

# Member NEWSLETTER

FALL ISSUE • SEPTEMBER 2020



VENTURA COUNTY  
HEALTH CARE PLAN  
A Department of Ventura County Health Care Agency



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**VENTURA COUNTY**  
**HEALTH CARE PLAN**  
 FALL ISSUE • SEPTEMBER 2020

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Ventura County Health Care Plan**

Regular Business Hours are:

Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- [www.vchealthcareplan.org](http://www.vchealthcareplan.org)
- [VCHCP.Memberservices@ventura.org](mailto:VCHCP.Memberservices@ventura.org)
- Phone: (805) 981-5050
- Toll-free: (800) 600-8247
- FAX: (805) 981-5051
- Language Line Services:  
Phone: (805) 981-5050  
Toll-free: (800) 600-8247
- TDD to Voice: (800) 735-2929
- Voice to TDD: (800) 735-2922
- Pharmacy Help: (800) 811-0293 or  
[www.express-scripts.com](http://www.express-scripts.com)
- Behavioral Health/Life Strategies:  
(24 hour assistance)  
(800) 851-7407  
[www.liveandworkwell.com](http://www.liveandworkwell.com)
- Nurse Advice Line: (800) 334-9023
- Teladoc: (800) 835-2362

**VCHCP Utilization Management Staff**

Regular Business Hours are:

Monday - Friday,  
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

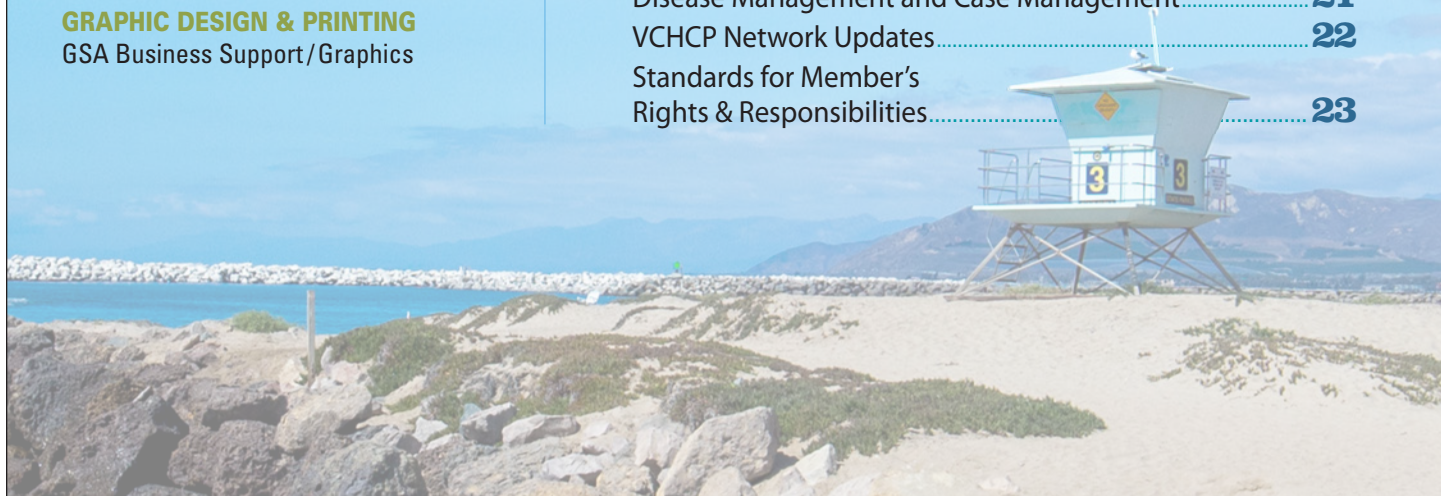
- (805) 981-5060

**GRAPHIC DESIGN & PRINTING**

GSA Business Support/Graphics

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# Patient Emergency & Provider AFTER HOURS CONTACT

## Ventura County Medical Center Emergency Room

300 Hillmont Avenue,  
Ventura, CA 93003  
**(805) 652-6165 or  
(805) 652-6000**

## Santa Paula Hospital

A Campus of Ventura  
County Medical Center  
825 N Tenth Street  
Santa Paula, CA 93060  
**(805) 933-8632 or  
(805) 933-8600**

## Ventura County Health Care Plan

on call Administrator  
available 24 hours per day  
for Emergency Providers  
**(805) 981-5050 or  
(800) 600-8247**

## THE NURSE ADVICE LINE 1-800-334-9023

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
for Member questions regarding their  
medical status, about the health plan  
processes, or just general medical information.

THERE IS ALSO A LINK ON THE MEMBER WEBSITE:  
[www.vchealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx](http://www.vchealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx)  
that will take Members to a secured email where  
they may send an email directly to the advice line.  
The nurse advice line will respond within 24 hours.

To speak with VCHCP UM Staff, please call The Ventura  
County Health Care Plan at the numbers below:

### QUESTIONS? CONTACT US:

**MONDAY - FRIDAY, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

Phone: **(805) 981-5060** or toll-free **(800) 600-8247**

FAX: **(805) 981-5051**, [www.vchealthcareplan.org](http://www.vchealthcareplan.org)

TDD to Voice: **(800) 735-2929** Voice to TDD: **(800) 735-2922**

Ventura County Health Care Plan 24-hour Administrator access  
for emergency providers: **(805) 981-5050** or **(800) 600-8247**

Language Assistance - Language Line Services:

Phone **(805) 981-5050** or toll-free **(800) 600-8247**

# COMPLETE THE 2020 Member Access Survey TODAY!!!

### YOUR INPUT MATTERS!

Help us make a difference to your health  
care access needs and identify areas  
needing improvement by completing the  
2020 Member Access Survey online at:  
[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/  
VCHCPMemberSurvey2020](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VCHCPMemberSurvey2020)

You may also complete the survey  
by visiting our website at  
[www.vchealthcareplan.org](http://www.vchealthcareplan.org)  
and click on "For Members".

