

MEETING OF BLUE SHIELD OF CALIFORNIA PROMISE HEALTH PLAN
LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

Date:	Thursday, September 5, 2024.
Time:	1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Location:	Hybrid (Virtual and in-person: 3840 Kilroy Airport Way, Long Beach)
Attendance:	<p>Committee Members present:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Member A, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 2. Member B, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 3. Member C, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 4. Member D, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 5. Member E, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 6. Member F, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 7. Member G, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 8. Member H, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 9. Anwar Zoueihid, VP of Long-Term Services & Supports, Partners in Care Foundation 10. Connor Hannigan, Staff Attorney, Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County 11. Halina Fardin, Program Develop Specialist, Worksite Wellness LA 12. Margie Harper, LA South-Central Mental Health Non- Profit 13. Richard Ayoub, CEO, Project Angel Food 14. Sally Valenzuela, Pathways LA <p>Committee Members absent:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kristine Choulakian, Outreach Specialist, Personal Assistance Councils <p>Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan Representatives present:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Araceli Garcia, Program Manager, Consultant 2. Marilyn Milano, Program Manager, Principal 3. Jennifer Nuovo, M.D., Chief Medical Officer 4. Sandra Rose, Senior Director, Community Programs <p>Members of the Public</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lisa Risch, California Department of Health Care Services 2. Preston Poon, California Department of Health Care Services
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Blue Shield Promise Health Plan Updates II. Re-cap of Q2-2024 Meeting III. Cultural & Linguistically Appropriate Services Report and Disparities Report

	IV. Information Resource Center Programs and Services V. Website Updates VI. Ombudsman Update VII. Discussion VIII. Closing Remarks
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Introductions and Welcome

- Araceli Garcia began the meeting with roll call and went over meeting logistics.
- Sandra Rose welcomed the committee and reviewed the agenda.

I. Blue Shield Promise Health Plan Update

- Sandra Rose provided an update on the Community Resource Center back-to-school events, vaccination clinics and a new community wellness collaboration with Thrive Global.
 - Back-to-school events
 - Blue Shield Promise, in partnership with LA Care, distributed 15,000+ backpacks with school supplies at 16 back-to-school events at the Community Resource Centers.
 - Since 2019, 81,000+ backpacks have been given to school children in the community.
 - Support was widespread from elected officials, volunteers and community partners.
 - The events garnered local media coverage, including stories on KNBC-4, Telemundo 52, Spectrum 1 and Estrella TV.
 - Vaccination clinics
 - Flu vaccines and the new COVID booster will be offered for free, with a \$25 grocery gift card for those who get vaccinated.
 - Committee members are encouraged to promote these clinics in their communities and organizations.
 - Dr. Nuovo explained that flu shots are recommended for September or October to ensure protection through flu season and COVID booster shots are recommended three months after the last vaccination or infection.
 - Partnership with Thrive Global
 - Blue Shield Promise collaborated with Thrive Global, a wellness company founded by Arianna Huffington, to create a culturally tailored, budget-friendly cookbook.

- Some of the recipes were field tested in the Community Resource Center kitchens and with Kitchenistas from an organization called Olivewood Gardens in San Diego. Kitchenistas are community women who raise awareness about health and wellbeing by promoting healthy cooking.
- Distribution will begin mid-October, with events and cooking demonstrations to promote the cookbook.
- Hard copies, in limited quantity, will be available in English and Spanish, with electronic versions in additional languages available for download.

II. Recap of Q2-2024 Community Advisory Committee Meeting

- Sandra Rose reviewed the topic and action items from the Q2-2024 meeting.
 - The topic was the member incentive program for preventive screenings.
 - Based on the CAC's feedback, the Quality team is looking into adding new retailers such as AutoZone, Costco, Dollar Tree, and UberEATS for 2025.
 - It was confirmed that members can call in to attest to completing the preventive screening. Members in LA County can call: 1-866-223-2933.

III. Discussion: Cultural & Linguistically Appropriate Services Report and Disparities Report

- Marilyn Milano provided background about the Cultural and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) program and led a discussion to get feedback on the importance of culture and linguistics in healthcare.
 - Background:
 - The CLAS report focuses on member demographics, provider network compatibility, and the utilization of services like interpretation.
 - The CLAS goals for members are to receive health care:
 - By a doctor who respects and values their culture and beliefs
 - In a language they understand
 - Meets their needs
 - Regardless how someone identifies.
 - The report assesses whether the provider network meets the cultural and linguistic needs of members, ensuring services like interpretation are effectively utilized.
 - Blue Shield Promise aims to provide quality care in a language and manner that members understand and feel comfortable with.
 - Discussion:
 - The CAC were asked to share why they believe culture and linguistics are essential in healthcare.

- Several CAC attendees shared personal experiences where cultural or linguistic barriers affected their healthcare, emphasizing the need for providers to understand cultural backgrounds.
- The CAC highlighted factors they consider when selecting a doctor, including:
 - Age compatibility (younger or more experienced physicians)
 - Language compatibility
 - Location and accessibility of the doctor’s office
 - Specialization and ability to address specific healthcare needs
- The CAC also discussed the importance of feeling understood by their doctors, particularly in their primary spoken language.
 - The CAC suggested that more resources, like interpreter services and culturally relevant information, be made available at clinics and during healthcare visits.
 - Ideas for improvement included:
 - Frequent reminders about services via mail and digital formats
 - Informational videos highlighting available language services
 - Flyers and other materials distributed in clinics and community spaces
- Action Items:
 - Blue Shield Promise will continue working to enhance CLAS services, ensuring that both members and providers have access to the necessary resources to foster effective communication and care.
 - The CAC feedback from the meeting will be incorporated into future evaluations and program improvements.

