CenCal CareConnect

Enrollee Advisory Committee (EAC) Meeting Minutes

Date: May 26, 2026

Time: 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Chairperson: Sara Macdonald, Member / Board of Directors (BOD) Liaison

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Enrollee Advisory Committee (EAC) Members Present:
Cynthia Guerrero, Member
Sara Macdonald, Member / Board of Directors (BOD) Liaison

EAC Members Excused:
N/A

CenCal Health Staff Present:
Bao Xiong, Director of Program Development, EAC Coordinator
Eric Buben, Director of Member Services
Gabriella Djuarna, MPH, Program Development Specialist
Paulina Llamas-Aranda, Program Development Specialist
Hector Garcia, Medicare Director
Dr. Van Do-Reynoso, MPH, PhD, Chief Customer Experience Officer, Chief Health Equity Officer
Rob Bever, Medicare Sales Manager

Guests:
MaryEllen Rehse, Executive Director, Children and Family Resource Services / Community Advisory Board Chair
Deborah Goodwin, CenCal CareConnect Member

Administrative Support: Gabriella Djuarna, MPH, Program Development Specialist

Location: Virtual (Zoom)

Agenda Item	*Discussion*

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements All	**Ms. Macdonald** called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m., reviewed the agenda, and facilitated introductions.
2. Public comment on any non-agenda item of interest to the public that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the EAC All	There were no public comments.
3. Approval of Minutes – February 26, 2026 EAC Meeting – Action Item All	**Mr. Garcia** submitted a motion to approve. **Ms. Guerrero** second the motion. The February 26, 2026 EAC Meeting Minutes was unanimously approved by all.
4. Follow-up Items from Q1 EAC Meeting B. Xiong, Director of Program Development	**Ms. Xiong** addressed three follow-up items: • The Enrollee Advisory Committee (EAC) Charter was revised and submitted to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) on 2/26/2026. • CenCal Health followed up with Over the Counter (OTC) vendor regarding glitches on their application on 3/16/2026. The vendor recommended opening the application in a place with reception prior to entering the store (where reception may not be as strong). Currently, there is no offline mode in the application. • The materials for the email and text campaign for EAC recruitment were approved by CenCal Health's Compliance team, and it is currently pending Spanish translation.
5. EAC Selection Committee Approval of New EAC Member All	**Ms. Macdonald** introduced Ms. Goodwin and invited her to provide a brief introduction. **Ms. Goodwin** introduced herself and shared her interest in serving on the EAC. **Ms. Guerrero** submitted a motion to approve. **Mr. Buben** second the motion. Deborah Goodwin was unanimously approved by the EAC Selection Committee to be an EAC member.
6. CenCal CareConnect Membership E. Buben, Director of Member Services	**Mr. Buben** presented a PowerPoint presentation titled CenCal CareConnect Enrollment Data and Member Demographics. The CareConnect enrollment goal and enrollment growth were presented. As of May 12, 2026, there were 453 CenCal CareConnect members. This number is expected to grow past 500 by next month. CenCal CareConnect's member demographics were also

	shared by age distribution by county, gender by county, and language by county. Demographic data indicate that the majority of members are aged 65 or older. The membership is composed of 61% females and 39% males. Additionally, most members are English-speaking, with 94% reporting English as their primary language. **Discussion:** **Ms. Rehse** asked if it is typical for more females than males to be enrolled in Medicare. **Mr. Buben** responded that he did not have the information at hand but would research and follow up.
7. Connecting with Member Services E. Buben, Director of Member Services	**Mr. Buben** presented a PowerPoint presentation titled Connecting with Member Services: The Role of Member Services. The role of Member Services Specialists (MSS) and their availability was shared. Mr. Buben shared that the MSS' hours of operation will change from April 2027-September 2027 to 8am-8pm, Monday-Friday, no weekends and holidays during that time as are the hours of operation the rest of the year. The MSS can connect in real-time with an interpreter in 230+ languages and the MSS can assist in scheduling appointments in Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL). The role of the Translation Team was presented. The Translation Team translates documents into Spanish and CareConnect has a contracted vendor that can provide translation for all other languages. Members can also request health plan materials in an alternative format (e.g. large print, braille). **Mr. Buben** presented the CareConnect Plan website (https://www.cencalhealth.org/health-plans/careconnect/) The website has an online search provider directory and can quickly provide information on primary care physician (PCPs) and specialists available. **Mr. Buben** shared that free transportation is available for members who qualify. Members can request transportation services by calling CenCal Health at 1-877-814-1861 or Ventura Transit System directly at 1-855-659-4600 at least three (3) business days in advance before your appointment. **Mr. Buben** presented the member portal accounts on the CenCal website. Members can request, download and view ID cards, change Primary Care Physician (PCP), see