The Survey is available  
**NOW THROUGH DECEMBER 31st**

For assistance contact our  
Member Services Department at  
**(805) 981-5050** or toll free at  
**(800) 600-8247**

Monday – Friday between  
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

# ACCESSING Behavioral Healthcare SERVICES

Contact OptumHealth Behavioral  
Solutions of California "Life Strategies"  
Program at **(800) 851-7407**

Contact VCHCP Member Services at  
**(805) 981-5050** to request an EOC  
copy or go to the Plan's website at  
[www.vchealthcareplan.org](http://www.vchealthcareplan.org)

Information on authorization of Plan Mental Health and Substance  
abuse benefits are available by calling the Plan's Behavioral Health  
Administrator (BHA). A Care Advocate is available twenty-four (24)  
hours a day, seven (7) days a week to assist you in accessing your  
behavioral healthcare needs. For non-emergency requests, either  
you or your Primary Care Provider may contact Life Strategies for  
the required authorization of benefits prior to seeking mental  
health and substance abuse care.

*Further information may also be obtained by consulting your Ventura County  
Health Care Plan Commercial Members Combined Evidence of Coverage (EOC)  
Booklet and Disclosure Form.*

# Acute Bronchitis, Common Cold and Strep

## PREVENTING AND TREATING BRONCHITIS

Cough keeping you up at night? Soreness in your chest and feeling tired? You could have acute bronchitis, but be aware: an antibiotic will not help you get better. See what Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say about preventing and treating acute bronchitis by visiting: <https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/community/for-patients/common-illnesses/bronchitis.html>



## STREP THROAT

### Key Facts

- Strep throat is an infection in the throat and tonsils caused by group A Streptococcus bacteria (called "group A strep"). However, viruses — not bacteria — cause most sore throats.
- Group A strep bacteria spread through contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze. If you touch your mouth, nose, or eyes after touching something that has these droplets on it, you may become ill.
- No one, not even a doctor, can diagnose strep throat just by looking at your throat. Doctors can swab your throat to see if you have strep throat.
- People with strep throat should stay home from work, school, or daycare until they no longer have a fever and have taken antibiotics for at least 24 hours.
- Antibiotics taken for strep throat reduce your symptoms and the length of time you're sick, prevent long-term health problems, and help prevent spreading the infection to friends and family members.

### Prevention Tips

- Wash your hands often.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Do not drink from the same glass, eat from the same plate, or share utensils with someone who is sick.
- If you have strep throat, stay home from work, school, or daycare until you no longer have a fever and have taken antibiotics for at least 24 hours. This will help keep others from getting sick.

Content source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## COMMON COLD

Sneezing, stuffy and runny nose? You might have a cold. Colds are one of the most frequent reasons for missed school and work. Every year, adults have an average of 2 to 3 colds, and children have even more. Antibiotics do not work against viruses that cause colds and will not help you feel better. See what Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say about the Common Cold by visiting <https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/community/for-patients/common-illnesses/colds.html>

# Breast Cancer Screening

Early detection is the best practice against cancer, especially breast cancer. In an effort to increase awareness, VCHCP sent mammogram post cards to those who are due for their breast cancer screening. The postcards were mailed in May and will be mailed out again in October. Our goal is to provide education to you to complete this important screening.

**If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Health Services Department at (805) 981-5060.**

EARLY DETECTION IS YOUR BEST PROTECTION AGAINST **BREAST CANCER**

**VCHCP NETWORK RADIOLOGY FACILITIES**

You can now set an appointment for a screening mammogram directly with any VCHCP contracted radiology facility without a doctor's prescription or order. There is no copay for screening mammogram at any of these contracted facilities.

Bring this card with you to your mammogram appointment and give it to the radiology office. Remember to ask the radiology office to send the result of your mammogram to your primary care physician.

**Ventura County Medical Center Radiology (VCHC)**  
(805) 852-6080  
M-F 8AM - 4:15PM

**Grossman Imaging Centers**  
(805) 988-0616  
VENTURA LOCATION  
W 8AM - 4PM  
F 8AM - 4PM  
OXNARD LOCATION  
M 9AM - 4:30PM  
THU 9AM - 4:30PM

**Rolling Oaks Radiology**  
(805) 357-0067  
PEDIATRIC OPTION 2  
VENTURA LOCATION  
M-F 8AM - 5PM  
CAMARILLO LOCATION  
M-F 8AM - 5PM  
OXNARD LOCATION  
M-F 8AM - 5PM  
THOUSAND OAKS LOCATION  
M-F 7:30AM - 5PM

**St. Johns Imaging Center**  
(805) 983-0883  
M-F 8AM - 5PM

**Palms Imaging**  
(805) 604-9500  
Mon- 8AM - 5PM  
TTH 7:30AM - 7:30PM  
Open 7 days/week with Month 8AM - 2PM

**Nancy Reagan Breast Center**  
(805) 955-6122  
M-F 8AM - 4PM

**Alamo Imaging Center**  
(805) 357-0067  
M-F 8AM - 4:30PM

GET YOUR SCREENING MAMMOGRAM DONE WHEN RECOMMENDED.

