



Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties Partner for a Healthier Community

We at the Santa Barbara Regional Health Authority are looking forward to the joining together of San Luis Obispo County Medi-Cal with the Authority's current Medi-Cal program. The program is scheduled to begin in March 2008. We believe that this partnership will enhance the current Medi-Cal program for the providers and members in both counties. If you have not received a contract to participate in the San Luis Obispo Medi-Cal program, please contact your local Authority office at (805) 543-4099. Please read on and learn about our services and the exciting new developments occurring at Santa Barbara Regional Health Authority (SBRHA).



The Santa Barbara Regional Health Authority is changing its name as of January 1, 2008 to CenCal Health. As we mature as an organization and partner with San Luis Obispo County, a fresh identity is needed to better convey our mission, vision, and values. In addition, this new name reflects the unique and exceptional qualities of our service area which will include both Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. We look forward to working with the provider community in San Luis Obispo County as we begin the administration of the Medi-Cal product into this county as of March, 2008. With over 24 years of service and commitment to the Santa Barbara community, we look forward to building equally strong relationships in San Luis Obispo County. Watch for more information including our new logo in the months to come.

SBRHA New Board Composition/ Committee Structure March 2008

One of the exciting developments in preparation for the San Luis Obispo Health Initiative (SLOHI) transition is a new Board of Directors composition. We currently have an eleven seat board and we'll be modifying that to a thirteen seat board. Five of those seats have been designated for SLO County representatives. The expansion of the Board to include San Luis Obispo participation will give ample representation relative to the total SLO County Medi-Cal membership. The SLO component of the Board consists of two public office seats, one hospital administrator, one physician and one Medi-Cal member.

In addition, we will be developing new SLO based committees, including a Community Advisory Board whose participants will include Medi-Cal members from SLO County, and a Provider Advisory Board whose members will consist of the operations' staff of local provider offices. The Authority will seek community participation on other Authority boards including the Medical Advisory Committee (clinical), Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee (pharmacy issues), Peer Review Committee (physicians), the Credentials Committee (physicians) and the Quality Improvement Committee (physicians). If you would like additional information on any of these committees, please contact your local Provider Services Department in San Luis Obispo County at 805 543-4099.

In This Issue . . .

- **Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties Partner for a Healthier Community**
- **CenCal Health**
- **SBRHA New Board Composition March 2008**
- **The Staff of the Authority**
 - **Provider Services**
 - **Health Services**
 - **Member Services**
 - **Health Education**
 - **Claims**
 - **Pharmacy Services**
 - **Decision Support**

THE STAFF OF THE AUTHORITY

The employees of the Santa Barbara Regional Health Authority are dedicated professionals committed to excellent service to our providers and our members. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce our operational departments to you.

Provider Services Department



The goal of the Provider Services Department is to deliver excellent customer service to you, our providers. Under the direction of Ms. Jacqueline Wright, our department consists of thirteen individuals including three stationed in San Luis Obispo. We are delighted to partner with San Luis Obispo County providers to continue to enhance the health of the members in your community. In addition to overseeing contracts and maintaining the network, we are here to assist you. If you have any questions about your contract or any of our programs, just call or e-mail us. We are here to help you.

Please take a look at some of the key services our department offers to our providers:

- Provider Onsite Staff Training
- Provider Workshops
- Provider Operational Protocols
- Physician Credentialing
- Incentive Program Education and Training
- Infection Control Training
- Specialty Education for Allied and Pharmacy providers
- Provider Data Maintenance
- Contracted Provider Lists
- Provider Bulletins
- Educational Materials and Provider Operations Manuals
- Case Management and Capitation Reports
- Contracting and Contract Compliance
- Quality Assurance
- Website Assistance
- Provider Grievances
- Provider Profiles
- Appreciation Luncheons
- Coordinate and oversee the Credentials Committee
- Coordinate and oversee the Provider Advisory Board

Once again -- **Welcome San Luis Obispo Providers!**

Health Services

The SBRHA Health Services Department aims to improve the quality of health care provided to our members including the efficient and effective use of covered services. Health Services promotes improvement in clinical practices including a focus on preventive medicine and appropriate management of clinical conditions. We also take responsibility for monitoring the consistent application of evidenced-based clinical criteria.

In the area of quality management we provide on-site surveys of primary care and OB/GYN offices and clinic sites, medical record quality audits, investigation of quality of care concerns and complaints from members and licensed clinical professionals. We also participate in process improvement teams. Finally, we oversee the

management of our asthma and diabetes disease management programs. These are PCP based programs which focus on rapid-cycle clinical improvement by providing member specific care data and significant financial incentives to PCPs.

In the area of utilization management we provide coverage decisions for preventive, diagnostic and treatment services delivered in inpatient, outpatient, and behavioral health settings. Our decision making is based upon the clinical appropriateness of care according to evidence-based guidelines. All denials for medical necessity are performed by a qualified physician. All appeals are considered by a physician who was not involved in the initial denial determination. We communicate our decisions and feedback to members, practitioners and hospitals in a clear and timely fashion.

THE STAFF OF THE AUTHORITY

Member Services Department

Member Services is ready to help....

Our Member Services staff is here to answer your questions and provide assistance in maintaining an effective relationship between you and your patients.

