



# **Non-Specialty Mental Health Services Plan**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This program outlines CenCal Health's comprehensive Outreach and Education Plan to enhance access and equity in Non-Specialty Mental Health Services (NSMHS) for its members. The Outreach and Education Plan is structured to meet the needs of diverse communities, foster partnerships with Tribal and community stakeholders, and align with state and federal regulations. The Outreach and Education Plan consists of actionable strategies for addressing low service utilization, promoting cultural and linguistic competence, reducing stigma, and ensuring comprehensive Provider education. By leveraging community partnerships and stakeholder feedback, CenCal Health aims to promote holistic health and well-being across Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties.

## **II. CATEGORY 1: STAKEHOLDER & TRIBAL PARTNER ENGAGEMENT**

### **A. Tribal Partner Engagement**

1. CenCal Health currently collaborates with one (1) Indian Health Facility (IHF) within its service area counties, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, the Santa Ynez Tribal Health Clinic. Located in Santa Barbara County, this IHF provides primary care services to Members from both Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. Additionally, CenCal Health partners with American Indian Health & Services to support its American Indian Members.
2. Recognizing the historical challenges faced by Indigenous communities, CenCal Health is committed to fostering strong, respectful partnerships with Tribal organizations by holding regular meetings with Tribal Partners to discuss behavioral health topics and ensure effective communication and collaboration to address any challenges or concerns related to services to our mutual Members.
3. CenCal Health's Tribal Liaison routinely engages with Tribal Partners to address Member needs, provide forums for raising concerns, and gather input on improving continuity of care, particularly regarding Non-Specialty Mental Health Services. This ongoing outreach underscores CenCal Health's dedication to serving the American Indian community with sensitivity and respect.

### **B. Community Advisory Committee (CAC)**

1. The Community Advisory Board (CAB), the CenCal Health equivalent to the Community Advisory Committee, serves as a platform for CenCal Health Members, their representatives, and community agencies to discuss shared issues of interest and importance. The CAB also facilitates input from Members, advocates, and agencies to ensure compliance with CAB functions and duties under CenCal

Health's contract with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), as well as applicable laws and regulations.

2. The CAB operates independently from CenCal Health's Quality Improvement and Health Equity Committee (QIHEC) and reports directly to the CenCal Health Board of Directors. Starting in 2025, CenCal Health's Behavioral Health Department will incorporate the Non-Specialty Mental Health Services Outreach and Education Plan into the CAB's quarterly presentations. This will provide an opportunity for Members, their representatives and community agencies' feedback on planned activities and performance related to outreach and education efforts.
- C. Collaboration with local stakeholders representing diverse racial and ethnic communities.
1. CenCal Health is dedicated to fostering strong partnerships with Behavioral Health Community Partners. CenCal Health conducts frequent meetings with County counterparts to discuss behavioral health referrals, closed-loop referral outcomes, and coordination concerns. These meetings ensure open communication and collaboration in providing services to our mutual Members while offering a platform for addressing any issues brought to CenCal Health.
  2. CenCal Health actively engages with Community Partners and Providers to promote collaboration. This includes leveraging Behavioral Health Community Integration Specialists to enhance coordination among CenCal Health, Providers, County Partners, and community-based organizations. These efforts aim to gather input from Partners and address continuity of care for Non-Specialty Mental Health Services.
- D. Engagement with Community Advisory Committee, local stakeholder, and Tribal Partner to influence Outreach and Education Plan elements.
1. CenCal Health values collaboration with Partners such as County behavioral health agencies, Tribal Partners, Enhanced Care Management (ECM) Providers, Network Non-Specialty Mental Health Services (NSMHS) Providers, and participants in various population-focused initiatives. These include efforts like suicide prevention, behavioral health advisory boards, Alcohol and Drug Provider networks, and other community-based initiatives.
  2. A key aspect of these partnerships is reviewing utilization patterns and addressing challenges related to care access for Members with low utilization. These collaborations shape CenCal Health's outreach

and education plan, supporting their development and adaptation as needed based on impact assessments.

3. Ongoing efforts will prioritize these concerns, using utilization data to guide and refine strategies for effectively reaching Members with low service engagement.

### **III. CATEGORY 2: ALIGNMENT WITH POPULATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT/NCQA POPULATION ASSESSMENT**

#### **A. Outreach/education materials and messaging for the diversity of the CenCal Health's enrollee membership.**

1. CenCal Health ensures that outreach and education materials for Members are reviewed by the Health Promotion Supervisor and/or Health Promotion Educators. This process includes tailoring content for specific populations and applying Health Literacy guidelines to maintain a sixth-grade readability level, simplifying language for better understanding.
2. Key Member resources, such as the Evidence of Coverage/Member Handbook, New Member Welcome (NMW) Packet, Provider Directory, and the "Members" section of CenCal Health's website, provide information on accessing interpretation and translation services.
3. The NMW Packet includes Non-Discrimination and Language Assistance Tagline documents, which advise Members to contact CenCal Health's call center for translation or interpretation in their preferred language.
4. CenCal Health's Member Services and Behavioral Health Department call centers utilize Certified Language International (CLI) to provide real-time language support in Spanish (service area threshold language) and over 230 other languages. This seamless connection ensures Members receive assistance at the time of need and are informed they can access these services again during future interactions.
5. Additionally, reminders about these services are included in the Member newsletter. The Notice of Non-Discrimination and Language Assistance Taglines is also attached to all Member informing documents mailed by CenCal Health, ensuring consistent communication across its membership.

#### **B. Meeting the population's language translation needs**

1. The majority of CenCal Health's only threshold language translation, Spanish, are performed in-house by CenCal Health's Spanish Translation Team.

2. For non-threshold language translation needs, excessive volume of Spanish needs, or for Alternative Format Selection (AFS) needs, such as braille, large print, or data and audio CD formats, CenCal Health has contracts with two vendors, AvantPage and Big Language Solutions. If CenCal Health were to receive requests for translation in non-threshold languages, these companies will be used to provide the translation.
3. CenCal Health's policy is to first offer verbal translation of the requested information using another contracted vendor for interpreter services, CLI. CLI offers phone and video remote interpreting services in over 230 languages for voice, and 20+ for video remote interpretation. If written translation were still requested after full verbal review of the information, CenCal Health would source the project to one of these translation service companies.
4. CenCal Health receives weekly data feeds for its Members with AFS selection from DHCS and actively engage these Members to discuss their needs.

#### **IV. CATEGORY 3: ALIGNMENT WITH UTILIZATION ASSESSMENT**

- A. Utilization Assessment accounts for utilization of covered mental health benefits by race, ethnicity, language, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability.
  1. CenCal Health collects demographic data for Members, including race, language, location, age, and gender. However, data on sexual orientation, gender identity (where it differs from gender), and disability is currently insufficient. CenCal Health is exploring strategies with local partners such as Department of Social Services and CAB member and other Local Health Plans to improve the collection and use of this data to enhance CenCal Health's education and outreach efforts.
- B. Strategies to reach Member groups with low utilization of Non-Specialty Mental Health Services
  1. CenCal Health values collaboration with key Partners, including County behavioral health agencies, Tribal Partners, ECM Providers, Network NSMHS Providers, and other stakeholders involved in initiatives such as suicide prevention, behavioral health advisory boards, Alcohol and Drug Providers, and community programs.
  2. As part of these partnerships, CenCal Health regularly review utilization data and address challenges related to access to care, particularly for Members with low utilization. Ongoing collaboration will continue to focus on these issues, using utilization assessments to guide and refine efforts to engage Members with low service usage.

**V. CATEGORY 4: ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL CULTURALLY & LINGUISTICALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICES STANDARDS**

**A. Language assistance**

1. All CenCal Health Members are offered language assistance services, including verbal, sign language, and written support, free of charge, 24/7 at all medical points of contact.
2. CenCal Health ensures that interpretation services are provided in accordance with Policy MS-31 Cultural and Language Access to Service Programs. This standard is reinforced across all points of contact to guarantee accurate and professional interpretation services are available whenever needed. Providers and Members are encouraged to avoid using family members or unqualified individuals and instead utilize CenCal Health's interpretation services. The use of untrained individuals and minors as interpreters should be avoided.
3. CenCal Health contracts with CLI to provide real-time language assistance in over 230 languages, including sign language through a video remote interpreting (VRI) platform. This ensures that Members can access these services whenever needed and are informed they can use them again for both medical and behavioral health services. CenCal Health's Member Services Call Center is also equipped to meet the threshold language requirements set by the 2024 DHCS Contract and All Plan Letter (APL) 21-004.
4. For Spanish and American Sign Language needs, CenCal Health contracts with individual, in-person interpreters.
5. Additionally, a contract with the Mixteco Indigena Community Organization Project (MICOP) is in place to offer verbal interpretation for the Mixteco-speaking population.
6. Finally, CenCal Health has contracts with AvantPage and Big Language Solutions for written translations and alternative formatting of documents to meet diverse language and accessibility needs.

**B. Informing Members of language assistance services**

1. CenCal Health's Member Evidence of Coverage/Member Handbook, New Member Welcome (NMW) Packet, Provider Directory, and the "Members" section of CenCal Health's public facing website include information on how Members can access interpretation and translation services.
2. The New Member Packet includes Non-Discrimination and Language Assistance Taglines, informing Members to contact the CenCal Health's call center for translation and interpretation services in their preferred language.

3. CenCal Health's Member Services and Behavioral Health Department Call Centers utilize CLI to provide real-time language assistance in Spanish and over 230 other languages. This ensures that Members receive immediate support during their calls and are aware they can access these services again when needed.
4. CenCal Health's Member Newsletter includes reminders about these services, and the Notice of Non-Discrimination and Language Assistance Taglines are attached to all documents mailed to Members to ensure consistent communication.

C. Ensuring competence of individuals providing language assistance

1. All vendors engaged by CenCal Health have established assessment processes to ensure that individuals providing interpretation and/or written translation services are qualified and competent in delivering these services. Vendors are required to provide CenCal Health with detailed documentation of their assessment processes. Additionally, CenCal Health retains the ability to request and obtain vendor qualifications as necessary to ensure compliance with established standards.
2. CenCal Health's internal staff who provide verbal assistance and written translation in Spanish are evaluated for competency through a formal testing process conducted by CenCal Health's Cultural and Linguistic Services Manager, who holds certification as a medical interpreter from the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters.
3. Furthermore, CenCal Health encourages Providers to utilize CenCal Health's interpretation services or employ qualified staff for interpretation needs, rather than relying on a member's family member. This guidance is communicated through annual new Provider orientation and Cultural and Linguistic (C&L) trainings for CenCal Health's network and is documented in the Provider Manual.

D. Providing Members with easy-to-understand print and multimedia materials and signage in the languages.

1. CenCal Health's outreach and education materials for Members are reviewed by CenCal Health's Health Promotion Supervisor and/or Health Promotion Educators to ensure they are tailored for various populations and meet readability requirements. These materials undergo Health Literacy assessments to ensure they are at a sixth grade reading level for clarity and accessibility.
2. CenCal Health's social media, website materials, and other documentation go through a formal internal review process, which



includes input from the Health Promotion Supervisor and/or Health Promotion Educators.

3. All print and multimedia materials are available in English and Spanish, as they are threshold languages, and can be provided in additional languages upon request.

E. Partnering with the community

1. As part of its responsibilities, CenCal Health's Community Advisory Board offers community representatives and Members opportunities to provide feedback and input on policies and practices related to various Member outreach campaigns and materials services to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness.

**VI. CATEGORY 5: BEST PRACTICES IN STIGMA REDUCTION**

A. Reducing stigma in outreach and education plans/materials

1. CenCal Health is committed to maintaining strong partnerships with its Mental Health Plan (MHP) Partners. CenCal Health holds regular meetings with its county counterparts to discuss behavioral health referrals, closed-loop referral outcomes, and coordination concerns. These meetings help ensure open communication and collaboration in providing services to our mutual Members and offer a forum for addressing any concerns they may have
2. CenCal Health is also dedicated to reducing stigma surrounding mental health issues. By fostering a collaborative environment with its Mental Health Plan (MHP) Partners and holding regular meetings with county counterparts, CenCal Health helps create a space for open dialogue about mental health. These discussions not only address behavioral health referrals, closed-loop referral outcomes, and coordination concerns, but also aim to normalize mental health care. This approach helps to reduce stigma, ensuring that Members feel comfortable seeking the support they need without fear of judgment. By working together, CenCal Health and its MHP Partners are committed to building a more supportive and understanding community for individuals facing mental health challenges. CenCal Health consistently engages with its Community Partners and Providers to foster collaboration. This includes the involvement of Behavioral Health Community Integration Specialists who help facilitate coordination among CenCal Health, Providers, County Partners, and community-based organizations. The goal is to gather input from all Partners and ensure continuity of care for Non-Specialty Mental Health Services.

- B. County MHP Partners Collaborate to Develop Outreach and Education Strategies for Informing Members on Accessing Mental and Behavioral Health Services
1. CenCal Health is dedicated to ongoing collaboration with its MHP Partners. CenCal Health holds weekly referral meetings and monthly leadership meetings with its county counterparts to discuss behavioral health referrals, closed-loop referral outcomes, and coordination concerns. These meetings ensure active communication and collaboration in providing services to our mutual Members, while also offering a platform for addressing any concerns they may have.
  2. As part of these meetings, CenCal Health focuses on Member outreach. CenCal Health's outreach and education Plan will incorporate input from the MHPs, Providers, Tribal Partners, and relevant community-based organizations to enhance its efforts and better serve its members.

## **VII. CATEGORY 6: MULTIPLE POINTS OF CONTACT FOR MEMBER ACCESS**

- A. Points of contact for Members to access mental health benefits
1. MCP website: [www.CenCalhealth.org/Members/behavioral-health/](http://www.CenCalhealth.org/Members/behavioral-health/)
  2. MCP phone number: 1-877-814-1861 (TTY/TDD 1-833-556-2560, or 711)
  3. MCP email: Plan response email is via secure, Member Portal Account access only. General website email address (not publicly advertised) for Member Services is: [msinquiry@CenCalhealth.org](mailto:msinquiry@CenCalhealth.org).
  4. MCP ombudsman: 1-888-452-8609
  5. Other:
    - i. CenCal Health Nurse Advice Line: 1-800-524-5222
    - ii. Behavioral Health & Wellness/Santa Barbara Co. 1-888-868-1649
    - iii. Behavioral Health & Wellness/San Luis Obispo Co. 1-800-838-1381
    - iv. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255 or call 988.
    - v. County Drug and Alcohol Services
      - a. Santa Barbara County 1-805-681-5440
      - b. North San Luis Obispo County 1-805-461-6080
      - c. South San Luis Obispo County 1-805-781-4753

- vi. CalHope Warm Line (Peer-run warm line available 24/7 for mental health and emotional support) 1-855-845-7415
- vii. Central Coast Hotline (24/7 mental health support) 1-800-783-0607
- viii. Ventura Transit Systems (transportation needs) 1-855-659-4600

## **VIII. CATEGORY 7: PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER OUTREACH AND EDUCATION**

- A. Annual Outreach and Education Plan for Primary Care Providers (PCPs) on Covered Non-Specialty Mental Health Services
  - 1. CenCal Health's Provider Relations Representatives (PRRs) will conduct in-person educational sessions with all Primary Care Providers (PCPs) annually, usually in Quarter 2. These sessions will include the distribution of updated or new Non-Specialty Mental Health (NSMH) materials, an overview of the covered services, and guidance on how Members can access mental and behavioral health services. Additionally, CenCal Health will feature an article in the E-Bulletin at least once a year to promote these services.
- B. PCP Plan Guided by the QIHEC
  - 1. In Quarter 4 2024, CenCal Health shared the PCP education and outreach Plan with the QIHEC to identify the most valuable approaches for supporting PCPs in delivering timely mental health services to CenCal Health Members. Feedback from this meeting was integrated to enhance the effectiveness of the education Plan for both the Provider Network and Members.