VCHCP and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends a screening mammogram every two years between the ages of 50 and 74. *Note: If you are having a diagnostic mammogram, copayment applies.*





## How to Find a Provider

The most efficient way of finding a provider is by utilizing our online Provider Search Engine! The Search Engine can be found in our website at **[www.vchealthcareplan.org](http://www.vchealthcareplan.org)** via the "Find a Provider" link. This is updated on a weekly basis thus providing the most accurate information available.

Select your plan:	All Plans
Select a provider type:	All Provider Types
Select a specialty:	All Specialists
Select a city:	All Cities
Select a language:	All Languages
Select a gender:	All Genders
Select Name of Clinic...	All Clinics
Select Name of Hospital...	All Hospitals

**TIP:** When searching for a specialist, make sure to select a specialty but ensure that the provider type is set at "All Provider Types" as selecting a provider type will limit the options available.

## How Often Should You See Your Primary Care Physician?

Your Primary Care Provider (PCP) is responsible for treating you when you are sick or injured, and at times is the coordinator of referrals to specialists and other services. Some members rarely see their PCP, which can make care difficult, especially in an emergent situation. Children and Adults should be seen by their PCP at least yearly (more frequently for children under 2 years of age). Preventive Health Visits, or Check-ups should occur regularly to have appropriate preventive screenings, immunizations, and an overall review of your health. This is an important visit to discuss health concerns or even health goals. Staying in contact with your PCP by having annual check-ups can help with establishing a good relationship with your PCP. This relationship can make times of illness or injury run smoother and give you peace of mind for the care you receive.

**If you haven't had a checkup in the last year, please call your PCP today to make an appointment. If you need assistance or have questions, please call Member Services at (805) 981-5050.**

## Timely Access REQUIREMENTS

### STANDARDS INCLUDE:

**VCHCP** adheres to patient care access and availability standards as required by the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC). The DMHC implemented these standards to ensure that members can get an appointment for care on a timely basis, can reach a provider over the phone and can access interpreter services, if needed. Contracted providers are expected to comply with these appointments, telephone access, practitioner availability and linguistic service standards.

TYPE OF CARE	WAIT TIME OR AVAILABILITY
Emergency Services	Immediately, 24 hours a day, seven days a week
Urgent Need – No Prior Authorization Required	Within 48 hours
Urgent Need – Requires Prior Authorization	Within 96 hours
Primary Care	Within 10 business days
Specialty Care	Within 15 business days
Ancillary services for diagnosis or treatment	Within 15 business days
Mental Health	Within 10 business days

# High Blood Pressure

## How to Make Control Your Goal



### Did you know?

Of the 75 million American adults who have high blood pressure, only about half (54%) of these people have their blood pressure under control.



**It's up to you** to successfully manage and control your blood pressure. But it doesn't have to be a daunting task. You can take small, manageable steps to make blood pressure control **your** goal. Here are some tips to show you how.

### Engage your health care team

Blood pressure control is a team effort. Engage all of your health care professionals—not just your primary care physician or cardiologist. Your pharmacist, nurses, and other health care specialists can help you control your high blood pressure.

Next time you go in for a visit, make a list of questions you want to ask your health care professional. For example:

- ▶ What is my blood pressure goal?
- ▶ What are the best ways to reach my goal?
  - ▷ Mention what you're already doing to work toward control, including exercising, changing your diet, or taking medications as prescribed.
  - ▷ Be honest and realistic with yourself and your health care team about what lifestyle changes you're ready to make and the ones you're not quite ready for.
  - ▷ Pick one goal to start working toward. As you achieve success and build confidence, choose another goal to tackle.

### Take your medications faithfully

Your health care team has put together a specific medication schedule to help control your blood pressure. You might forget to take your medicine every day, or maybe you're having trouble dealing with the side effects. Remember that your medication is important to control and maintain your blood pressure.

Here are some tips to help you stick with your medication plan:

- ▶ Talk to your doctor about any side effects you experience with your medications. If necessary, discuss other treatment options. **Never stop treatment on your own.**
- ▶ Make a schedule and set up a system to remind you to take your medications regularly—use a pillbox for every pill, every day, or use smartphone “app” reminders.
  - ▷ If your insurance provides mail order delivery, set it up and request a 90-day supply of medications.
  - ▷ If this service is not available, schedule all your refills at the same pharmacy at the same time each month so you can pick them up all at once.

Make control **your** goal.



## Don's Story

As an avid runner, Don thought he was in great shape. When he was diagnosed with high blood pressure during a routine physical exam more than 30 years ago, Don was frustrated. High blood pressure is a common condition among men in his family. Don's grandfather, father, and two younger brothers all had high blood pressure. Because he knew he couldn't control his family history, Don focused on what he could control.

Don committed to understanding his condition and working with his health care team to improve diet, exercise more, and manage stress. Because of his busy work schedule as a veterinarian and his limited cooking skills, Don's wife supports his efforts by preparing healthy, low sodium meals. No longer able to run marathons, Don walks several times a day with his 15-year-old dog, Sophie. To help relax, Don meditates every day. He also volunteers at a local hospice and shares his love for animals by instructing and evaluating animal-assisted therapy volunteers and working with two animal outreach groups.

Don knows that he plays the most important role in controlling his high blood pressure; that's why he's made control his goal. He works closely with his health care team and has a strong support system in his family and colleagues.

## Monitor your blood pressure

What's your blood pressure goal? Develop a plan to regularly check your blood pressure, not just at the doctor's office but at home or at a pharmacy. Track your results in a log or diary to monitor your progress.

