

MEETING OF BLUE SHIELD OF CALIFORNIA PROMISE HEALTH PLAN  
LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

Date:	Monday, December 9, 2024.
Time:	1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Location:	Hybrid (Virtual and in-person: 3840 Kilroy Airport Way, Long Beach)
Attendance:	<p>Committee Members present:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Member A, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan</li> <li>2. Member B, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan</li> <li>3. Member C, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan</li> <li>4. Member D, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan</li> <li>5. Member E, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan</li> <li>6. Member F, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan</li> <li>7. Member G, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan</li> <li>8. Member H, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan</li> <li>9. Anwar Zoueihid, VP of Long-Term Services &amp; Supports, Partners in Care Foundation</li> <li>10. Connor Hannigan, Staff Attorney, Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County</li> <li>11. Halina Fardin, Program Develop Specialist, Worksite Wellness LA</li> <li>12. Kristine Choulakian, Outreach Specialist, Personal Assistance Councils</li> <li>13. Margie Harper, LA South-Central Mental Health Non- Profit</li> <li>14. Richard Ayoub, CEO, Project Angel Food</li> <li>15. Teri Morales, Pathways LA</li> </ol> <p>Committee Members absent:</p> <p>Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan Representatives present:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amie Eng, Program Manager</li> <li>2. Araceli Garcia, Program Manager, Consultant</li> <li>3. Jennifer Nuovo, M.D., Chief Medical Officer</li> <li>4. Jennifer Shirmer, Vice President, Medi-Cal Growth &amp; Community Engagement</li> <li>5. Keisha Dreher, Sr. Manager, Program Management</li> <li>6. Sandra Rose, Senior Director, Community Programs</li> </ol> <p>Members of the Public</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No members of the public in attendance</li> </ol>
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Blue Shield Promise Health Plan Updates</li> <li>II. Re-cap of Q3-2024 Meeting</li> </ol>

	III. DispatchHealth Overview IV. Medi-Cal Quality Improvement Preventive Screenings V. Ombudsman Update VI. Discussion VII. Closing Remarks
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## Introductions and Welcome

- Araceli Garcia began the meeting with roll call and went over the meeting logistics.
- Sandra Rose welcomed the committee and reviewed the agenda.

### I. Blue Shield Promise Health Plan Update

- Jennifer Schirmer provided an update on our partnership with Thrive Global Cookbook, GEDWorks program, and the Lincoln Heights Community Resource Center Ribbon Cutting Event.
  - Thrive Global Cookbook
    - Blue Shield Promise partnered with Thrive Global to produce a budget-friendly cookbook featuring 60 recipes (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, drinks) and tips for healthy cooking.
    - Recipes from celebrity chefs (e.g., Jose Andrés, Ina Garten) and dietary symbols indicating heart-healthy, vegan, etc.
    - Hard copies will be mailed to CAC members.
    - A digital version is available now, with a Spanish version later this month and nine additional languages next year.
    - Richard Ayoub inquired about heart-healthy/diabetic options and potential collaboration with Project Angel Food.
    - Jenn confirmed recipes include designations and welcomed the partnership idea.
  - GED Works Program
    - A partnership with GEDWorks provides free GED resources, including tutoring, study materials, practice tests, and personal advisors.
    - 2024 Progress:
      - 150 members enrolled.
      - 54% are actively studying; 9 members have graduated.
    - 2025 Plans:
      - Increase program seats.
    - Pair members with Community Health Advocates to address additional health and social needs.

- Blue Shield Promise is the only California health plan offering GED support as a member benefit.
  - Lincoln Heights Community Resource Center
    - Ribbon cutting event scheduled for Saturday, December 14, from 10:00–11:30 AM. RSVPs were due today.
    - A community grand opening event will occur in March 2025.
      - The Lincoln Heights Center marks the 14th Community Resource Center.
      - Blue Shield Promise and LA Care have committed \$189 million in a five-year agreement to manage the centers and address social determinants of health.
  - Additional Updates
    - Richard shared that Project Angel Food is conducting a capital campaign and plans to connect with the community at the ribbon-cutting event.
    - Jenn emphasized the health plan's commitment to community health and invited members to tour the resource centers.