Member Services Representatives are available to assist you in resolving member issues, which can include the following:

- Providing member education regarding program parameters
- Assisting with non-compliant members
- Assisting with mid-month changes (adding a member to your case management list for the current month)
- Providing Eligibility Verification (please be prepared to provide your Provider Identification Number). Providers can also verify eligibility through our website at www.sbrha.org
- Assisting in resolving Medi-Cal eligibility problems related to billing issues
- Assisting in arranging interpreter services; ask to speak to the Resource Coordinator

Member Services Representatives can be reached toll-free at 1-877-814-1861, 8a.m. to 5p.m., Monday through Friday.

Member Services Quality Improvement Team

The Santa Barbara Regional Health Authority's Member Services Department also has a quality improvement unit focused on improving the quality of services offered to members through the SBRHA Member Services Department. As part of the quality improvement unit, members are offered the opportunity to file complaints and appeals regarding the health plan or health plan providers.

This team is currently leading a quality improvement activity (QIA) for SBRHA focused around reducing emergency room utilization for "avoidable" emergency room visits and are participating in a state-wide collaborative effort. This team, in collaboration with the Member Service Representatives, also performs New Member Welcome Calls to assist members with understanding how their health plan works, when it is appropriate to use the emergency room, the importance of developing a relationship with their primary care physician and scheduling their Initial Health Assessment or prenatal visits.

Health Education

The goal of the Health Education Department is to provide Health Authority members with information on good health practices, preventive services and community resources. The Health Promotion Educator oversees the plan's health education activities and is responsible for planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating health education services. In addition, the Health Promotion Educator assists our provider network with resources and trainings, and participates in coalitions and projects in our community and state-wide to improve health services to our members.

Specific programs and resources have been developed to address priority areas such as pregnancy care, with our Better Beginnings Program, as well as adolescent health. Our health plan offers smoking cessation referrals and scholarships for our members, and has been instrumental in educational efforts to address antibiotic resistance awareness and asthma and diabetes management. Our newest health initiative will address obesity prevention, with our Live Better, Make a Change Program, which will incorporate member education with a community focus.

Providers can contact the Health Educator for assistance with finding patient education materials that are appropriate to our member population or other health education needs.



"Go Red for Women" American Heart Assoc. Screening at the weekly SLO Farmers' Market.

(Photo L-R) **Kathryn Reid** (CHC), **Theresa Merkle** (SBRHA), **Krista Morley** (SBRHA), **Bernadette Alexander** (CHC), **Paula Marie Michal** (SBRHA), **Steve Smith** (CHC).

THE STAFF OF THE AUTHORITY

Managed Medi-Cal Pharmacy

We are excited about our coming partnership with our SLO county providers and what we believe will be benefit enhancements that both you and the members we serve will enjoy and appreciate. Some highlights include:

- Broader formulary than Fee-For-Service (FFS)
- More generous monthly benefit limit than FFS, 10 RXs/month vs 6 RXs/month
- Provider input into formulary decisions
- Provider participation within our committee structure including Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T)
- Therapy management on high touch, chronic therapies through our Specialty partnership with McKesson Specialty
- At-Risk Quality Initiative focused on ADR avoidance through medication profile screening on targeted "At-Risk" members

Again, we look forward to our coming partnership and collaboration on these and other projects.

Decision Support

The Santa Barbara Regional Health Authority's Decision Support Department provides pivotal assistance to senior management to direct and administer operational aspects of the health plan. To promote access to high quality medical services, the Decision Support Department ensures the availability of accurate and timely information to inform decision-making and development of strategy and tactics. The Department plays a key role in the ongoing evaluation of the plan's operations. It also provides consultation to the Information Technology Department to suggest development or procurement of decision support resources, which together comprise an enterprise-wide decision support system.

Under the guidance of the Director of Decision Support, project management and additional analytical staff comprise a decision support team. Chief customers include, but are not limited to senior management of the Authority's medical, finance, contracting, and marketing operations.

The Decision Support Department's overall objective is to provide accurate and timely information to support strategic decision making by the Authority's senior management; and increase self-sufficiency among general Authority staff, to access data and information with intuitive, easy-to-use, self-service tools.

Claims Department

Welcome SLO County Providers, the Claims Department is happy to assist you with any needs that may arise in the realm of claims processing. The Claims Department has many functions and services, and our ultimate goal is to process your claims in an efficient and timely manner. It will continue to be our goal to encourage and assist providers in the submittal of claims electronically and/or through the SBRHA website, but we still have the ability to process paper medical claims from start to finish. Our department is able to assist and educate providers on how to bill claims, and will readily provide one-on-one training with any provider needing assistance with any aspect of their claims billing. At least twice a year, the Claims Department provides assistance with provider workshops. We are committed to working directly with the Provider community in any way needed to assist and guide the claims process.

On a daily basis, the Claims Department reviews and prices claims that require manual intervention, as well as make adjustments to corrected claims submitted by providers. In addition, our department is up-to-date on all program policies and is more than happy to assist and educate providers on current policies. Thank you for allowing us to serve in your community, the Claims Department is looking forward to assisting you in 2008!

The Provider Bulletin is produced as a timely supplemental information service for provider office staff and is published monthly by the Provider Services Department. Questions and/or suggestions for articles may be made to Theresa Merkle (theresa@sbrha.org) at 620 California Blvd Suite P-1 San Luis Obispo, Ca 93401, or by calling (805) 543-4099, or by contacting Suzzi Tyler (suzzi@sbrha.org), Marina Gordon (marina@sbrha.org), Faith Reeves (faith@sbrha.org), Jennifer Fraser (jennifer@sbrha.org), at 110 Castilian Drive, Goleta, CA 93117-3028, or by calling (805) 685-9525 or (800) 421-2560, extension 1676.