in emergency situations and crisis-stricken communities. Chairperson Ficek highlighted Andres' philosophy of "plan less, adapt more," emphasizing the need to avoid over planning and over analysis, which can hinder action and inhibit adaptability. She urged the audience to reflect on the applicability of this philosophy in their work environments, projects, or when dealing with issues. She shared her perspective on moments at First5 LA where excessive planning had limited responsiveness, emphasizing the importance of being nimble. She concluded by encouraging everyone to consider the "plan less, adapt more" approach and how it might resonate with their work, leaving the audience with a philosophical perspective to ponder throughout the day.</p>	
<b>APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES</b>	<p><b>The November 15, 2022 minutes, January 17, 2023 summary, March 21, 2023 summary, and the May 16, 2023 summary and August 15, 2023 summary were approved as submitted.</b></p> <p><i>The agenda and the meeting minutes were approved simultaneously.</i></p>	<p><b>Approved.</b> <b>9 AYES (Aguilar-Hernandez, Amin, Bloch, Dudovitz, Ficek, Jordan, Knox, Perez, Puffer)</b></p> <p><i>(Member Frederick was present, but did not cast a vote)</i></p>
<b>CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR ELECTION</b>	<p><u>CHAIRPERSON ELECTION</u></p> <p>Tara Ficek, MPH, Director, Health Systems, First 5 LA, was nominated by Member Amin and Member Perez and unanimously elected Chairperson of the Committee.</p>	<p><b>Approved.</b> <b>9 AYES (Aguilar-Hernandez, Amin, Bloch, Dudovitz, Ficek, Jordan, Knox, Perez, Puffer)</b></p> <p><i>(Member Frederick was present, but did not cast a vote)</i></p>

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	<p><u>VICE CHAIR ELECTION</u> Maryjane Puffer, BSN, MPA, Executive Director, L.A. Trust for Children's Health, was nominated by Member Perez and elected Vice Chair of the Committee.</p>	<p><b>Approved.</b> <b>9 AYES (Aguilar-Hernandez, Amin, Bloch, Dudovitz, Ficek, Jordan, Knox, Perez, Puffer)</b></p> <p><i>(Member Frederick was present, but did not cast a vote)</i></p>
<p><b>CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER REPORT</b></p>	<p>Dr. Sameer Amin, MD, gave a Chief Medical Officer update.</p> <p>Dr. Amin outlined three key areas in his update. Firstly, he discussed the challenges with specialty access, emphasizing the recent vendor survey results that indicated insufficient progress, especially during the pandemic. Dr. Amin expressed a comprehensive effort to address this issue, focusing on data tailoring to identify acute problems among delegates, urging network expansion, and exploring virtual care solutions. Dr. Amin addressed interactions with the network management team to enhance the direct network and ensure the inclusion of providers willing and capable of serving patients. He emphasized the need for rigorous efforts in virtual care, championed by Dr. Li. The third aspect involved collaboration with the enterprise performance optimization team to improve communication with delegated portions of the network, issuing more specific caps for remediation plans. Regarding transitions of care programs, Dr. Amin highlighted efforts to navigate changes in Medicaid medical, particularly the challenges associated with delivering coordinated care without duplication. He advocated for a coordinating force, leading to the establishment of an office of transitions of care. Dr. Amin expressed optimism about working with the Department of Health Services (DHS) and the evolving approach for the 2024 population, incorporating innovative tactics and reducing the reliance on individual case managers. Dr. Amin provided an update on the utilization management (UM) department, noting a substantial team size increase and focused efforts on auditing and training for inpatient teams. He underscored the positive impact on turnaround times and compliance, showcasing the team's engagement with hospitals for patient discharge and contributions to strategy changes for skilled nursing facilities. Dr. Amin expressed satisfaction with the team's performance, anticipating further improvement in the identified areas over the next year.</p>	

