

# PROVIDER BULLETIN

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR PROVIDERS  
VOL. 34 NO. 3 • September 2025

## PROVIDER NEWS

### Services to Support CenCal Health Members' Access to Care

CenCal Health is committed to ensuring that our members have easy access to the care and services they need. Below are key programs and resources available:

#### Telehealth

- CenCal Health covers care for appropriate services delivered via telemedicine.
- Review CenCal Health's **Telehealth Guide** for more information: [qrco.de/bgG2pY](http://qrco.de/bgG2pY)

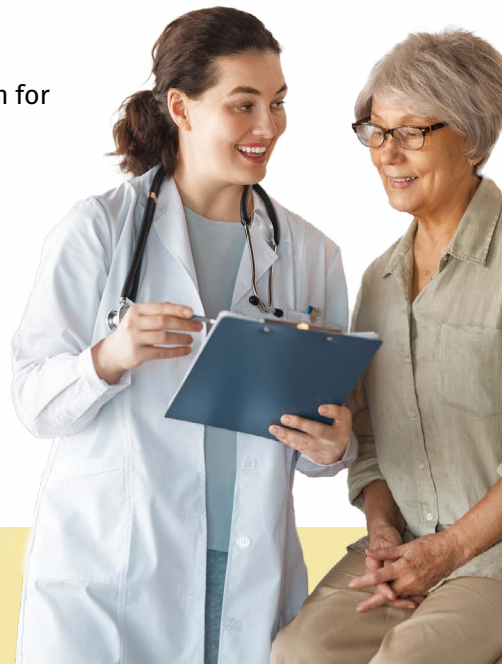
#### Transportation

- Eligible members can access curb-to-curb transportation for appointments, to pick up medications, and have their labs drawn through our transportation vendor, **Ventura Transit System (VTS)**. Members can contact VTS directly to schedule transportation at **1-855-659-4600**.
- Members who have additional questions can contact our Member Services Department at 1-877-814-1861.

#### Medication

- CenCal Health members can have their medication delivered to their homes through **Medi-Cal Rx**. Search for mail-order pharmacies on the Medi-Cal Rx website: [www.medi-calrx.dhcs.ca.gov/](http://www.medi-calrx.dhcs.ca.gov/)
- Use the display filter for "mail order" after you search for a pharmacy near you.
- Members can also call the Medi-Cal Rx call center for assistance locating a mail-order pharmacy at 1-800-977 2273 (TTY 711), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A delivery fee may apply.

For additional support, please contact the CenCal Health Provider Relations Department at 805-562-1676.



## PROVIDER NEWS

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# Cultural Competency & Health Literacy Training and More!

The CenCal Health Cultural and Linguistic (C&L) Services Program strives to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate health care and services for our members regardless of race, color, national origin, ethnic group identification, creed, ancestry, religion, language, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, health status, physical or mental disability, or identification with any other persons or groups.

To reduce health disparities and bridge language barriers, CenCal Health covers interpreting services for all Limited English Proficient (LEP) deaf or hard of hearing members, and written information in other formats, for members with disabilities. Additionally, CenCal Health ensures that all members have access to health care providers and services in their language of choice when accessing covered services.

Under federal and state regulations, as well as CenCal Health requirements, contracted providers must adhere to the following standards:

## DO:

- Offer qualified interpreters at no cost to members.
- Document every patient's preferred language in their medical record.
- Section 1557 of the ACA requires documentation of the following:
  - » Patient declined the offer of a free, qualified medical interpreter
  - » Name of the person (e.g., friend, family) the patient specifically named as their preferred interpreter
  - » Individual named by the patient who agreed to interpret despite the availability of free qualified interpreters
  - » Medical provider deems the individual qualified to interpret for the encounter

## DO NOT:

- Require patients to bring their own interpreters.
- Suggest that patients use a friend or family member to interpret.
- Use untrained interpreters.

## Training on the Horizon:

The goal of this training is to provide education on how to provide medically necessary and covered services to all members in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner, **regardless of race, color, national origin, faith, ancestry, religion, language, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, health status, disability, or gender identity.**

The training will focus on **six areas** that will assist providers in better understanding the needs of our members:

1. Serving a Diverse Population
2. Culture and Cultural Competence
3. Communication
4. Cultural Competence and the LGBTQI+ Communities
5. Race, Ethnicity, National Origin, Faith
6. Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

To further the goals of reducing health disparities and bridging language barriers, CenCal Health will provide a **Cultural Competency and Health Literacy training on October 29 at 12 p.m.** to improve provider-patient communication. Register online at [cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-training-resources/](https://cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-training-resources/).

# CenCal CareConnect D-SNP Model of Care Training: Annual training course for all participating physicians

CenCal Health will be hosting three CenCal CareConnect (D-SNP) Model of Care (MOC) training sessions on September 23, 24, and 25.



**This training provides an overview of how CenCal Health coordinates care for members who are eligible for both Medicare and Medi-Cal. This training outlines the key elements of our care model, including member-centered care management, interdisciplinary care teams, and provider collaboration to improve health outcomes.**

*Beginning January 1, 2026, all providers who are providing care to CenCal CareConnect members must complete this annual training and submit an attestation confirming their participation.*

## What You'll Learn:

This interactive training, designed for all participating providers, will cover:

- Overview of Special Needs Plans (SNP) & Dual Special Needs Plans (D-SNP)
- Model of Care (MOC) goals and member benefits
- In-depth review of the four core MOC elements:
  - » Description of the D-SNP population
  - » Care coordination strategies
  - » D-SNP provider network structure
  - » Quality measurement & performance improvement initiatives
- Your essential role as a provider and collaborative partner in improving member health outcomes.

## Register for your Virtual Seat Four Ways!



1. Scan this QR code
2. Go to <https://qrco.de/PTSEPT1>
3. Visit our website at [cencalhealth.org/providers/medicare-d-snp/](https://cencalhealth.org/providers/medicare-d-snp/)
4. Go to CenCal Health's Provider Training website page at [cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-training-resources/](https://cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-training-resources/)

Feel free to submit any questions in advance through the registration form.

Your participation is essential as we work together to enhance care for our members.

# Introducing Provider Relations: Support for Our Provider Network

At CenCal Health, we are dedicated to collaborating with our provider network to support the delivery of exceptional care to all CenCal Health members.

The Provider Relations Department serves as the primary point of contact through our dedicated Provider Relations Representatives, who ensure that our providers receive support through:

## Building Strong Relationships

The Provider Relations team fosters professional relationships with providers through regular communication, ensuring they are informed about CenCal Health's programs and policies.

## Onboarding and Credentialing

The team guides new providers through the credentialing and contracting process, ensuring their ability to serve CenCal Health members within our community.

## Education and Training

Provider Relations offers ongoing training to our providers through a variety of modalities to meet each provider's unique needs. Trainings are offered through webinars, in-person events, provider visits, and recorded trainings most of which are accessible through CenCal Health's website for viewing when convenient for our providers.

## Provider Portal Support

Our support team provides refresher training and assistance to help you quickly and easily access the portal's tools and information, streamlining your administrative processes.

**Providers can contact the Provider Relations Department any time, either through their assigned Provider Relations Representative, or by calling 805-562-1676.**

## Provider Relations Leadership Team



**Cathy Slaughter**  
Provider Relations Director

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805-685-9525, ext. 7091



**Dona Lopez**  
South & Central Santa Barbara County  
Provider Relations Manager

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**Gisela Taboada**  
North Santa Barbara  
& San Luis Obispo County  
Provider Relations Manager

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805-685-9525, ext. 1045

## South & Central Santa Barbara County Team

*Includes Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, Goleta, Santa Ynez, Buellton, and Lompoc*



**Jennifer Martinez**  
Provider Relations Representative

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805-685-9525, ext. 5456



**Collin Fasth**  
Provider Relations Representative

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## San Luis Obispo County Team

*Includes all cities within San Luis Obispo County*



**Grace Gonzalez**  
Lead Provider Relations Representative

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805-685-9525, ext. 5378



**Julia Voge**  
Provider Relations Representative

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## North Santa Barbara County Team

*Includes Orcutt and Santa Maria*



**Jamie Hughes**  
Lead Provider Relations Representative

jhughes@cencalhealth.org  
805-685-9525, ext. 1660



**Crystal Rivera**  
Provider Relations Representative

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# HIPAA Privacy Reminder

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) is a federal law that requires CenCal Health and its network providers to protect the security and maintain the confidentiality of its members' Protected Health Information (PHI). HIPAA establishes guidelines to protect patient privacy while at the same time ensuring that it does not cause unnecessary barriers to care.

## Permitted Uses and Disclosures of Member PHI

The HIPAA Privacy Rule allows providers and CenCal Health to share member PHI with each other, without the member's written consent, for the following reasons (not a complete list):

- Verifying eligibility and enrollment
- Authorization for Covered Services
- Claims processing activities
- Member contact for appointments
- Investigating or prosecuting Medi-Cal cases (e.g., fraud, waste, or abuse)
- Monitoring Quality of Care
- Medical treatment
- Case Management/Disease Management
- Providing information to public health agencies as permitted by law
- In response to court orders or other legal proceedings
- Appeals/Grievances
- Requests from state or federal agencies or accreditation agencies

Providers must obtain specific written consent through a HIPAA Compliant Authorization Form for all other uses and disclosures of PHI that do not fall within the list above or are otherwise permitted by the HIPAA Privacy Rule.

As required by the Provider Manual, providers must respond to and assist CenCal Health with requests for member PHI when the request is for any purpose listed above or as permitted by law.

CenCal Health is here to help if you have questions related to sharing member PHI or want to report any concerns that you may have. To report suspected or known privacy incidents and breaches, you may contact CenCal Health via our anonymous Compliance Hotline at 886-775-3944, email [HIPAATeam@cencalhealth.org](mailto:HIPAATeam@cencalhealth.org), or visit our website at: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/74102/index.html>

# Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events before age 18, including abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction. They are common—about 64% of U.S. adults report at least one ACE, and one in six report four or more.<sup>[1]</sup> ACEs increase risks for chronic disease, mental health challenges, and substance use in adulthood.

**Providers are key to recognizing trauma, building trust, and connecting families to support. Trauma-informed care can help mitigate long-term effects.**

## Screening Guidelines

- Screen once per year for members under 21, when medically necessary.
- Screen once in a lifetime for adults 21–65.
- CenCal Health reimburses \$29 per screening that follows these guidelines.

## Requirements & Tools

- Complete **ACEs Aware Training** and attest to receive reimbursement.<sup>[2]</sup>
- Use age-appropriate tools: **PEARLS** (0–19) or **ACEs Assessment Tool** (adults).
- Review, document, and discuss results with members/families.
- Integrate screening into the **Initial Health Appointment (IHA)**.

## Screening Tips

- Use the appropriate tool for age.
- Score reflects the number of ACE categories (0–10).
- Discuss results with members/families.
- Screen during the **IHA** when possible.
- Document all clinically appropriate actions.

## Billing Codes

- **G9919** – ACE score 4+ (high risk for toxic stress)
- **G9920** – ACE score 0-3 (lower risk)

For more information, visit **APL 23-017**:

[cencalhealth.org/providers/forms-manuals-policies/all-plan-letters/](https://cencalhealth.org/providers/forms-manuals-policies/all-plan-letters/) or contact CenCal Health's Population Health team at [populationhealth@cencalhealth.org](mailto:populationhealth@cencalhealth.org).

<sup>[1]</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/aces/about/index.html>

<sup>[2]</sup> <https://www.acesaware.org/>

# September is Sepsis Awareness Month

## Preventing Sepsis in Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

**The 2024 Population Needs Assessment by CenCal Health has identified sepsis as the leading cause of hospital visits among Seniors and Persons with Disabilities (SPDs) in 2023.**

The data reveals 118 visits for “sepsis, unspecified organism,” 21 for “sepsis due to Escherichia coli,” and 15 for “sepsis due to Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus,” alongside 13 readmissions due to sepsis. In contrast, hospital visits for other diagnoses among SPDs were notably lower, indicating effective health management overall.

**In alignment with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, our Health Promotion team sees a critical opportunity to educate members on sepsis prevention. Key preventive measures include maintaining good hygiene, managing chronic conditions, and following vaccination recommendations.**

Our team has developed educational resources, including newsletter articles and webpages, to provide members with practical tools and information.

It is imperative to recognize that infections starting in the lungs, skin, urinary, or gastrointestinal tracts can develop into sepsis, potentially leading to severe outcomes if not addressed promptly. Clinicians should recognize the signs and symptoms of sepsis, and immediately evaluate and treat anyone with one or more of the following:

- Clammy or sweaty skin
- Fever, shivering, or feeling very cold
- Tachycardia or weak pulse
- Shortness of breath
- Confusion or disorientation
- Excessive pain or discomfort

### **People at higher risk include:**

- Adults over 65 and children under 1 year old
- Those with weakened immune systems or chronic conditions such as cancer, diabetes, lung or kidney disease
- Those with a recent inpatient stay or severe illness
- Those who have previously had sepsis

The New York State Office for the Aging notes that seniors and persons with disabilities may have difficulty communicating their symptoms and may need simplified language or visual aids. Walkers, wheelchairs, and other assistive devices must be clean and well-maintained to prevent falls and injuries. Healthcare professionals can educate caregivers on the importance of adequate nutrition and hydration, how to ensure a safe environment, and when to seek medical attention for those in their care.



# Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

This Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, CenCal Health highlights the importance of addressing childhood obesity. Our 2024 Population Needs Assessment identified that about 10% of pediatric members have a diagnosis of overweight or obesity.<sup>[1]</sup> The impact is not equal—84.04% of affected children are Hispanic.

Childhood obesity, shaped by socioecological, environmental, and genetic factors, remains a significant health challenge. The following clinical guidelines and tools can support providers in addressing childhood obesity during the annual well-child visit:



## Clinical Guidelines

American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations:

- **Patient-Centered Care:** Reduce bias and create supportive environments.
- **Screen for ACEs:** Recognize links between childhood experiences and obesity.
- **Motivational Interviewing:** Encourage healthy changes in diet and activity.
- **Holistic Goals:** Look beyond BMI to improve comorbidities, quality of life, and self-image.

## Supporting Healthy Growth

1. **Culturally Relevant Nutrition:** Discuss family eating habits, suggest healthier versions of traditional dishes, and provide bilingual materials.
2. **Educate on Risks & Prevention:** Highlight long-term risks such as diabetes and heart disease while sharing practical, sustainable habits.
3. **Address Food Insecurity:** Use validated tools like the Hunger Vital Sign<sup>TM[2]</sup> and refer families to CalFresh<sup>[3]</sup> or CenCal Health's CalAIM Community Supports: [cencalhealth.org/providers/calaim/](https://cencalhealth.org/providers/calaim/)

## Questions?

- **Health Education and Promotion:** [healtheducation@cencalhealth.org](mailto:healtheducation@cencalhealth.org)
- **Population Health Team:** [populationhealth@cencalhealth.org](mailto:populationhealth@cencalhealth.org)

## Resources:

- **Social Drivers of Health:** Reporting codes for SDOH: [www.cencalhealth.org/providers/social-determinants-of-health/](https://www.cencalhealth.org/providers/social-determinants-of-health/)
- **Translation Services & Cultural Resources:** Translation services and cultural support: [cencalhealth.org/providers/cultural-linguistic-resources/](https://cencalhealth.org/providers/cultural-linguistic-resources/)
- **Patient Educational Materials:** “Stay Healthy Kids” handouts: [cencalhealth.org/providers/patient-education-materials/](https://cencalhealth.org/providers/patient-education-materials/)
- **Child Growth and BMI Training:** Training on assessing child growth and BMI: [cencalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/CenCal-Health-BMI-Training\\_Assessing-Child-Growth-tagged.pdf](https://cencalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/CenCal-Health-BMI-Training_Assessing-Child-Growth-tagged.pdf)

<sup>[1]</sup> CenCal Health 2024 Population Needs Assessment- 2024 Population Needs Assessment

<sup>[2]</sup> Hunger Vital Sign<sup>TM</sup> Screening Tool - The Hunger Vital Sign<sup>TM</sup> - Children's HealthWatch

<sup>[3]</sup> CalFresh Information - CalFresh

# Provider Bulletin



**CenCal Health is committed to keeping our provider network informed with important updates.**

We publish quarterly Provider Bulletins every March, June, September, and December, along with monthly digital Bulletins, to ensure you stay up-to-date on the latest developments.

In addition, we regularly send out Provider News Flash notifications and announcements to communicate urgent and regulatory updates.

To make sure you never miss out on critical information, sign up today by scanning the QR code or visit our online resources at [cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-bulletin-newsletter/](http://cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-bulletin-newsletter/).



**The Provider Relations post-visit satisfaction survey continues to offer valuable real-time feedback, helping CenCal Health identify opportunities to refine operational processes and better support providers in delivering care to CenCal Health members.**

In order to foster a culture of continuous improvement, survey results are shared with all relevant staff. Providers who report dissatisfaction are promptly contacted by the Provider Relations Leadership Team to discuss areas of improvement.



## Important numbers:

- Provider Relations: 805-562-1676
- Claims Services: 805-562-1083
- Pharmacy Services: 805-562-1080
- Health Services: 805-562-1082
- Member Services: 877-814-1861
- Behavioral Health: 805-562-1600



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## Reminder to Report Practice Changes



**We want to share a friendly reminder to submit any changes to your availability so we can keep our Provider Directory updated with the most current information about your practice.**

Updates include any changes to your address or phone number, your ability to see new members, and any physician staffing changes at your practice.

Please reference the Provider Directory online at [cencalhealth.org/providers/search-provider-network/](http://cencalhealth.org/providers/search-provider-network/) to view your details for accuracy.

To update your information, providers may go to [cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-profile-and-practice-changes/](http://cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-profile-and-practice-changes/) for documentation requirements and ways to submit to CenCal Health.

If you have any questions regarding the coordination of your practice changes, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Provider Relations Department at 805-562-1676. We're here to assist you.