## Make healthy choices

- ▶ Exercise can be a great way to help control your blood pressure. Find a safe place to walk or be more active. Increase the time and intensity of your physical activity as you progress.
- ▶ Shop for more fresh fruit, vegetables, and whole grains and fewer prepared foods with high sodium, cholesterol, saturated fat, and trans fat.
- ▶ Learn to read labels and choose foods lower in sodium. Lowering your sodium intake can help lower your blood pressure.
- ▶ Quit smoking. There are many tools available to help you. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or visit **Smokefree.gov** for help.

## Tools and resources

Million Hearts®, in partnership with the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, has developed online tools to help you track and manage your heart health, including your blood pressure, and provide helpful advice and information. Check out:

- ▶ **Heart360®**
- ▶ **My Life Check®**

**Find and download additional materials** to help control your high blood pressure at the **Million Hearts®** website:

- ▶ **Heart Age Calculator**
- ▶ **Blood Pressure Wallet Card**

**Million Hearts®** is a national initiative to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017. It is led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, two agencies of the Department of Health and Human Services.

The Million Hearts® word and logo marks and associated trade dress are owned by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Use of these marks does not imply endorsement by HHS.

**millionhearts.hhs.gov**

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/facts.htm>

May 2016

# COVID-19 (coronavirus)

## Mental Health tips during a quarantine

People react differently to stressful situations, and the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019, or COVID-19, may cause feelings ranging from concern or worry to anxiety or anger, among many other possible reactions.

If you and your household are under quarantine — whether self-quarantine or otherwise — you may be feeling a number of emotions including feeling anxious, lonely, bored or frustrated. It's important to understand your feelings during this time and pay attention to your mental health.

Here are some tips for helping take care of your mental health during this time.

1. **Look for ways to relax.** Find things that help you manage stress. Consider trying deep breathing, stretching or meditation. There are also apps that may help you deal with stress.
2. **Set boundaries.** While it's important to have up-to-date, reliable information, you should limit exposure to the ever-present media coverage.
3. **Create regular routines.** For example, consider setting up a regular routine for physical activity, communicating and connecting with others and continuing other day-to-day habits.
4. **Make a list.** Gather a list of contacts, including friends, family, neighbors, health care providers, as well as any therapists or counselors, and other community resources. Place it somewhere prominent in your home, for example, on your refrigerator.
5. **Check your medications.** Make sure you have any prescription and/or over-the-counter medications you need. Take your prescriptions as recommended. If possible, the recommendation is to have a two-week supply on hand. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist to learn how you can obtain what you need.
6. **Define how you'll stay connected.** Establish how you'll communicate with friends and family through available methods — text, phone calls, over the internet or even through letters in the mail. Consider "face-to-face" time using apps that allow you to videochat with others.
7. **Keep up with healthy habits.** Your physical health is an important part of your mental health, during a quarantine and always. Avoid using tobacco, alcohol or other drugs to try to manage stress. Get plenty of rest and physical activity.
8. **Be aware of stress.** A quarantine may cause additional stress. For example, you may experience financial stress if you are unable to work. Talk with your employer about why you may be missing work. If need be, contact the U.S. Department of Labor at 1-866-487-2365 about the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The FMLA offers employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for dealing with a serious medical condition for yourself or to care for a loved one.

## OptumHealth QUALITY PROGRAM

**VENTURA COUNTY HEALTH CARE PLAN** contracts with OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions (Life Strategies) for Mental/Behavioral health and substance abuse services. OptumHealth has a Quality Management Program (QM) that is reviewed annually.

If you would like to obtain a summary of the progress OptumHealth has made in meeting program goals, please visit OptumHealth's online newsletter at <https://www.liveandworkwell.com/newsletter> or call OptumHealth directly at (800) 851-7407 and ask for a paper copy of the QM program description.



# Staying connected in recovery: Virtual meetings and online resources

Meetings are key to staying connected with others who share your recovery journey. It may be comforting to know that when you can't be there in person, meetings are available online. Use the information below to find links to virtual meetings and other recovery support.

**Go online** to reach out, and keep coming back.

## VIRTUAL RECOVERY PROGRAMS

**Alcoholics Anonymous:** Offers online support.

Website: [aa-intergroup.org](http://aa-intergroup.org)

**Cocaine Anonymous:** Offers online support and services.

Website: [ca-online.org](http://ca-online.org)

**LifeRing:** LifeRing Secular Recovery offers online support.

Website: [lifering.org/online-meetings](http://lifering.org/online-meetings)

**In The Rooms — Online Recovery Meetings:** Provides online support through live meetings and discussion groups.

Website: [intherooms.com](http://intherooms.com)

**Marijuana Anonymous:** Offers virtual support.

Website: [ma-online.org](http://ma-online.org)

**Narcotics Anonymous:** Offers a variety of online and Skype meeting option.

Website: [na.org/meetingsearch](http://na.org/meetingsearch)

**Refuge Recovery:** Provides online and virtual support.

Website: [refugerecovery.org](http://refugerecovery.org)

**Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART)**

**Recovery:** Offers global community of mutual support groups and forums, including a chat room and message board.

Website: [smartrecovery.org](http://smartrecovery.org)

**Soberocity:** Offers an online support and recovery community.

Website: [soberocity.com](http://soberocity.com)

**Sobergrid:** Offers an online platform to help anyone get sober and stay sober.

Website: [sobergrid.com](http://sobergrid.com)

**Al-Anon:** Online support for anyone affected by alcoholism in a friend or family member.

Website: [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org)

**Nar-Anon:** Support for anyone affected by addiction in a friend or family member.

Website: [nar-anon.org](http://nar-anon.org)

## VIRTUAL RECOVERY RESOURCES FOR SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH

**The National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) HelpLine Coronavirus Information and Resources Guide:**

Website: [bit.ly/NAMIresource](http://bit.ly/NAMIresource)

**Shatterproof:** "How I'm Coping with COVID-19 and Social Isolation as a Person in Long-Term Recovery" provides helpful suggestions.

Website: [bit.ly/shatterproof-coping](http://bit.ly/shatterproof-coping)

**The Chopra Center:** "Anxious About the Coronavirus? Here Are Eight Practical Tips on How to Stay Calm and Support Your Immune System."

Website: [bit.ly/Chopra-calm](http://bit.ly/Chopra-calm)

**SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline:**

Toll-Free English and español: 1-800-985-5990

SMS (English): Text TalkWithUs to 66746

SMS (español): "Hablamos" al 66746 TTY: 1-800-846-8517

Website (English): [disasterdistress.samhsa.gov](http://disasterdistress.samhsa.gov)

Website (español): [disasterdistress.samhsa.gov/espanol](http://disasterdistress.samhsa.gov/espanol)

**SAMHSA's National Helpline**

Toll-Free: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

**Treatment Referral Information Service**

Website (English and español): [samhsa.gov/find-treatment](http://samhsa.gov/find-treatment)

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (Toll-Free)**

Toll-Free English: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Toll-Free español: 1-888-628-9454 TTY: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)

Website (English): [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Website (español): [suicidepreventionlifeline.org/gethelp/spanish](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/gethelp/spanish)

**SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center:**

Toll-Free: 1-800-308-3515

Email: [DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov)

Website: [samhsa.gov/dtac](http://samhsa.gov/dtac)



# 2019 QUALITY IMPROVEMENT Program Evaluation

*Each year, the Health Plan evaluates its success in accomplishing identified goals for the prior year, including, but not limited to, its ability to meet regulatory standards specified by the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC). For 2019, the Plan is pleased to share that it succeeded in achieving multiple identified goals.*

## HIGHLIGHTS OF PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2019 INCLUDE:

### Improved Access and Availability:

- 6.5% reduction of access issues.
- Executed 9 new provider contracts including Dermatology, Vascular Surgery, and Palliative Care.
- Teladoc was implemented on 11/1/2019.
- The hiring of providers for many Primary Care Providers and Specialist, which include Pediatric Gastroenterologist, Cardiothoracic Surgeon, Oncology Surgeon, Gastroenterologist, Podiatrist, Hem/Oncologist and Otolaryngologist

### Effectiveness of Case Management (CM) Program:

- CM acceptance rate was 84% which is above the 20% goal.
- 27% reduction in inpatient admissions for members enrolled in complex case management at least 60 days.
- 65% reduction in Emergency Room visits for members enrolled in complex case management program at least 60 days.
- 100%-member experience/satisfaction with CM.

### Improved Disease Management Program:

- The VCHCP Quality Application System (Quality App) disease management tool was enhanced to include daily A1c update, a new feature in 2019. This allowed appropriate stratification of members with increased and decreased risk, enabling the Plan's case manager and QA nurse to focus their health coaching and case management on those members with increased A1c.
- Continued identification of members in the moderate and high risk with the availability of Diabetes A1c results, allowing health coaching and case management.
- Increase A1c testing compliance, decreased A1c level and decreased risk level of members with successful health coaching and case management.
- 100% overall satisfaction with Asthma and 87.5% with Diabetes Disease Management programs.
- Implemented survey monkey and offered "goodie bags".

### Efficiency in Utilization Management:

- To improve the member and provider experience/satisfaction with UM, the Plan collaborated with the VCHCA clinic providers and administration to improve care coordination, specialist access and increasing efficiency.
- Continued collaboration with Ventura County Health Care Agency Clinics (VCHCA) providers and administration to ensure timely receipt of treatment authorization requests from the clinics for timely processing of authorizations.
- Implemented process improvement in Utilization Management for a more efficient and timely authorization processing.
- Aggressive queue/workload monitoring, distribution and management ensured timely completion of workload and efficiency.

### System Enhancements:

- UM and CM module QNXT (medical management computer system) upgrade.
- Daily A1c update was implemented in the Quality App which allowed appropriate stratification of members with increased and decreased risk, allowing the Plan's case manager and QA nurse to focus their health coaching and case management on those members with increased A1c.

### Services:

- All Member Services phone and email response time goals were met.
- Continued identification of members in the moderate and high risk with the availability of Diabetes A1c results, allowing health coaching and case management.

### Surveys:

- Member Appointment Availability Survey conducted by VCHCP



<p>specific to Access (10/1/19 – 12/31/19).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After Hours Survey conducted by VCHCP was started in April 2019 and concluded on August 28, 2019 with the result being 100% of the providers complied.</li> <li>• Provider Satisfaction Survey conducted by SPH Analytics (May 2019 – July 2019).</li> <li>• Provider Access Survey was conducted by Healthy People (July 2019).</li> <li>• Conducted the annual member Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and systems (CAHPS) survey, evaluated its findings, and identified opportunities for improvement particularly surrounding timely access to care (11/26/19).</li> </ul>	<p>updates to practitioners on a timely basis; for example, the VCHCP drug formulary update (additions and deletions).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mailed postcard reminders to members re: needed mammograms, colorectal screenings and reminder on appropriate use of the Emergency Room.</li> </ul> <p><b>Collaborations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued regular Access to Care Task Force meetings to identify and track access to care barriers and collaborate with County partners to identify and imple-</li> </ul>	<p>ment potential solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued successful collaboration with Optum Behavioral Health which has resulted in robust, productive quarterly meetings to promote continuity and coordination between medical and behavioral healthcare.</li> <li>• Continued quarterly Joint Operations Committee meetings with each of the Plan's delegates to ensure a venue of robust oversight of delegate activities with resultant quality services offered to Plan members.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Processes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VCHCP Member Services Department phone and email response time goals were met.</li> <li>• Achieved 99% to 100% compliance with UM review turnaround time.</li> <li>• UM physicians and nurses met the passing score of 80% or better on inter-rater testing.</li> <li>• Continue to meet Clinical rationale 8th grade reading level met 100% compliance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Communications:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distributed member and provider newsletters twice a year, highlighting services offered by the Plan, as well as education about these services, benefits and guidelines.</li> <li>• Continued to utilize email/fax-blasts to providers to relay important</li> </ul>	<p><b>While the Plan realized multiple accomplishments throughout 2019, there were Key Challenges for the Plan in 2020 that came to light:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of barriers and interventions that will improve Health Effectiveness Date Information Set (HEDIS) scores overall, with the emphasis on the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Comprehensive Diabetes Care (CDC)</li> <li>▪ Breast Cancer Screening (BCS)</li> <li>▪ Postpartum Care (PPC)</li> <li>▪ Plan All-Cause Readmission (PCR)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Consistent timeliness of follow up care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ After Emergency Room visits</li> <li>▪ After Inpatient hospital admissions</li> <li>▪ Postpartum</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Timely communication of feedback from behavioral health providers to PCPs through increased collaboration between Optum Behavioral Health and VCHCP.</li> <li>• Increase rates of member participation in the Case Management program.</li> <li>• Increased A1c testing compliance, decreased A1c level and decreased risk level of members with successful health coaching and case management.</li> <li>• Maintain volume of members stratified as moderate and high risk to allow health coaching and case management screening and intervention to more members.</li> </ul>	

## A great resource in Ventura County...

2•1•1 can assist patients with counseling, food assistance, domestic violence services, employment resources, health care, senior services, legal assistance, substance abuse services, housing, resources for parents, and much more! 2•1•1 is available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. You can also visit [www.211ventura.org](http://www.211ventura.org).



# 2019 HEDIS RESULTS & INTERVENTIONS

*VCHCP continues to maintain high standards in Healthcare Effectiveness Data Information Set (HEDIS) Measures. Examples of some of the measures include: preventive screening for breast cancer, colorectal cancer, and cervical cancer; appropriate childhood immunizations; as well as decreasing or preventing complications in diseases such as diabetes and asthma. When these measures are met by members, disease and complications decrease.*

## 2019 Accomplishments

- Several scores improved over the past three years.
- Improvement in Comprehensive Diabetes Care attributed to effective Health Coaching by the Plan's Health Coach Nurses and Case Manager.
- VCHCP has a Diabetes Disease Management Program where our nurses perform health coaching calls when member risk is moderate and high. This means that your HgbA1c lab result is 8.0% and above. This program, which includes health coaching, has been effective as evidenced by the following:
  - a. Higher percentage of members had their A1c testing completed.
  - b. Higher percentage of members had decreased A1c levels.
  - c. Member decreased in risk stratification level.

*Our goal is to improve your health and it is important to call us back when our Health Coaching Nurse calls you because it is making a significant impact in your compliance with getting your HgbA1c testing done and decreasing your HgbA1c level and risk.*

## 2020 Goals

- Breast cancer screening: All women age 50-74 should receive a screening mammogram every two years (except for those with a history of mastectomy).
- Colorectal cancer screening: All men and women age 50-75 should receive colorectal cancer screening. The frequency of the screening depends on the type of screening performed. For example, a colonoscopy every 10 years, or a sigmoidoscopy every 5 years, or a Fecal Occult Blood Test (stool test) annually.
- Postpartum Care: A new mom should have a postpartum visit within 7-84 days of delivery.
- Controlling High Blood Pressure: All members who have been diagnosed with hypertension should strive to have their blood pressure remain below 140/90.
- Continue to improve Comprehensive Diabetes Care.

## 2019 Areas for Improvement

- Prenatal and Postpartum Care
- Comprehensive Diabetes Care

## 2020 Planned Interventions:

- VCHCP will continue to reach out to you and to your doctor when you need any of the above preventive health screenings.
- Postcards will be sent to members in need of breast cancer screenings twice a year.
- Diabetics will continue to receive health coaching, mailed information and resources annually, and have access to Health Coach Nurses.
- All women who deliver babies will continue to receive follow up reminder care letters.
- Birthday Card Care Gap reminders will be sent to you on your birthday month.

*This is just a glance at the interventions continuously being performed by the VCHCP HEDIS team. When members fulfill these HEDIS measures, they are partnering with their Primary Care Physicians to improve their health or maintain good health. If you have any questions about the services you may be in need of, please contact your primary care physician. If you have questions about HEDIS, please contact VCHCP at (805) 981 5060.*



## Language and Communication Assistance

Good communication with VCHCP and with your providers is important. If English is not your first language, VCHCP provides interpretation services and translations of certain written materials.

- To ask for language services call VCHCP at (805) 981-5050 or (800) 600-8247. You may obtain language assistance services, including oral interpretation and translated written materials, free of charge and in a timely manner. You may obtain interpretation services free of charge in English and the top 15 languages spoken by limited-English proficient individuals in California as determined by the State of California Department of Health Services.
- If you are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech impairment, you may also receive language assistance services by calling TDD/TTY at (800) 735-2929.
- If you have a preferred language, please notify us of your personal language needs by calling VCHCP at (805) 981-5050 or (800) 600-8247.
- Interpreter services will be provided to you, if requested and arranged in advance, at all medical appointments.

If you have a disability and need free auxiliary aids and services, including qualified interpreters for disabilities and information in alternate formats, including written information in other formats, you may request that they be provided to you free of charge and in a timely manner, when those aids and services are necessary to ensure an equal opportunity for you to participate.

## Direct Specialty REFERRALS

A “Direct Specialty Referral” is a referral that your Primary Care Physician (PCP) can give to you so that you can be seen by a specialist physician or receive certain specialized services. Direct Specialty Referrals do not need to be pre-authorized by the Plan. All VCHCP contracted specialists can be directly referred by the PCPs using the direct referral form [EXCLUDING TERTIARY REFERRALS, (e.g. UCLA AND CHLA), PERINATOLOGY and NON VCMC PAIN MANAGEMENT SPECIALISTS]. Referrals to Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy also use this form.

Note that this direct specialty referral does not apply to any tertiary care or non-contracted provider referrals. All tertiary care referrals and referrals to non-contracted providers continue to require approval by the Health Plan through the treatment authorization request (TAR) procedure.

Appointments to specialists when you receive a direct referral from your PCP should be made either by you or by your

referring doctor. Make sure to check with your referring doctor about who is responsible for making the appointment.

Appointments are required to be offered within a specific time frame, unless your doctor has indicated on the referral form that a longer wait time would not have a detrimental impact on your health. Those timeframes are: Non-urgent within 15 business days, Urgent within 48-96 hours.

If you or your doctor feel that you are not able to get an appointment within an acceptable timeframe, please contact the Plan's Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050 or (800) 600-8247 so that we can make the appropriate arrangements for timeliness of care.

**The Direct Referral Policy can also be accessed at: <http://www.vchealthcareplan.org/providers/providerIndex.aspx> To request to have a printed copy of the policy mailed to you, please call Member Services at the numbers listed above.**

## Standing REFERRALS

A standing referral allows members to see a specialist or obtain ancillary services, such as lab, without needing new referrals from their primary care physician for each visit. Members may request a standing referral for a chronic condition requiring stabilized care. The member's primary care physician will decide when the request meets the following guidelines.

A standing referral may be authorized for the following conditions when it is anticipated that the care will be ongoing:

- Chronic health condition (such as diabetes, COPD etc.)
- Life-threatening mental or physical condition
- Pregnancy beyond the first trimester
- Degenerative disease or disability
- Radiation treatment
- Chemotherapy
- Allergy injections
- Defibrillator checks

- Pacemaker checks
- Dialysis/end-stage renal disease
- Other serious conditions that require treatment by a specialist

A standing referral is limited to 6 months, but can be reviewed for medical necessity as needed, to cover the duration of the condition.

If you change primary care physicians or clinics, you will need to discuss your standing referral with your new physician. Changing your primary care physician or clinic may require a change to the specialist to whom your primary care physician makes referrals. Additional information regarding Standing Referrals is located on our website:

**[www.vchealthcareplan.org/providers/providerIndex.aspx](http://www.vchealthcareplan.org/providers/providerIndex.aspx) or by calling Member Services at (805) 981-5050 or (800) 600-8247.**

## VENTURA COUNTY HEALTH CARE PLAN CONTRACTS WITH



# OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions (LIFE STRATEGIES)

## FOR MENTAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

Optum's Live and Work Well website is packed with valuable information for healthy living. For easy access to this information, look for Optum's icon on the VCHCP website – click on it and you are on your way to learning more about healthy living! You can also access it through <https://www.liveandworkwell.com/member>.

*Following are two examples of articles available for members to help with common behavioral health issues.*

## Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

### ***What is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder?***

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a condition in which a person has trouble paying attention and focusing on tasks, tends to act without thinking, and has trouble sitting still. It may begin in early childhood and can continue into adulthood. Without treatment, ADHD can cause problems at home, at school, at work, and with relationships. In the past, ADHD was called attention deficit disorder (ADD).

### ***What causes ADHD?***

The exact cause is not clear, but ADHD tends to run in families.

### ***What are the symptoms?***

The three types of ADHD symptoms include:

- **Trouble paying attention.** People with ADHD are easily distracted. They have a hard time focusing on any one task.
- **Trouble sitting still for even a short time.** This is called hyperactivity. Children with ADHD may squirm, fidget, or run around at the wrong times. Teens and adults often feel restless and fidgety. They aren't able to enjoy reading or other quiet activities.
- **Acting before thinking.** People with ADHD may talk too loud, laugh too loud, or become angrier than the situation calls for. Children may not be able to wait for their turn or to share. This makes it hard for them to play with other children. Teens and adults may make quick decisions that have a long-term impact on their lives. They may spend too much money or change jobs often.

### ***How does ADHD affect adults?***

Many adults don't realize that they have ADHD until their children are diagnosed. Then they begin to notice their own symptoms. Adults with ADHD may find it hard to focus, organize, and finish tasks. They often forget things. But they also often are very creative and curious. They love to ask questions and keep learning. Some adults with ADHD learn to manage their lives and find careers that let them use those strengths.

## The Basics: Autism Facts

### ***What is Autism?***

Autism is a developmental disorder. The disorder makes it hard to understand the world. Communication is especially challenging. It is hard for people with autism to attach meaning to words and facial expressions. Individuals with the disorder have trouble interacting with others. They may seem as if they are in their own world. People with autism tend to engage in repetitive or obsessive behavior. They often do self-harming things. They may bang their heads on the wall or do things like repeatedly pinch themselves.