AGENDA ITEM/ PRESENTER	MOTIONS / MAJOR DISCUSSIONS	ACTION TAKEN
	<p>Member Puffer asked if the UM audit was done by an external auditor.</p> <p>Dr. Amin responded to Ms. Puffer, stating that upon entering the organization approximately 10 to 11 months ago, he conducted a thorough foundational gaps analysis. Identifying specific areas requiring increased investment, he highlighted utilization management and case management as key focus areas. Under his leadership, the case management team saw a substantial 66% increase. Additionally, the managed long-term services team, responsible for skilled nursing facilities and community support programs, witnessed an approximate 40% expansion. Dr. Amin emphasized the organization's significant investment in health services, extending to the community health department. This department oversees behavioral health, social services, community supports, and housing initiatives, with substantial investments to enhance their capabilities. He praised the enthusiasm and commitment to data and analytics for network management, noting the positive outcomes of the significant redesign and restructuring efforts on the health services side. Dr. Amin highlighted improved compliance and enhanced services provided to the network as tangible results of these strategic investments.</p> <p>Member Puffer expressed appreciation for the Student Behavioral Health Improvement Program (SBHIP) and commented on the innovative concept of merging the way schools conduct business, particularly in the realm of behavioral health, with health plans. She acknowledged the positive aspects of this approach and conveyed her support for the initiative.</p> <p>Dr. Amin expressed enthusiasm for the successful launch of the Student Behavioral Health Improvement Program (SBHIP) within the last 10 months. He credited the initiative to the efforts of Dr. Brodsky and Dr. Robinson from the community health department, commending them as champions of the program. Dr. Amin conveyed excitement not only about the program's initial implementation but also about its potential to make a significant difference for children in the future.</p> <p>Member Puffer noted that there's some funding that has come down from the stage.</p> <p>Dr. Amin outlined the significant efforts undertaken by the organization to enhance behavioral health care for students. He highlighted two main programs—one focused on placing counselors in schools and the other aimed at improving the infrastructure. In total, Dr. Amin mentioned the implementation of four distinct programs designed to collaborate with school systems in order to elevate the standard of behavioral health care for students.</p>	

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	<p>Member Puffer emphasized the significance of the Child and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative, a substantial \$4 billion effort across the state. She highlighted ongoing discussions with Melissa Stafford, who leads the initiative, focusing on leveraging these funds to support the \$4 billion community schools effort in the state. With Los Angeles County boasting 254 community schools, each mandated to have an internal school coordinator, the strategy involves integrating comprehensive support for the overall health and wellness of students. Ms. Puffer connected this initiative with the Student Behavioral Health Improvement Program (SBHIP), expressing its potential to reinforce the behavioral health aspect. She acknowledged the alignment with Dr. Amin's comments on enhancing case management for children, emphasizing that the current time presents a unique opportunity for such endeavors.</p> <p>Dr. Amin expressed appreciation for Ms. Puffer's comments and shared insights on the importance of investments in initiatives like SBHIP. He emphasized the shift towards building infrastructure for long-term impact, distinguishing it from short-term spending. Dr. Amin highlighted the significance of creating lasting structures and programs that endure beyond the initial influx of funds, ensuring sustained benefits for children. He stressed the value of using the allocated funds to establish a robust foundation for school behavioral health, with an emphasis on longevity and future impact.</p> <p>Member Jordan raised a question regarding the children's behavioral health programs and inquired whether they would also cater to children and adolescents with developmental disabilities. She highlighted the observed increase in behavioral challenges among teenagers and young adults with developmental disabilities, emphasizing the difficulty in accessing generic resources for this demographic. Member Jordan sought clarification on whether there were considerations to include individuals with developmental disabilities in the targeted programs.</p> <p>Dr. Amin responded to Member Jordan expressing appreciation for her comments and assuring her that the behavioral health programs would indeed be available for students with developmental disabilities. He mentioned that he would check with Dr. to provide more specific information on the targeting of that population. Dr. Amin emphasized the broad availability of these programs and mentioned multiple funding streams, including the Challenge Behavioral Health Initiative, which aims at systems change and has additional rounds of grants planned. He encouraged exploring the initiative's website for further information and highlighted the community-driven approach in determining essential services.</p>	

