

MEETING OF BLUE SHIELD OF CALIFORNIA PROMISE HEALTH PLAN
SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

Date:	Friday, March 14, 2024
Time:	1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Location:	Hybrid (Virtual and in-person: 3131 Camino Del Rio, North Suite 1300, San Diego, CA 92108)
Attendance:	<p>Committee Members present:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Member A, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 2. Member B, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 3. Member C, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 4. Member D, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 5. Member E, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 6. Member F, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 7. Member G, Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan 8. Aidee Roman, SD 211 9. Jack Dailey, Consumer Center for Health Education and Advocacy, Legal Aid Society of San Diego, Inc. 10. Leticia Zuno, Access to Independence 11. Rick Ochocki, National Alliance Mental Illness <p>Committee Members absent:</p> <p>Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan Representatives present:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Araceli Garcia, Senior Program Manager 2. Brigitte Lamberson, Health Equity Program Manager 3. Jennifer Nuovo, M.D., Chief Medical Officer 4. Sandra Rose, Senior Director, Community and Provider Engagement <p>Members of the Public</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No members of the public in attendance
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Blue Shield Promise Health Plan Updates II. Re-cap of Q4-2024 Meeting III. Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Training IV. Know Your Rights V. Discussion VI. Closing Remarks

Introductions and Welcome

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

I. Blue Shield Promise Health Plan Update

- Dr. Nuovo shared some key health plan accomplishments.
 - Blue Shield Promise received a Health Equity accreditation from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). This accreditation is a recognition that Blue Shield Promise meets the standards that focus on organizational diversity, equity, inclusion and reducing bias to address health inequities and improve care in a holistic manner.
 - Blue Shield Promise ended 2024 with strong financial and quality performance.
- Dr. Nuovo acknowledged concerns about potential changes to the Medicaid Program (which is the Medi-Cal Program in California) and explained that Blue Shield Promise is helping inform policymakers about the importance of the Medi-Cal program.
- Dr. Nuovo provided information about the measles outbreak and an update on the flu season.
 - The 2024–2025 flu season has been particularly severe, with an increased number of hospitalizations and flu-related deaths in San Diego County.
 - A major contributing factor is the lower flu vaccination rates among Americans this season.
 - California is experiencing peak flu activity, with flu cases surpassing COVID-19 cases.
 - Dr. Nuovo strongly encouraged individuals who have not yet received their flu vaccine to do so, as it is still effective and available at pharmacies and doctor's offices.
 - A significant measles outbreak has emerged, beginning in West Texas within a community with low vaccination rates, and has since spread to multiple states, including California.
 - Measles is highly infectious, more so than flu, COVID-19, and HIV/AIDS.
 - There is no treatment for measles, but it is almost entirely preventable through vaccination.
 - The measles vaccine is a two-dose series administered at:
 - Age 1 (first dose)
 - Ages 4–6 (second dose)
 - The vaccine offers lifetime protection against measles.

- The disease is highly contagious and can be severe, leading to complications such as pneumonia and brain infections, which can be fatal.
- A recent case in Texas resulted in the death of a six-year-old child.
- Measles symptoms include fever, sore throat, runny nose, itchy eyes, and a distinctive rash that spreads across the body.
- Individuals can transmit measles before showing symptoms, making early detection and vaccination critical.
- For adults born between 1968 and 1989, only one dose of the measles vaccine may have been administered during childhood.
- Those in this group should consider getting their antibody titer levels checked to determine if they need a booster dose for full protection.
- The measles vaccine provides nearly 100% immunity when both doses are received.
- The U.S. previously eliminated measles, but declining vaccination rates (falling from near 100% to around 80-90%) have led to recent outbreaks.
- Public health efforts continue to promote vaccine confidence and encourage families to ensure their children are fully vaccinated.