IV. Discussion: Information Resource Center Programs and Services

- Sandra Rose gave an overview of the Information Resource Center (IRC) and asked the CAC for feedback about their impression of the name, ideas for new classes that appeal to children, youth, adults and seniors, and ideas for new programs and services to bring new people to the center.
 - Background:
 - Blue Shield Promise has operated an Information Resource Center (IRC) in Huntington Park for more than 17 years. Services include:
 - Assistance with Medi-Cal applications and renewals
 - Linkages to social services
 - Health education classes
 - The IRC was closed during the pandemic but has recently resumed programming. Upcoming offerings include cooking classes, health screenings, and a legal aid clinic in partnership with Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles.

- Discussion:
 - Sandra asked the CAC for input on whether the name "Information Resource Center" resonates or if a new name should be considered.
 - Member A suggested the name is too broad and does not clearly convey what the center offers. She recommended changing it to something more specific.
 - Member H felt the name was clear, but others agreed it could be more descriptive to attract newcomers.
 - The CAC's ideas for classes and activities included:
 - Children:
 - Member H suggested classes like Zumba for kids, which encourages physical activity and following directions.
 - Member A recommended teaching and performing interactive plays to engage children.
 - Member D proposed ballet for kids and folkloric dance classes.
 - Adults and Seniors:
 - Member B suggested classes on bullying, which affects all age groups, and mental stimulation activities for seniors to help prevent conditions like dementia.
 - Member D proposed internet classes for adults.
 - Member H recommended "Mommy and Me" support groups and yoga classes where parents can bring their babies.
 - Special Needs:
 - Member D emphasized the need for activities catering to children with special needs.
 - The CAC's ideas for attracting new people to the IRC included:
 - Member A suggested hosting open houses and fun events with refreshments to draw people in.
 - Member H emphasized the importance of offering daycare services or classes that allow parents to include their toddlers.
 - Member C recommended family game nights or community events to engage more families.
 - Member D suggested distributing flyers and hosting health fairs to increase awareness.
 - Member B inquired about transportation to the IRC, and Sandra explained that transportation benefits currently do not cover visits to the IRC. However, the IRC is located on major bus routes to ensure accessibility.
 - The CAC mentioned the need for better promotion of the IRC, including flyers, videos, and community outreach efforts.

V. Website Update

- Sandra Rose provided an update on three new webpages and asked the CAC to provide their feedback on the content and ease of navigation.
 - Advancing Health Equity Together
 - This webpage includes information about the Quality Improvement and Health Equity Committee and a summary of health equity activities and initiatives.
 - Behavioral Health Services
 - This webpage was updated to provide more information about behavioral health services and how to access them.
 - Find Help
 - This webpage features a new tool to help users search for social services, such as housing assistance, employment, food resources, etc. by entering a zip code.

VI. Ombudsman Presentation

- Connor Hannigan, from the Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles, presented and led a discussion the organization's legal services hotline, Q3 report on Medi-Cal and Medicare cases, and timely access to care.
 - Connor reminded the CAC of the free legal hotline available through Neighborhood Services of Los Angeles County. The CAC were encouraged to reach out with any health-related legal questions.
 - Q3 Report on Medi-Cal and Medicare Cases:
 - A decline in cases was noted in June, followed by an increase in July and August.
 - The major issue reported was the impact of the "unwinding" of the public health emergency, leading to many individuals losing Medi-Cal coverage after renewals. The team is focused on helping individuals regain their insurance.
 - Other issues being addressed include In-Home Supportive Services termination and transportation challenges for medical appointments.
 - Timely Access to Care
 - Connor reviewed access standards for care:
 - Urgent Care: Health plans must provide urgent care without prior authorization within 48 hours.
 - Non-Urgent Care: Primary care appointments should be scheduled within 10 business days, while specialty care appointments should be within 15 business days.
 - Mental Health: Appointments should be scheduled within 10 business days for mental health providers.

- If there are delays in accessing care, members should contact customer care to help resolve the issue.
- Travel Distance Standards
 - Primary care should be within 30 minutes or 10 miles of a member's location. Specialty care travel should be no more than 30 minutes or 15 miles, but exceptions exist depending on the circumstances.
- Connor offered to discuss any specific concerns and emphasized that the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) website has additional information on these standards.

VII. Open Discussion

- Sandra reminded the CAC how members can file a complaint and encouraged members to contact Customer Care or visit a Community Resource Center for assistance.

VIII. Closing and Adjournment

- Sandra Rose concluded the meeting by thanking the committee for their time and feedback and reminding the group to review the appendix materials.
 - Appendix A: Standing Reports
 - Membership & Interpreter Services
 - Grievances Q2-2024
 - Appeals Q2-2024
 - Appendix B: Blue Shield Promise Contacts