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<b>MEDI-CAL REDETERMINATION</b>	<p>Ms. Ahn and Ms. Romero gave an update on Medi-Cal Redetermination (<i>a copy of the presentation can be obtained from Board Services</i>).</p> <p>Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medi-Cal redetermination updates</li> <li>• Current outreach tactics</li> <li>• Discussion – additional outreach strategies</li> </ul> <p>Medi-Cal redeterminations for members (with August renewal month)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action taken on third cohort of beneficiaries (September 1, 2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Auto renewal using existing info in Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) systems started in June <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pass = renewed</li> <li>○ Fail – Beneficiaries mailed renewal packet in late June <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ~127,000 L.A. Care members were mailed a packet</li> <li>▪ L.A. Care conducted a call campaign for these members in July</li> <li>▪ Monthly data file of members who were mailed a packet shared with groups/Independent Physicians Associations (IPA)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• If no response to packet/request for info, beneficiary lost coverage effective September 1 and entered the 90-day cure period (procedural term/on hold) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ L.A. Care called and mailed postcards to these “on hold” members</li> <li>○ Monthly on-hold data file shared with groups/IPAs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Estimated September 2023 disenrollment and on-hold counts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 58,000 total disenrollments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 49,000 procedural terminations / on-holds</li> <li>○ 9,000 disenrollments / no longer eligible</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<p>Redetermination Outcomes to Date</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Medi-Cal Renewal Outcomes (June – August 2023)</b></p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <caption>Medi-Cal Renewal Outcomes (June – August 2023)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Members with 834 Renewal Month</th> <th>Coverage Maintained</th> <th>On-Hold</th> <th>Disenrolled</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>June Renewal Month</td> <td>207,138</td> <td>163,244</td> <td>37,823</td> <td>6,071</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July Renewal Month</td> <td>210,505</td> <td>177,481</td> <td>19,849</td> <td>13,175</td> </tr> <tr> <td>August Renewal Month</td> <td>203,375</td> <td>145,647</td> <td>49,210</td> <td>8,518</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Unwinding Continues  Medi-Cal redeterminations continue to be in flight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next cohort of beneficiaries impacted are those with a September 2023 renewal month <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Renewal processing for beneficiaries with a September renewal month began in July</li> <li>- Paper packets for the individuals who failed auto renewal were mailed around July 19</li> <li>- L.A. Care expects to receive the list of members who were mailed a packet from DHCS on September 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o A call campaign is planned to target these individuals</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Medi-Cal redetermination will continue annually for all beneficiaries.</i></p>	Month	Members with 834 Renewal Month	Coverage Maintained	On-Hold	Disenrolled	June Renewal Month	207,138	163,244	37,823	6,071	July Renewal Month	210,505	177,481	19,849	13,175	August Renewal Month	203,375	145,647	49,210	8,518	
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	<p>Key Messages to Share with Beneficiaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Update your contact information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make sure the county has your current contact information, if it has changed. This way, the county can contact you about your Medi-Cal. If your information has changed, you can update it online at <a href="http://benefitscal.com">benefitscal.com</a> or by calling DPSS at 1-866-613-3777</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Create or check your online account <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You can sign up to receive alerts on your case. Create or log into your BenefitsCal account to get these alerts. You may submit renewals or requested information online</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Check your mail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The county will mail you a letter about you Medi-Cal eligibility. You may need to complete a renewal form</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Complete your renewal form (if you get one) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If you receive a renewal form in the mail, submit your information by mail, phone, in person, or online so you do not lose your coverage.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Watch out for scammers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is no cost to renew your Medi-Cal</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Dr. Li asked if there were any children that were automatically renewed such as children in foster or children with disabilities. Ms. Ahn responded that children in foster care have a slightly different renewal pathway. She can provide more information on that. Ms. Ahn stated that is done by aid codes. She emphasized the importance of obtaining information on how individuals renew, whether through auto-renewal or other means. She indicated that they recently acquired this data, prompting ongoing analytics and number analysis to better understand the renewal dynamics.</p> <p>Member Aguilar-Hernandez stated that Ms. Ahn and her team are doing great work in Medi-Cal Redeterminations. He said that he hears from parents that it is very difficult to work the DPSS. He asked “How is L.A. Care working with DPSS to address Medi-Cal redeterminations?” Ms. Ahn responded that L.A. Care has always considered DPSS to be an essential partner, because they are the agency that approves and renews Medi-Cal for the population in L.A. County. L.A. Care shares with them demographic information and L.A. Care has ramped up this process by creating a Memorandum of Understanding with them.</p>	

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	<p>She noted that DPSS is under pressure due to the volume of applications. This has also affected call wait times.</p> <p>Member Knox suggested leveraging the toolkit for providers and schools by cross-training practice facilitators. She emphasized the availability of facilitators both in-house and through external programs like the equipped project and the state's equity practice transformation initiative. Member Knox proposed organizing an all-call training for practice facilitators across the county, enabling them to integrate the toolkit into their work in various practices. The idea was to use this trained workforce to assist individuals in the renewal or authorization process efficiently. Ms. Ahn responded that it is a great idea and she will reach out to her after the meeting to get more information.</p> <p>Member Perez shared her perspective on the Health Promoters program and highlighted its active participation in various Community Resource Center (CRC) events, especially during flu season. She emphasized the personal approach taken at events, such as the Norwalk CRC, where help promoters engage with individuals, collect information, and provide follow-up support. Member Perez suggested coordinating efforts and criteria among SRC coordinators to enhance efficiency. Additionally, she commended the widespread visibility of billboards and bus stop ads, echoing the importance of connecting messages to actions. Member Perez stressed the need for resources and efforts to align seamlessly, ensuring that individuals take meaningful actions in response to the messages. She invited committee members to attend board meetings and inquired about outreach efforts to families, emphasizing collaboration with partners. Ms. Ahn expressed appreciation for Ms. Perez's insightful points and committed to connecting with the team to verify how renewals are promoted at flu clinics. She acknowledged the lack of a consistent approach and mentioned the understanding that each CRC operates differently with varying space limitations. Ms. Ahn highlighted the excellent work done by Norwalk.</p>	
<b>CLINICAL INITIATIVES</b>	This agenda item was not discussed due to time.	
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 a.m.	

Respectfully submitted by:  
Victor Rodriguez, *Board Specialist II, Board Services*  
Malou Balones, *Board Specialist III, Board Services*  
Linda Merkens, *Senior Manager, Board Services*

APPROVED BY:  
Tara Ficek, *MPH, Chairperson* \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED**