

Network Provider Update

To: Medi-Cal network participants

September 2023

From: Manuel T.G. Enriquez
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Subject: **All Plan Letter 23-005: Requirements for Coverage of Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment Services for Medi-Cal Members under the Age of 21**

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) recently issued [All Plan Letter \(APL\) 23-005](#), "Requirements for Coverage of Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment Services for Medi-Cal Members under the Age of 21." We are sharing a summary of this APL with you to ensure you are aware of the information, and you can apply the information to your practice or facility operations, where appropriate.

APL 23-005 clarifies and reinforces state and federal requirements for early and periodic screening, diagnostic, and treatment (EPSDT) services for members under the age of 21, which managed care plans (MCPs) such as Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan are advised to cover.

For members under the age of 21, MCPs are advised to provide and cover all medically necessary EPSDT services, unless otherwise carved out of the MCP contract, regardless of whether such services are covered under California's Medicaid State Plan for adults, when the services are determined to be medically necessary to correct or ameliorate defects and physical and mental illnesses or conditions.

APL summary

- A service does not need to cure a condition in order to be covered under EPSDT. Services that maintain or improve a child's health or prevent adverse health outcomes are also included.
- The APL notes that "medical necessity decisions are individualized" and not based on any monetary or budgetary caps or limits.
- The APL recommends MCPs follow the current American Academy of Pediatrics [Bright Futures](#) Periodicity Schedule and Guidelines delivering care, including but not limited to health and developmental screening services, physical examinations, dental services, vision services, and hearing services.
- Members under the age of 21 should have timely access to all medically necessary services – as soon as possible but no later than 60 calendar days following a screening or visit that identifies a need for follow-up.
- APL 23-005 includes medically necessary behavioral health treatment services, case management and care coordination, transportation, and member information requirements.
- The APL lists outreach and education materials for MCPs to publish annually.
- Starting in January 2024, all network providers will need to complete EPSDT-specific training no less than every two years.
 - [View "Medi-Cal for Kids & Teens" provider training](#)

- While MCPs have the primary responsibility to provide EPSDT services, they should coordinate with other outside entities that also provide EPSDT services.

This summary is only meant as a brief description of the APL. Please see the APL itself for additional background and the complete requirements. The full text of APL 23-005 may be found at this URL: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Documents/MMCDAPLsandPolicyLetters/APL2023/APL23-005.pdf> (Links to the DHCS.ca.gov website will take you off of the Blue Shield Promise website.)

If you have questions about providing EPSDT services for Blue Shield Promise members under the age of 21, please contact our EPSDT Care Coordinators at EPSDT_Monitoring@blueshieldca.com, contact Provider Services via Live Chat after logging in at blueshieldca.com/provider or call (800) 468-9935 from 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.