



## Health Equity

Central California Alliance for Health (the Alliance) is a County Organized Health System, serving more than 410,000 Medi-Cal members in Merced, Monterey and Santa Cruz counties. For more information on the Alliance's five-year Strategic Plan, visit

[www.thealliance.health/strategy](http://www.thealliance.health/strategy)

**HEALTHY PEOPLE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

[www.thealliance.health](http://www.thealliance.health)

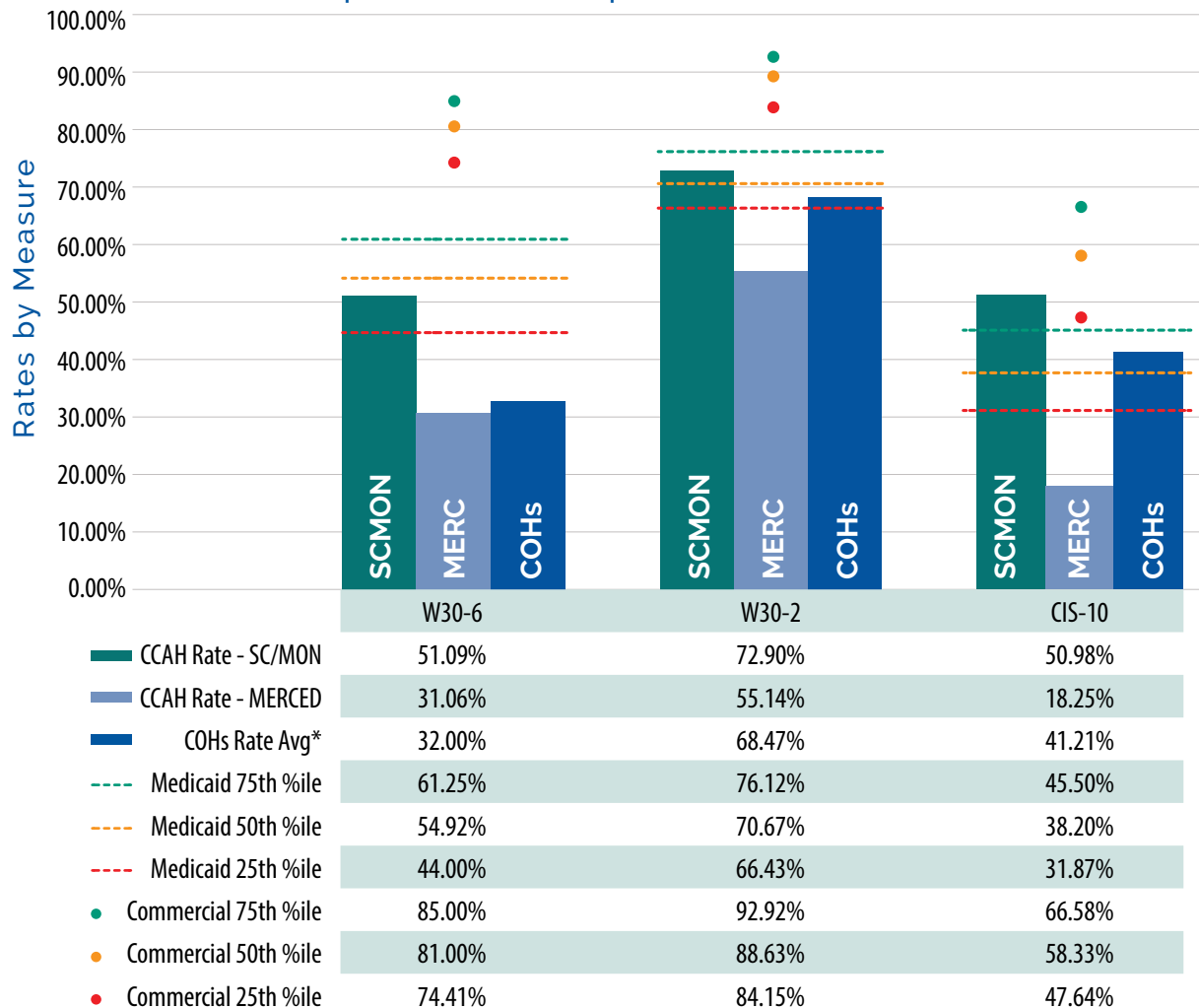
# HEALTH EQUITY

**Health equity** means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health.

The Alliance is committed to achieving health equity for our members. To fully address health inequities, we must seek to understand root causes of health disparities, particularly those experienced by members in marginalized populations. We will accomplish this by embracing diversity, inclusion and belonging in our workforce, partnering with providers and engaging with members to inform and guide our actions. In addition, we will focus prevention efforts on children and youth and work to increase members' access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health care to eliminate health disparities and achieve optimal health outcomes.

## CHILDREN'S HEALTH DOMAIN, MY 2021

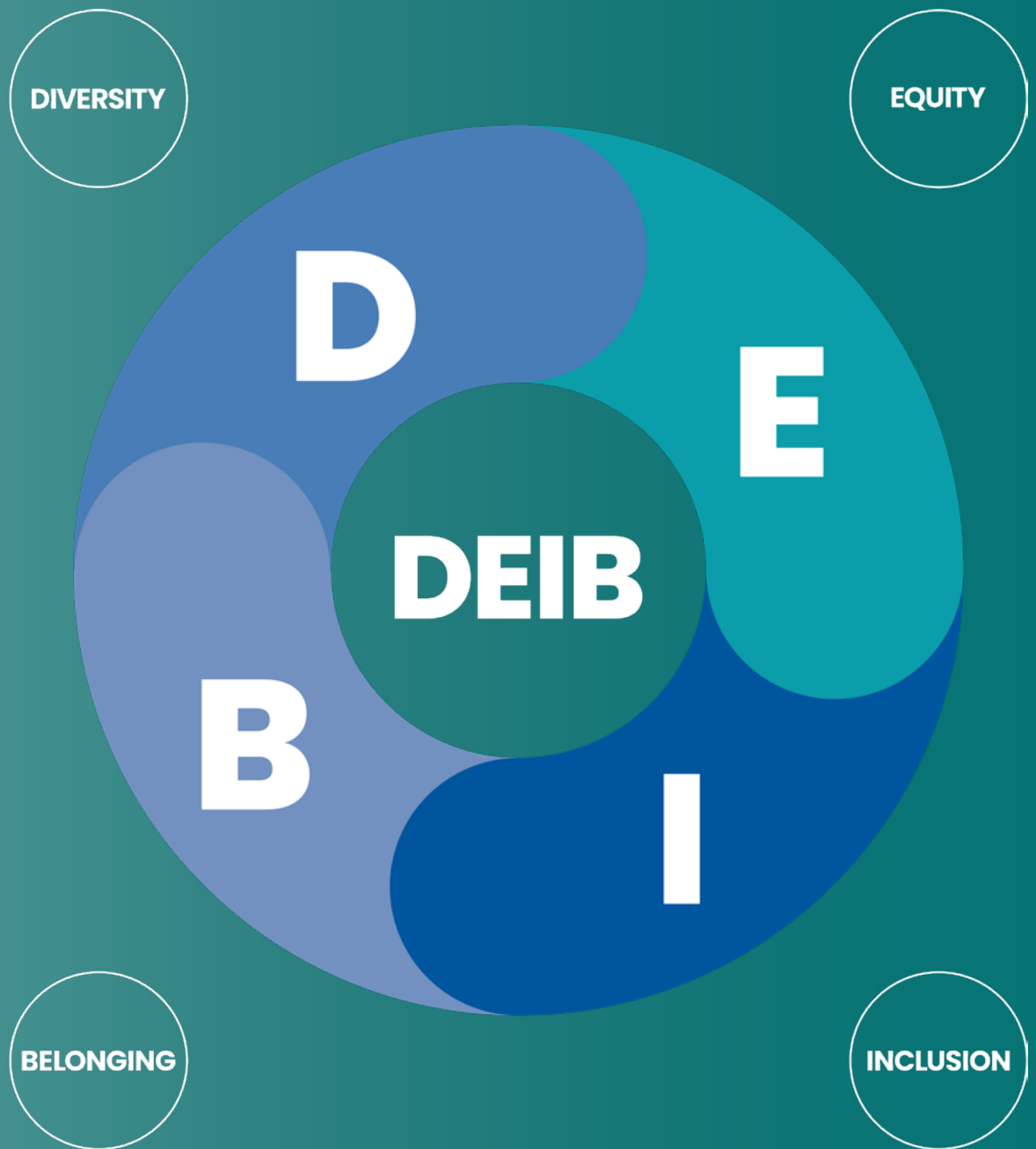
Alliance performance compared to national benchmarks



\*COHs Rate Avg. is based on MY 2020 Plan rate averages. MY 2021 reported were not available at the time of this publication.

The next few pages represent the early actions the Alliance has taken towards our goal to improve health equity, as well as a glimpse into emerging initiatives.





## DEIB in our workforce

To ensure an inclusive approach to equity in Alliance policies and processes, we launched a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) priority initiative within our workforce. This work is meant to ensure that staff is equipped to support health equity from the inside out. Foundational work completed thus far includes a DEIB Assessment, staff surveys, staff and leadership training, Coffee Talks and Town Halls with executive leadership. We also established a DEIB Steering Committee to inform our future efforts. Outputs from this work included shared language, psychological safety, guidelines to include staff voice and implementing an annual staff engagement survey.





**Eliminate health  
disparities and  
achieve optimal  
health outcomes**



## TARGETED INCENTIVES

In 2022, we provided timely point-of-service member incentives for well visits, flu vaccines and COVID-19 vaccines. Gift cards were given to nearly 90,000 members for COVID-19 vaccine completions. For the state COVID-19 Vaccine Incentive Plan, through both provider and member incentives, the Alliance achieved partial or full health disparity gap closure in eight out of nine populations. In addition, there was nearly a 20% increase in COVID-19 vaccination for 5-11-year-olds. Looking ahead, the member incentives program has been revised to provide both mailed and point-of-service rewards for desired health behaviors, including well visits and vaccine completions.

## AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

We launched targeted bi-lingual media campaigns in all three counties in support of the COVID-19 vaccine boosters incentive program, which included advertisements in buses, social media, mobile platforms, theaters, and outdoor billboards. In addition, our annual fall flu vaccine campaign targeted young families and pregnant people on various communication channels. In 2023, we will deploy quarterly targeted awareness campaigns on traditional and digital channels, focused on preventative care and well visits to ensure members receive health care reminders and information at the right place and at the right time.

## MEMBER OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

In order to reach members where they live, our Your Health Matters outreach team attended 119 community events where staff connected in person with more than 13,000 members in all three counties. These events provided timely, face-to-face opportunities to share health plan information and wellness resources to our members and communities. In addition to community outreach, we also launched a member engagement program to provide opportunities for members to provide feedback about their experience. Listening to our members and learning more about their unique experiences will further inform and enhance the effectiveness of our health equity efforts in the future.

## DATA-DRIVEN PROVIDER SUPPORT

We are offering providers enhanced data to support their outreach to members who are most in need of care. Quality measures include stratification by race, ethnicity, age and zip codes that allow providers to identify health inequities in their communities. Performance Improvement Projects in Merced included:

- Well-child visits (Golden Valley): Providers conducted outreach to children due for preventative care services, offering a member incentive upon completion of a well-child exam.
- Childhood immunizations (Castle): Vaccine clinics provided a member incentive for the 2nd dose of the flu vaccine for children less than 2 years of age.
- Well visits (Asian health disparity project): Conducted targeted outreach and practice coaching for clinic staff where significant disparity in Asian populations was indicated for well-child visits.
- Breast Cancer Screening (BCS) (Hmong members): Alliance Health Educators conducted outreach to educate and assist members in scheduling and completing a mammogram screen.

## MEMBER OUTREACH

The Alliance  
attended  
**119**  
outreach  
events.

Reached  
**13,000**  
members at in-  
person events.



## **MEDI-CAL CAPACITY GRANT PROGRAM (MCGP)**

To further realize the Alliance's vision of healthy people, healthy communities, we invest in the communities we serve through the MCGP. Since 2015, the Alliance has invested \$129.8 million in investments focused on increasing the availability, quality and access of health care and supportive resources for Medi-Cal members. Grants help strengthen the health care workforce to provide culturally and linguistically competent care and to reflect the diversity of Alliance members. Grants also address healthy food access, permanent supportive housing and other social drivers and health inequities that influence wellness in our communities. In 2022, the principle "equity in impact" was established in a revised MCGP Framework and focus areas were changed to: 1) Access to Care, 2) Healthy Beginnings, and 3) Healthy Communities to integrate health equity in funding strategies.

MCGP investments further the Alliance's strategic priority of health equity through a variety of grant programs:

- Workforce (Provider Recruitment, Local Licensed Provider Higher Education)
- Healthy Food Access (Food Prescription Projects, Post-Discharge Meal Delivery Pilot)
- Children's Preventative Care (Children's Savings Account Health Milestones Contributions)
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Person-Centered Care (Intensive Case Management Pilot, Recuperative Care Pilot)
- COVID-19 Response (Basic food and supplies to communities experiencing inequities)

More information is available at [www.thealliance.health/grants](http://www.thealliance.health/grants)

## **ADDRESSING PROVIDER WORKFORCE SHORTAGES**

Recognizing that some communities face provider shortages, we have begun to actively support provider recruitment and retention efforts in under-resourced areas. Through our MCGP, Merced Faculty Associates Medical Group (MFA) and Golden Valley Health Centers (GVHC) increased their capacity to serve members in their primary care practices by hiring new providers from the Provider Recruitment program. As a result, all clinics reduced next available appointment wait times and patient cycle times while increasing access to preventative screenings and chronic disease management.

Looking ahead, we will partner with clinical academic programs to increase the provider pipeline in local communities for preventative care services and identify additional programs and services to increase the provider workforce. In addition, we are researching opportunities to offer targeted incentives to increase provider workforce in impacted areas. Further, the Alliance implemented the Community Health Worker benefit to support members in navigating the health care system.

## **CARE-BASED INCENTIVES**

Providers participate in the Care-Based Incentive program to improve performance in access, quality of care and care coordination. In 2023, a health plan performance measure using the Child and Adolescent Well-Care Visit measure was added with the goal of closing health disparity gaps among ethnic groups. To strive for even higher performance and needed care for members, funding of \$5 million will be offered for providers to address workforce shortages (such as community health care workers), operational improvements or support care delivery in the clinics.



# Increase member access to culturally and linguistically appropriate care

## **CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS**

We conducted nearly 30,000 telephonic interpreting calls in 2021. We also assisted in 718 translation services for members, representing a 50% jump from 2020. In addition, nearly 90% of our members with children reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the help they received from the Alliance to coordinate their child's care. In terms of the information they receive from the Alliance, 70 % of members indicated that the materials we provide to them are easy to understand. To increase access to person-centered, linguistically and culturally competent care for non-English-speaking Medi-Cal members, we have implemented a Linguistic Competence Incentive for providers.

Looking ahead, we are seeking to solicit ongoing member feedback to improve member experience from a health equity lens and we are creating targeted messaging to help members more easily understand their health plan and how to navigate their care.

## **PROVIDER TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

We offered various training and support programs for providers including practice coaching, learning collaboratives, webinars and Practice Transformation Academy on a variety of topics including: Improving Healthcare Outcomes by Addressing Access and Equity; Through the Lens of Maternal Child Health; and ACEs Screening: Promoting Resilience for All. In addition, we have held immunization trainings for each county to boost immunization rates.



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HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.**

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