II. Recap of Q4-2024 Community Advisory Committee Meeting

- Araceli Garcia reviewed the topics and action items from the Q4-2024 meeting.
 - The committee previously discussed home-based, urgent care services provided by Dispatch Health and ideas to promote preventive screenings.
 - Araceli informed the committee she shared their feedback about their experiences using Dispatch Health with the program leads.
 - Araceli explained that we will continue to discuss new initiatives to promote preventive screenings at future meetings.

III. Discussion: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) Training

- Brigitte Lamberson, Health Equity Principal Project Manager at Blue Shield Promise, led a discussion about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Training for providers.
- Brigitte began by reaffirming Blue Shield Promise's commitment to health equity guided by our core values of honesty, integrity, courage, and authenticity.
- Brigitte explained that Blue Shield Promise contracted providers are required complete the Advancing Health Equity training by January 1, 2026.

- Blue Shield Promise Health Plan is working with the other managed care plans in San Diego to ensure compliance, track training completion, and address deficiencies.
- Blue Shield Promise will continue to monitor complaints related to discrimination and enforce corrective actions for violations.
- The key training topics include:
 - Introduction to health equity and how it is defined.
 - Understanding social determinants of health, including housing, food, transportation, financial stability, and personal safety.
 - Cultural competency and traditional healing practices to help providers better serve diverse communities.
 - Reducing disparities in healthcare access and improving patient-provider communication.
 - Identifying and addressing implicit bias in medical settings.
 - Language access and effective communication strategies for members with limited English proficiency.
- Brigitte asked the committee:
 - What cultural or social aspects should providers know to better serve members?
 - Which training topic resonated most with attendees and why?
- Discussion:
 - Member A inquired about accessing the training.
 - Brigitte confirmed that it will be available online and offered to share a copy with members upon request.
 - Multiple committee members requested access, and Brigitte agreed to distribute the training via Araceli.
 - A member asked if herbalism is covered in the training.
 - Brigitte confirmed that traditional home remedies are included to ensure providers are aware and that members feel comfortable discussing their practices with healthcare professionals.
 - Member F asked about the mental health evaluation process for gender-affirming care.
 - Brigitte explained that the training provides an overview of gender-affirming care, LGBTQIA+ terminology, and best practices for provider-patient interactions.
 - Dr. Nuovo emphasized that the goal is to help providers foster open, supportive conversations and refer patients to appropriate behavioral health services.

- Sensitivity training ensures providers respect pronouns, create safe spaces, and offer thoughtful referrals, particularly for adolescents navigating family dynamics and identity exploration.
- Action Items
 - Araceli to share a copy of the DEI training with the committee.

IV. Discussion: Know Your Rights

- Blue Shield Promise asked Jack Dailey, Director of Policy and Training at the Legal Aid Society of San Diego and long-time member of the Blue Shield Promise Community Advisory Committee, to provide general information about rights pertaining to immigration that may impact members, providers and community organizations.
- Jack Dailey explicitly stated:
 - The information provided in the presentation is not be construed as legal advice.
 - Participating in the presentation does not create an attorney-client relationship.
 - The information provided is only general information. Specific questions about individual circumstances, requires a consultation with an attorney or Department of Justice (DOJ) accredited representative.
- Jack Dailey's presentation covered:
 - Constitutional rights
 - Individual rights at home, work, in a car, in a public setting or at a health clinic/provider office
 - Know Your Rights resources
- Discussion:
 - Some CAC members expressed concerns about children being afraid to attend school due to immigration enforcement.
 - Jack explained that while federal policy no longer explicitly protects schools, California law limits school officials from cooperating with immigration enforcement without a valid warrant.
 - Healthcare providers must follow HIPAA laws and cannot share patient information without a court order.
 - The committee expressed their thanks to Jack and Blue Shield Promise for sharing this information.

- Action Items:
 - Araceli to share the Know Your Rights resources, including the Red Card information, with committee members.

V. Open Discussion

- Rick Ochocki invited members to attend the NAMI Walk on April 26 at Liberty Station. The event will include mental health resources, advocacy updates, and community service providers.

VI. Closing and Adjournment

- Sandra Rose concluded the meeting by thanking the committee for their time and feedback 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