



Meeting Minutes

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Thursday, September 11, 2025

4:00 PM

595 Center Ave, Martinez CA 94553 |
<https://cchealth.zoom.us/j/96667062931> |
+16465189805,,96667062931# US (New York)

Agenda Items: Items may be taken out of order based on the business of the day and preference of the Committee

1. Roll Call and Introductions

Allison welcome (with Claudia translation). Explanation of interpreter function. Rules for interpreters and note recording meeting. Belkys welcome participants and introduce Cynthia Laird. Belkys reminded of the recording guidelines for meetings. For the benefit of interpreter please speak slowly and use short sentences. Also reminded participants that the meeting is being recorded and any personal information that may be shared is not private. Also, comments made during the meeting should be respectful and relevant to the topic at hand. Participants should avoid personal attacks or inflammatory language. Additionally, persons wishing to comment should use the "raise your hand" feature in Zoom app or post comment or question in "chat" section. All public comments will be limited to 2 minutes per speaker per topic.

2. Public comment on any item under the jurisdiction of the Committee and not on this agenda (speakers may be limited to two minutes).

3. Welcome new Member, agenda Review, follow up from last meeting

Belkys went over the agenda for the participants:

Medi-Cal Re-Determination

Mental Health Services outreach and education plan

Member Services: Current function & Communication, Future Technology for Communication

CCHP Training: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Cynthia introduces herself and welcomes new members and existing members. She briefly states the meeting purpose:

Share feedback from the public to improve service of Plan

Work with community members and local partners to make CCHP stronger for our community

4. Medi-Cal Re-Determination

Belkys introduces Krista Holguin -Medi-Cal Program Analyst for Contra Costa Employment and Human Service Department to discuss medi-cal renewals and using website benefitscal.com.

Krista goes into detail regarding the renewal process. She reminds participants that ALL Medi-Cal Members are required to renew their coverage annually (means every 12 months)

Some members' coverage is renewed automatically, and some members are required to complete renewal forms.

These members should receive a "Yellow Envelope". These are mailed out to the members 45 days before they are due.

Members can complete renewal forms and provide current information by the following:

- Phoning Medi-Cal/CalFresh Service Center at 866-663-3225
- Mailing back completed forms (self-addressed post-paid envelope provided)
- Or by submitting forms online using benefitscal.com

The easiest and fastest way to submit your renewal is via mail or online

(Wait times on the phone can be long and Krista noted that members may also come into local district offices; however, the in-person wait- times can be long as well)

If members do not provide information by the due date the member's coverage will end.

If this happens, members have 90 days to provide the information without needing to re-apply (meaning members can turn in forms or contact Medi-Cal via phone to complete renewal within 90 days.

Krista provides information on benefitscal.com. Benefitscal.com is medi-cal online service that allows members to get forms to the county in real time. For example,

Members can upload documents (like renewal forms)

Members can request callbacks from county

Members can report changes to the country

Members can do this through "Manage my Benefits" function on the website without needing to create an account.

Even though members can submit documents w/o an account; however, members will need to know their case number. Members need to know this number and provide ID information to upload documents.

However, creating an account is highly encouraged and allows people to:

- View benefits (not just M-CAL. Includes CalFresh and CalWORKs)
- Track status and reminders
- Read notices
- Keep up with reporting

Once member logs in their things to do list.

Fastest way to submit documents to county

Krista provides some additional information and phone numbers

EHSD Website is where you can find benefit information and locations

Benefitscal.com has information to assist members on how to create or start an application to complete your renewal

Another resource found on benefitscal.com is how to video, there are videos on basically anything you can do on the website (including a step-by-step video on how to complete your Medi-Cal renewal)

Medi-Cal: How to Get the Health Care You Need - available on EHSD website

Questions:

How does one know if your Medi-Cal is automatically renewal? Members will receive a notice in the mail stating your coverage has been renewed and informs members of the next renewal date in the next 12-month period. This notice is required to inform members of approval or discontinuing.

The County is constantly notifying members of renewals either by notifying them of automatic renewals or by sending out packets and if not received and due date is approaching.

Member has a comment that CCHS has partnered with Medi-Cal to remind patients during their appointment that patients are reminded to renew M-Cal it is their renewal due.

Jersey: What other information can you find on benefitscal.com or what other programs can apply for? On benefitscal.com you can apply for Cal Works, Cal Fresh and Medi-Cal. Also, you can report or change anything (i.e., address changes or income changes or changes in household members). You can uphold documents and submit renewals. If member has set up an account, they can renew notices, create an

income verification. They can also obtain a history of benefits and proof of benefits. They check program status (whether case is approved or denied). The site posts reminders in members account of things to do. Members can see this from their login page. It really is the fastest way to get the members' documents turned in.

Have you used the website to apply for Medi-Cal

Member asked about changes to Medi-Cal? Summary of change

- Effective January 2026 - the asset test which was eliminated in January 2024 will be returning
- Customers are allowed to retain or have \$130,000 worth of assets for one person and \$65,000 additional per person up to 10 people. Messages and FAQ will be going out in the next few weeks.
- Another large change starting January 2026. Any person applying for Medi-Cal that does not have satisfactory immigration status will be approved for restricted Medi-Cal only. Current Medi-Cal members regardless of immigration status coverage will still continue past January 2026.
- Dulce asked another question after Krista left the meeting. The question was about the 80-hour work requirement.

5. Non-Specialty Mental Health Services (NSMHS) outreach and education plan

Belkys introduced Jersey Neilson with Quality Management team. Jersey asked some basic questions on how to get appointments, assistance in Mental Health (MH) crisis and available resources dealing with Mental Health and Substance Use.

One member spoke to some issues with getting appointments. She explained that she is finding process difficult and awaiting a callback from Mental Health appointment desk. Jersey offered some guidance with the process and some possible short cuts (the best way is call Access Line). Jersey informed all that MH Access line does intake for both specialty MH services and substance use services.

Jersey reminded the group that for MH crisis the County has 3 crisis response 800 number and trained MH counselors. There were questions about waitlists in chat; Allison put MH Access Line number in chat. Jersey provided a list of resources and programs available for MH and Substance Use cases. All resources are available through Access Line

Jersey informed participants of 2024 requirement to create plans on how to outreach and to educate members on how to access services. She stated the reason for speaking at this CAC meeting as these services are not accessed as often as they should be and the plan needs to have input from this group who are Medi-Cal members and who may or may not need to access services.

Additionally, the plan needs to have input from county Behavioral Health services who run the access line.

Also, the plan needs to determine whether the available services are equitable, and it informs people how to receive help with an interpreter.

The plan must tell how it will reduce stigma around MH and substance use.

It must tell how it's going to educate providers how to inform members how to obtain services.

How we are going let members know what services are available and how to get them.

What we have done

Developed 1-pagers with health education on 1 page and resources (i.e., educate members on when they should seek treatment specifically for adults and another one for children; how to cope with stress in a healthy way; another flyer about pregnancy and MH). Jersey also requested other topics from participants

Created a MH specific e-newsletter going out to people who have signed up (members, providers and community health providers). It is about upcoming local events and other topics. Briefly highlighted the first issue launched in February which focused on seasonal affective disorder (SAD) and when one should consider treatment.

Having a table at community events and health centers- handing out 1-pager and other information at community health fairs and events.

What we do

Place at least 1 MH article in CCHP members' newsletter at least once a year

Annual Member Experience surveying our patients who have accessed MH services to see where CCHP is doing well and where improvements are needed.

New Member mailers - included information on how to access MH and substance abuse services.

Provide education on MH Services - a quarterly network bulleting and provider training.

What we plan to do

Social Media posts in May (MH Awareness Month) - partnering with BH providers and doing social media posts and awareness and continue with community outreach

Continue community outreach-Farmers' Markets, Flee Markets and other open-air markets working on targeting these and getting into these venues - target date as early as October.

More materials/handouts - targeting a larger audience (what works from some/may not work for others) - everything is always available in Spanish and Chinese, but CCHP is always able to translate to additional languages.

Question: What else can CCHP do to spread word?

Issue with long wait times for Spanish interpreters-more availability with telehealth; however, for in-person interpreters - CCHP is trying to expand their network. Overall, it's hard to get MH providers nationally.

Follow up to above issue - participant asked for clarification on "211". Jersey was not aware of what "211" does - she indicated that "211" is recommended as an option in text and chat and they have a wealth of resources. It was explained that it's the team understanding that "211" is hub for everything that Jersey mentioned like mental health access and other resources can be funneled through "211". Most likely if a caller requests MH services, the caller would be warm transferred to MH access line

One member has reported issues in the past and she is now engaging in the process with another foster child.

She hopes that this time will go smoother and she will report back to the group her recent experiences as it was difficult for her to obtain care, make appointments and then the therapist wasn't with county very long so that ended.

Jersey reminded group of the timely access standards and if they feel the standards are not being met then they have the right to phone health plan to inform them of issues - difficulty in getting providers

One members suggested that the health plan add a direct graphic and link to mental health services-making information more available and easier to find on the website is always a good suggestion.

Jersey shares another example of the 1-pager flyer (general information on the subject on the front side and MH resources specific to the County on the back side) with a QR code on the top right for feedback.

6. CCHP Training: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Belkys introduces Allison to discuss this topic

Participant added to chat a message about Contra Costa Health Atlas and how they are finding this a great resource. Additionally, a participant would like to include fitness like East Bay Regional Parks. Allison briefly described CC Health Atlas for the participants.

It is a feature on the website and includes different local data in the county. Jersey indicated that more data sources are being added as they become available.

Allison restated the members' suggestion that new Tech might be used to make filing grievances easier. Allison reminded all participants that CCHP website does have an online grievance form. Allison is posting the link in the chat.

CCHP Training: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Allison asked the following questions:

- What's your definition of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion?
- Do you think this is important to you as a CCHP Member?
- What do you think providers or CCHP staff should learn from DEI training? Participant indicated that she is very positive with HP implementing DEI processes and she appreciates that it includes member disabilities as well, whether it is an obvious issue or whether it a disability that is not obvious

Allison stated that all CCHP staff and providers are required to complete training by end of 2025. Staff and providers will need to redo training every 2 to 3 years. The team will continue to make updates to this training. This update will be made annually if not more frequently. Allison is looking for feedback from participants on what should be added to this training

7. Member Services: Current function& Communication, future technology for communication

Brandon was introduced to discuss this topic. Brandon briefly lists the types of technology assistance that may become available.

How should smart tech work for members?

What would be helpful for you?

Someone indicates that they prefer text messages, someone adds that the Health Plan already sends some text messages, Allison clarifies that texts are sent for upcoming appointments and reminders about health screening; however, she feels that Brandon was asking about tech function used to access ID cards, or other issues members currently need to speak to Member Services staff. Another member indicates that she would like to have an ID card sent to her by text and also, she liked the comprehensive way appointment reminders are sent by text. Brandon responded that appointment reminder come from Health Services side. Participant indicated that it might be helpful if members could file a grievance using a technology solution. CCHP Member Services are considering the following for interactive text messaging or chat bots or if your kind of IVR is too complicated it would escalate the inquiry to live human representative

Order a new Member ID card

Change your Primary Care Provider

Check your benefits

Message with a live Member Services staff

Still get help from a person for hard questions

Participant suggested filing a grievance

Another Participant suggested changes to basic health information (such as changes to address or phone number)

Just to make clear, Member Services are still in the evaluation phase. It remains to be seen if any of the above will come to pass. This exercise is to see if the Plan can meet members where they are and improve member's satisfaction.

Brandon concludes with statement of goals

Give choices to members so they can pick what works best for them

To provide better access when a phone is not necessary

To provide self-service tools anytime day or night

The next meeting is currently scheduled for December 11, 2025.

Adjourn

The Committee will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities planning to attend the Committee meetings. Contact the staff person listed below at least 72 hours before the meeting. Any disclosable public records related to an open session item on a regular meeting agenda and distributed by the County to a majority of members of the Committee less than 96 hours prior to that meeting are available for public inspection at 595 Center Ave., Martinez CA 94553, during normal business hours. Staff reports related to items on the agenda are also accessible online at www.contracosta.ca.gov. If the Zoom connection malfunctions for any reason, the meeting may be paused while a fix is attempted. If the connection is not reestablished, the committee will continue the meeting in person without remote access. Public comment may be submitted via electronic mail on agenda items at least one full work day prior to the published meeting time.

For Additional Information Contact: 1-800-211-8040