## II. Recap of Q2-2024 Community Advisory Committee Meeting

- Sandra Rose reviewed the topic and action items from the Q3-2024 meeting.
  - Cultural and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS)
    - Information was provided on interpreter and translation services.
  - Information Resources Center Services
    - Explored resources and class offerings for the Huntington Park Information Resource Center.
    - Feedback has been shared with resource center managers, and an update on new programs will be provided in early 2025.
  - Web Page Updates
    - Highlighted Pages
      - Health Equity Page: Information on initiatives supporting equitable access to care.
      - Find Help Tool: A searchable database for community-based social services by zip code.
      - Behavioral Health Services: Details on behavioral health benefits for members.
    - Limited input received, but members are encouraged to provide feedback on content, layout, or usefulness via Araceli Garcia.

## III. Discussion: DispatchHealth Overview

- Keisha Dreher gave an overview of the DispatchHealth program and led a discussion to get feedback on the visibility and utilization of the program for Medi-Cal members.
  - Background
    - DispatchHealth is an on-demand, in-home emergency room substitution care program.
    - The care team includes nurse practitioner, physician assistant, medical technician, and virtual ER doctor.
    - It covers 60–70% of emergency services in-home at no cost to Blue Shield Promise members.
    - The services are available from 8 AM–10 PM, 365 days a year, in 450 zip codes across Los Angeles, Orange County, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties.
    - Members, care managers, or providers can request a visit from DispatchHealth either by phone or through an online platform.
    - The care team provides treatment and ensures follow-up coordination with the member’s primary care physician.
    - The typical response time for DispatchHealth services is between 2–3 hours.
    - DispatchHealth is particularly beneficial for members who face challenges assessing same-day services, including mobility challenges, or lack of transportation.
    - The service is ideal for individuals needing care after hours, on holidays, or following medical procedures.
    - Frequent emergency room users for non-emergency issues can also benefit from this in-home care option.
    - DispatchHealth treats a variety of conditions, including minor injuries, infections, Dehydration, and other non-life-threatening medical concerns.
  - Discussion
    - The CAC expressed enthusiasm for the program, highlighting its convenience and potential to reduce ER visits.
    - The CAC mentioned feeling comfortable allowing care teams into their homes for health emergencies.
    - Some noted it could depend on the severity of symptoms and the urgency of the situation.
    - The CAC requested an expanded list of conditions DispatchHealth can treat.
    - The CAC made suggestions to extend hours beyond 8 AM–10 PM for increased accessibility.
    - The CAC recommend broadening marketing efforts through:
      - Social media, TV ads, and newsletters.
      - Engage healthcare providers to promote the service to patients.

- Action Item
  - Keisha to send Araceli an expanded list of conditions DispatchHealth can treat.
  - Keisha and team to Incorporate feedback into marketing and outreach strategies for 2025.

#### IV. Discussion: Medi-Cal Quality Improvement preventive screenings

- Amie Eng gave an overview of the Medi-Cal Quality Improvement Preventive Screenings Program and asked the CAC for feedback about phone outreach.
  - Background
    - The Medi-Cal Quality Improvement Preventive Screenings Program focuses on helping members stay healthy through routine exams and wellness checks, separate from visits for sickness, injury, or illness.
    - Preventive visits include:
      - Vaccines to protect against diseases.
      - Cancer screenings to detect conditions early, even before symptoms arise.
      - Education and counseling to support informed health decisions.
    - To help members stay on track with preventive care, the program offers:
      - Letters reminding members of due screenings.
      - Phone calls to assist with scheduling, transportation, and identifying alternative providers.
      - Gift card incentives for completing screenings.
    - The program partners with mid-level practitioners (e.g., nurse practitioners and physician assistants) to provide:
      - Mobile and flexible screening events, improving accessibility for members facing barriers to traditional care settings.
  - Discussion
    - The CAC expressed a preference for phone calls that do not ask for personal information (e.g., address, phone number) to build trust.
    - The CAC suggested providing a unique identifier or code in prior communication (e.g., letters) to verify the call is from Blue Shield Promise.
    - The CAC noted the tendency to deprioritize screenings when no symptoms are present.
    - The CAC made suggestions, which included leveraging word-of-mouth campaigns and emphasizing the importance of staying ahead of health issues.
    - Concerns over the loss of personal connection in telehealth during the pandemic.