### ***What are the Symptoms?***

Autism is usually noticed in the first three years. Sometimes the symptoms are apparent when comparing the development of your child to others their age. Other times the symptoms may come on all at once. Some signs to look for are:

### ***Communication symptoms:***

- Talks late or not at all; speaks loudly or with flat tones
- Points or uses other motions to indicate needs
- Repeats words or phrases without understanding the meaning
- May talk at length about something even if no one is listening





### Social interaction symptoms:

- Likes to be alone
- Dislikes being held or touched
- Does not know how to interact; poor listener
- May stare at something for a long time, ignoring the rest of the world
- Poor eye contact
- Does not understand the feelings of others

### Behavior symptoms:

- Likes routine; is upset by change
- Does not pretend or use his or her imagination
- May have tantrums or show aggression
- May become very attached
- May engage in repetitive movements like rocking
- May bang his or her head or hurt self
- May be sensitive to noises that others tolerate
- May have an unusual reaction to the way things smell, taste, look, feel or sound

Not everyone experiences autism in the same way. Some may have severe trouble with some things and not be as challenged by others. If you suspect that your child may have autism, trust your instincts. Take your child to a doctor and have them examined.

*Additionally, VCHCP has a Case Management Program specific to the needs of those with Autism. Contact the VCHCP Case Management Department for more information (805) 981-5060 or visit [www.vchealthcareplan.org](http://www.vchealthcareplan.org) and click on "Request Case Management or Disease Management".*

# Autism Screening FOR ALL CHILDREN

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is the name for a group of developmental disorders. Studies show that when children with ASD are diagnosed early and receive early intervention, they have improved long-term outcomes. With this in mind, VCHCP has in place a Screening for Autism Policy that all Family Practitioners and Pediatricians caring for children age 2 and younger are to follow. Your child's provider will administer a standardized screening and surveillance of risk factors at age 18 and 24 months. Also, your provider will perform a general observation at every well-child visit. Please understand that these screenings are to be provided for all children at age 18 and 24 months. If you have concerns about the screening or the results, contact your child's provider.

**If you have any questions about the Autism Screening Policy, please contact VCHCP Utilization Management department at (805) 981-5060.**

## Autism Spectrum Disorders

**REQUEST  
Case Management or  
Disease Management**

Members now have an opportunity to seek assistance for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). VCHCP recommends all members with ASD or parents of children with ASD participate in our Autism Case Management Program. Visit <http://www.vchealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx>, and on the right side of the site, click "Request Case Management or Disease Management". You will be prompted to enter member specific information. You will then submit this form to a secure email. A nurse will evaluate your request and call you within 2 business days.

**If you would like to speak directly with a nurse, please call (805) 981-5060 and ask for a Case Management Nurse.**

# GETTING YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER

## Advance Care Planning

*Making healthcare decisions for yourself or someone who is no longer able to do so can be overwhelming. That's why it's important to get a clear idea about preferences and arrangements while you can make decisions and participate in legal and financial planning together.*

Visit <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/caregiving/advance-care-planning> to learn more about advance care planning.



**Use this checklist** to ensure healthcare and financial arrangements are in place before serious illness or a healthcare crisis.

- ✓ **Start discussions** early with your loved one while everyone can still help make decisions.



- ✓ **Create documents** that communicate **healthcare, financial management,** and **end of life** wishes for yourself and the people you care for, with legal advice as needed.



- ✓ **Review plans regularly,** and update documents as circumstances change.



- ✓ **Put important papers in one place.** Make sure a trusted family member or friend knows the location and any instructions.



- ✓ **Make copies** of **healthcare directives** to be placed in all medical files, including information on every doctor seen.



- ✓ **Give permission** in advance for a doctor or lawyer to talk directly with a caregiver as needed.



- ✓ **Reduce anxiety** about funeral and burial arrangements by planning ahead.





# Caregiver Support:

## Talking about Advance Care Planning

**WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE IS DIAGNOSED WITH A LIFE-LIMITING ILLNESS,** it is important to keep communication as clear and direct as possible. Work at keeping the lines of communication open with your loved one, with his or her doctor, and with your family. Recognize your family's style of communication. How did your family communicate before your loved one was diagnosed with this serious illness? Were you able to communicate freely and openly, or were there barriers to your communication, such as frequent arguments or a lack of sharing? If you encounter barriers, consider visiting a counselor to help resolve difficult issues and to help your family learn some effective ways to communicate. Talk to your loved one and his or her doctor about the life-limiting diagnosis.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK THE DOCTOR INCLUDE:

- What are the treatment options?
- How long do you expect my loved one to live?
- What do you expect to happen with this diagnosis?
- What support services are available to help my family?
- Who will oversee and manage my loved one's care?
- Who do I call if my loved one is having problems, such as pain?

Talk to your loved one about his or her wishes. What end-of-life goals does he or she have? How do these goals compare with yours? If your loved one has not communicated his or her end-of-life wishes, talk about them now.

### IMPORTANT END-OF-LIFE ISSUES TO DISCUSS INCLUDE:

#### TREATMENT GOALS

- What type of medical treatment does your loved one want? Is it curative, life-sustaining treatment, or is it care focused on maintaining comfort and controlling symptoms without curing the illness?
- Has a legal document to express these health care wishes—called an Advanced Directive—been written? See sample form here: <https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/consumers/ProbateCodeAdvancedHealthCareDirective-Form-fillable.pdf>
- Personal and family goals.
- Discuss your loved one's end-of-life goals. Are there things that need to be done? Are there relationships that need mending? