Living **Healthy**

A newsletter for the members of Central California Alliance for Health

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The Alliance now provides Medi-Cal to Mariposa and San Benito counties!

As of Jan. 1, 2024, the Alliance serves Medi-Cal members in Mariposa and San Benito counties! This is in addition to serving the counties of Merced, Monterey and Santa Cruz**.**

If you are a new Alliance member, welcome! Have you completed the steps below? They are covered in the new member welcome packet that was mailed to you.

Within 30 days of becoming a member

Choose your primary doctor (also known as primary care provider or PCP).

If you do not select one, we will select one for you. You can learn more about how to choose a doctor on our website at **www.thealliance.health/findadoctor**. You can also call Member Services for help.

Within 120 days (four months) of becoming a member

Call your doctor to schedule your new patient exam.

Find more information for new members at **www.thealliance.health**.

Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports
Enhanced Care Management (ECM)

Alliance members can get Enhanced Care Management (ECM) services to help manage their health care. With ECM, you can get the care you need to stay healthy. ECM can also connect you to community resources.

If you are eligible for ECM services, you will have a special care manager to help with your health care and social needs. ECM care managers work with your doctors and other health care providers.

Community Supports (CS)

Community Supports (CS) are services that may not include direct medical care. The Alliance offers Community Supports to help members with needs like:

- Food.
- Housing.
- Safety changes to your home.

How to get services

To find out if you can get ECM or CS services, call the Alliance at **800-700-3874**.

If you would like to learn more and apply, go to **www.thealliance.health/memberecmcs**.

Teenage girls' health and chlamydia screenings

Teenage girls go through many personal changes in their early teen years. Girls getting their menstrual period is a turning point from being a child to a teenager.

Menstruation can be different for each girl. Some girls may have light symptoms. Some girls may have more severe symptoms, such as depression, headaches and heavy menstruation flows. A doctor may recommend birth control medication to help with their symptoms.

If a girl is prescribed birth control, their doctor may ask to screen for chlamydia. This is a safety check for your teen.

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted disease. It is a silent infection and doesn't have symptoms. It can cause serious damage to a woman's reproductive system if it goes untreated. It is best to catch it early.

The doctor may ask for a urine test to make sure your teen's reproductive system is healthy. There is no cost to you for this test. Contact your doctor for questions about your teen's health and if they are due for a chlamydia screening.

Are you up to date with checkups?

Checkups are regular visits to the doctor that are important for you and your family's health. They are offered at no cost to members of the Alliance.

What happens at a checkup?

At a checkup, your doctor will:

- Go over your personal and family health history.
- Give health screenings based on age.
- Make sure vaccines are up to date.
- Review your medications.
- Provide referrals to specialty care and dental services.

How do I prepare for a checkup?

- Bring any medications that you are taking or that your doctor has prescribed.
- Know your family history for chronic diseases and health conditions.
- Prepare any questions or concerns you have about your health.

How often should we get a checkup?

Babies get checkups three to five days after birth and when they reach these monthly milestones: 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 24 and 30 months of age.

Adults and children ages 3 and older get yearly checkups.

Members can earn gift cards for getting checkups, managing chronic conditions, adopting healthy habits and more. For details, visit **www.thealliance.health/healthrewards**.

Discover local health allies: Community Health Workers!

Alliance members can now get Community Health Worker (CHW) services from participating providers.

CHWs have both lived experience and training to provide preventive health services. CHWs are also known as promotores, community service aides or health navigators.

Covered CHW services include:

- Health education.
- Health navigation.
- Individual support and advocacy.
- Screening and assessments.

If you think you may benefit from this service, talk with your primary care doctor. You may also contact Member Services at **800-700-3874**. For the Hearing or Speech Assistance Line, call **800-735-2929** (TTY: Dial **711**).

Prescription drugs

If you are a Medi-Cal member, your prescriptions that are filled at a pharmacy are covered by Medi-Cal Rx, not the Alliance. You can view prescription drugs that are covered by Medi-Cal Rx at **www.medi-calrx.dhcs.ca.gov**, or you can request a printed copy by calling **800-977-2273** (TTY: Dial **711**), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you are an IHSS member, pharmacy services are managed by MedImpact. You can view covered prescription drugs on the Alliance website at **www.thealliance.health/prescriptions**. You can also request a copy by calling Member Services at **800-700-3874** (TTY: Dial **711**), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. You may also call Member Services if you have questions about a medication.

Ask the doctor
Colorectal cancer screenings

Dr. Heinert is a Medical Director for Central California Alliance for Health with over 20 years of experience in patient care and healthcare management.

With Dr. Maya Heinert

In the United States, colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer found in men and women. Colorectal cancer happens when cells in the colon or rectum grow out of control. Here are a few things you need to know about colorectal cancer screening.

What is a colorectal cancer screening? Why is it important?

A colorectal cancer screening is when your doctor checks to see if you have any precancerous polyps (small clumps of cells) or signs of colorectal cancer. The screening is used to check for disease even if you don't have any symptoms. It is important to check for cancer

through regular screenings, because early treatment works best to help prevent serious health issues.

Screening tests consist of something as simple as a stool test. The test is usually done every one to two years in people 50 to 80 years of age as part of an annual exam. Some people will need a colonoscopy, which allows a doctor to see inside the intestine using a flexible scope. It is important for a doctor to determine the best screening test for you.

Am I at risk for colorectal cancer?

Colorectal cancer is most commonly found in adults ages 65 to 74. However, there has been an increase in colorectal cancer in adults 40 to 49 years old.

You might be more likely to develop colorectal cancer if:

- You have inflammatory bowel disease.
- Someone in your family has had colorectal cancer or polyps.

There are other parts of your lifestyle that can affect your risk level for colorectal cancer. This can include diet, exercise, and the use of alcohol and tobacco products.

When should I get screened for colorectal cancer? How often should I get screened?

If you are 45 to 75 years old, you should be screened once a year for colorectal cancer.

How do I set up a screening?

Talk to your doctor. They can help you understand which kind of screening will be best for you.

Does the Alliance cover colorectal cancer screening?

Yes. You can be screened for colorectal cancer at no cost to you.

What should I do if I have questions?

Contact your doctor's office if you have questions about colorectal cancer screening.

Benefit spotlight
You have dental and vision benefits!

Dental services

Your Medi-Cal plan offers dental benefits for both children and adults. The services are covered by the Medi-Cal Dental Program and not by the Alliance. You will need to show your Medi-Cal Benefits Identification Card (BIC) to your dental provider to receive dental services.

For more information, or to find a dentist near you, you can:

Call the Medi-Cal Dental Program at **800-322-6384** (TTY: **800-735-2922**).

Visit the Medi-Cal Dental website at **www.dental.dhcs.ca.gov**.

Vision services

The Alliance Medi-Cal health plan covers an eye exam and glasses every two years.

You must get your eye exam and glasses from a contracted Vision Services Plan (VSP) provider. Be sure to bring your Alliance ID card to your appointment.

For more information or to find a vision provider near you:

- Call VSP at **800-877-7195**.
- Visit the Medi-Cal VSP website at **www.thealliance.health/dhcs-VisionBenefits**.

Full-scope Medi-Cal is available for ages 26–49!

Starting Jan. 1, 2024, full-scope Medi-Cal is offered for adults ages 26 through 49. Immigration status does not matter. Persons applying for Medi-Cal will still have to meet all other eligibility rules. Full-scope Medi-Cal covers these health care services and more:

- Medical care.
- Dental care.
- Emergency care.
- Mental health care.
- Family planning.
- Alcohol and drug use treatment.
- Medicines and tests your doctor orders.
- Medical supplies.

If all of the following apply to you, you are now eligible for full-scope Medi-Cal.

- You were enrolled with restricted-scope Medi-Cal in December 2023.
- You are now 26 through 49 years of age.
- You live in Mariposa, Merced, Monterey, San Benito or Santa Cruz counties.

For information on Alliance benefits, refer to the Member Handbook at **www.thealliance.health/memberhandbook**. You can also call Member Services at **800-700-3874**. To apply for Medi-Cal, visit **www.BenefitsCal.com**. If you have questions about your eligibility for benefits, please contact your county's Medi-Cal enrollment office.

Mariposa County: 800-549-6741

Merced County: 209-385-3000

Monterey County: 877-410-8823

San Benito County: 831-636-4180

Santa Cruz County: 888-421-8080

About your Provider Directory and Member Handbook

The Provider Directory and Member Handbook have important information about your health plan.

Provider Directory: lists all the primary care doctors in the Alliance network.

Member Handbook: tells you about the coverage that the Alliance provides for you.

You can view the Provider Directory and the Member Handbook on our website at **www.thealliance.health/for-members**. Call Member Services if you want a copy mailed to you, need help finding a provider or have benefits questions.

To talk to our Member Services team, please call **800-700-3874**. For the Hearing or Speech Assistance Line, call **800-735-2929** (TTY: Dial **711**). We are here 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The call is toll-free. If you speak a language other than English, language assistance services are available to you at no cost.

Important phone numbers:

Alliance Member Services: 800-700-3874 (TTY: Dial 711).

24/7 Alliance Nurse Advice Line: 844-971-8907.

Alliance Language Assistance Services: 800-700-3874, ext. 5580.

Mental Health Services: Carelon Behavioral Health: 855-765-9700.

Vision Services Plan (for routine vision services): 800-877-7195.

Medi-Cal Dental Program (for dental services): 800-322-6384.

24/7 Medi-Cal Rx (for pharmacy services): 800-977-2273 (TTY: Dial 711).

Alliance Care Management Line: 800-700-3874, ext. 5512.

Alliance Health Education Line: 800-700-3874, ext. 5580.

Alliance Transportation Services: 833-244-1678.

You can also view information about continuity of care and member rights and responsibilities on our website at **www.thealliance.health/find-a-doctor**.

Alliance Language Assistance Services

If you have trouble talking with your doctor, we can help! You do not have to use family or friends to interpret for you at medical appointments. The Alliance provides both telephonic and in-person interpreting services.

For help with getting an interpreter or written information in your language, please call the Alliance Health Education Line at **800-700-3874, ext. 5580**. If you need language assistance, we have a special telephone line to get an interpreter who speaks your language at no cost to you. For the Hearing or Speech Assistance Line, call **800-735-2929** (TTY: Dial **711**).

Getting an appointment:
How long should you have to wait?

As a member of the Alliance, it is your right to have timely access to network providers, but sometimes it is not possible for a doctor to see you right away. Some appointments might take longer to schedule than others.

We work with the providers and clinics in our network to make sure you can get care when you need it.

Health plans in California have to meet certain standards for access to care. The regulations to put this law into place are called the Timely Access to Non-Emergency Health Care Services standards.

The chart at right lists the standards for different types of appointments. The waiting times for an appointment may be longer if the provider feels that it will not harm your health. If they feel a longer wait time would not be harmful to your health, they must note it in your medical record.

Appointment type	You should be able to get an appointment within:
Urgent care appointments that do <u>not</u> require pre-approval (prior authorization).	48 hours

Urgent care appointments that <u>do</u> require pre-approval (prior authorization).	96 hours
Non-urgent (routine) primary care appointments.	10 business days
Non-urgent (routine) specialist care appointments.	15 business days
Non-urgent (routine) mental health provider (non-doctor) care appointments.	10 business days
Non-urgent (routine) appointments for ancillary (supporting) services for the diagnosis or treatment of injury, illness or other health condition.	15 business days

Other wait time standards	You should be able to get connected within:
Member Services telephone wait times during normal business hours.	10 minutes
Telephone wait times for Nurse Advice Line.	30 minutes (connected to nurse)

If you feel you are not getting care when you need it, call Member Services at **800-700-3874** (TTY: **800-735-2929** or **711**).

Wellness for all
The Alliance offers health education programs

At the Alliance, we care about your health! That's why our health education programs give Alliance members the tools they need to get healthy and stay healthy. There is no cost for Alliance members to join. Programs are offered in person, online or over the phone.

Program	Who is it for?
Live Better with Diabetes	Adult members who have diabetes.
Healthy Breathing for Life	Members who have asthma.
Healthier Living Program	Adult members who have chronic conditions like heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity or depression.
Adult Weight Management Program	Adult members who are overweight or have obesity.

Healthy Weight for Life	Parents of members ages 2 to 18 who want to help their child reach a healthy weight.
Healthy Moms and Healthy Babies	Members who are pregnant or who had a baby in the last 12 months.
Tobacco Cessation Support	Members who want to stop smoking and/or using tobacco products.

If you would like to sign up for a program or have questions, please call the Alliance Health Education Line at **800-700-3874, ext. 5580**. If you need language assistance, we have a special telephone line to get an interpreter who speaks your language at no cost to you. For the Hearing or Speech Assistance Line, call **800-735-2929** (TTY: Dial **711**).

The Alliance's Health Rewards Program rewards you and your family for taking actions that support your health! Check out our rewards for all ages at **www.thealliance.health/healthrewards**.