- The CAC mentioned a strong preference for in-person visits for well-childcare.
- The CAC suggested engaging parents directly through education about the importance of preventive care for their children.
- The CAC mentioned appreciating reminders via calls and letters, as well as incentives.
- The CAC made recommendations included targeted outreach to parents, simplified communication, and leveraging community forums and social media to raise awareness.
- Action item
  - Quality team to look into Improving phone call verification to distinguish Blue Shield Promise outreach from potential fraud.
  - Explore community education emphasizing the benefits of preventive screenings for all ages.
  - Enhance messaging to highlight the value of in-person visits, especially for children’s well-child visits.
  - Expand outreach using videos and social media platforms to simplify and amplify the message.

## V. Ombudsman Presentation

- Connor Hannigan, from the Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles, presented and led a discussion on Recuperative Care, Short-term care for individuals not requiring hospitalization or skilled nursing.
  - Overview
    - Services available to anyone in LA County facing health-related legal issues.
    - Steady caseload with a noticeable increase in October 2024.
    - Issues span all health plans, not exclusive to Blue Shield Promise.
    - Short-term care for individuals not requiring hospitalization or skilled nursing but needing support to recover from an illness or injury.
      - Settings:
        - Recuperative care facilities.
        - Locations providing basic services such as a bed, meals, and monitoring of medical or behavioral health conditions.
        - wound care, medication management, and health assessments.
      - Eligibility Criteria:
        - Individuals with Medi-Cal managed care who meet the following conditions:
          - At risk of hospitalization or recovering post-hospitalization.
          - Lack formal support or housing necessary for safe recovery.

- Experience housing insecurity or conditions jeopardizing health and safety.
    - Meet HUD definitions of homelessness or at risk of homelessness.
    - Have enhanced care management, a serious chronic condition, serious mental illness, or are at risk of institutionalization due to substance use disorder.
  - Provides up to 90 days of recovery-focused support in a safe environment.
  - Assists vulnerable populations, such as individuals with housing insecurity recovering from medical procedures.
- Discussion
  - The CAC were unfamiliar with recuperative care as a community support option.
  - Recognized its potential to address gaps for individuals recovering from surgeries or illnesses in unstable living conditions.
  - Emphasized the importance of outreach to ensure eligible members are aware of this resource.

## VI. Open Discussion

- Member B inquired about how the CMS Final Rule, effective January 2025, would affect her healthcare benefits as a dual-eligible member with Medicare Part B and Medi-Cal.
- Sandra and Dr. Nuovo acknowledged the complexity of the rules and mentions they would follow up. Initial insights suggest that Medicare Part A may become automatic for individuals with Part B. Connor offered additional assistance if needed.
- Sandra emphasized their role in assisting members with interpreting notices and connecting them to resources.
- Sandra encouraged members to use customer service and legal support for further assistance.
- Member B reported receiving a questionnaire from Blue Shield Promise and LA Care but noted a missing return envelope and lack of follow-up after contacting customer service.

## VII. Closing and Adjournment

- Sandra Rose concluded the meeting by expressing gratitude for the robust discussions and engagement throughout the year. Wished everyone a safe and joyful holiday season and encouraged them to prioritize their health and well-being. Confirmed the committee will reconvene in 2025 and reminding the group to review the appendix materials.

- Appendix A: Standing Reports
  - Membership & Interpreter Services
  - Grievances Q3-2024
  - Appeals Q3-2024
  
- Appendix B: Blue Shield Promise Contacts