	billing and authorization history, and much more through the member portal account. **Mr. Buben** shared a group photo of Member Services to personalize the individuals in Member Services assisting our membership.
8. Medicare Navigators R. Beaver, Medicare Sales Manager	**Mr. Beaver** presented a PowerPoint presentation titled The Role of Medicare Navigators. Medicare Navigators help CenCal CareConnect members navigate Medicare and Medi-Cal options through personalized guidance, including understanding benefits, comparing options, and checking coverage for doctors and prescriptions. Mr. Beaver emphasized that the navigators work without sales pressure since they are employees rather than commissioned brokers, typically spending 63 minutes per enrollment call and making an average of two phone calls before enrollment. Mr. Beaver noted that while CareConnect is a strong fit for approximately 95% of individuals, the team's priority is to ensure individuals are well-informed and supported in making decisions about their healthcare coverage. For the remaining 5% who may not be an ideal fit, the team aims to help them understand the reasons why CenCal CareConnect may or may not meet their needs. **Discussion:** **Ms. Goodwin** asked why 5% of individuals would not join CareConnect. **Mr. Beaver** responded that most individuals that may not be a good fit for CareConnect are because they are using providers outside of the area. **Ms. Goodwin** asked a follow-up question about how care would be managed if a member needed to see a provider outside of the service area. **Mr. Beaver** responded that a transition coordination of care is needed if a member is referred to a provider outside of the network so that the member can see a provider outside of the network. **Ms. Goodwin** inquired about who she should call if her provider says that she is not covered. **Mr. Beaver** responded that members should call CenCal Health's Member Services Department if they are not able to receive care from their provider so that CenCal Health staff can educate the front desk staff to help accommodate care for the members.

	Ms. Goodwin expressed appreciation to Mr. Beaver for sharing about CenCal CareConnect and EAC with her. **Ms. Guerrero** expressed appreciation to CenCal Health for always being able to assist her.
9. Supplemental Benefits H. Garcia, Medicare Director	**Mr. Garcia** presented a PowerPoint presentation titled Benefits Overview. He provided an overview of the Annual Bid Process and the 2026 CareConnect benefits. Currently, CenCal CareConnect offers $120/quarter for OTC, annual eye exam, $400 for glasses and contacts, annual hearing exam, and $1,250 for hearing devices. The 2027 benefit strategy and approach were presented.
10. EAC Membership and Recruitment B. Xiong	**Ms. Xiong** provided an update on EAC recruitment efforts, which include posting information about the EAC on CenCal Health's website, launching text and email campaigns, and sharing information about the EAC at community events. Medicare Navigators also provide information about the EAC to CenCal CareConnect members. CenCal Health strives to recruit three (3) additional EAC members. CenCal Health aims to ensure broad representation by including individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, genders, languages, cultures, and physical disabilities, reflecting the rich diversity of the CenCal CareConnect population. Individuals who meet the following criteria may join the EAC: • Be a CenCal Care Connect Member, Member's family members, consumer advocate, and caregivers • Be at least 18 years of age • Be able to attend EAC meetings Ms. Xiong concluded her update by inviting EAC members to share their ideas on recruitment strategies. **Discussion:** **Ms. Macdonald** recommended sharing information about the EAC at the Community Advisory Board (CAB) meeting. **Mr. Buben,** who serves as the CAB Coordinator, **and Ms. Rehse,** who serves as the CAB Chair, expressed support for the recommendation. **Ms. Guerrero** expressed excitement for additional CenCal CareConnect members to join the EAC and shared that she is aware of a CenCal CareConnect member who may be interested in joining. **Ms. Xiong** expressed appreciation for the referral and stated she will follow up with Ms. Guerrero to obtain the individual's contact information and reach out accordingly.

11. Opportunity for EAC members to share relevant updates or feedback All	**Ms. Goodwin** shared that she has been very impressed with CenCal CareConnect and appreciates the plan's supplemental over-the-counter benefits. She also expressed enthusiasm about others enrolling in CenCal CareConnect, noting that she first learned about the plan through her provider. **Ms. Guerrero** stated that she would be willing to share the opportunity to join the EAC within her network. **Ms. Xiong** thanked Ms. Guerrero for her willingness to do so and stated that she would follow up to provide appropriate materials for sharing. **Dr. Do-Reynoso** suggested presenting the CenCal CareConnect sales strategy at the Quarter 3 EAC meeting. **Ms. Macdonald** shared that she will no longer be using Walgreens, as she has transitioned to receiving her over-the-counter items by mail through SortPak Pharmacy. She expressed appreciation for the convenience of home delivery, noting that it eliminates the need to take the bus to Walgreens. **Ms. Goodwin** expressed interest in SortPak pharmacy. **Mr. Buben** explained that pharmacy benefits are administered by MedImpact, a pharmacy benefits manager, while the Medi-Cal pharmacy component is managed by Magellan (Medi-Cal Rx). This split has led to billing misalignment and processing issues at Walgreens. He noted that using SortPak provides a more effective solution, as its processing and billing are more streamlined and helps avoid the issue with ordering from Walgreens. **Ms. Macdonald** noted that there are co-pay tiers for ordering over-the-counter items. **Mr. Buben** introduced himself and shared pictures of his softball championships. **Dr. Do-Reynoso** and **Ms. Macdonald** showed their appreciation for **Mr. Buben**. **Ms. Macdonald** adjourned the meeting at 2:21 p.m. She thanked the EAC for their time and participation.
Next meeting: September 3, 2026	

Respectfully submitted,

(To be approved at the September 10, 2026 meeting, Meeting by EAC vote)

Bao Xiong

Director of Program Development, EAC Coordinator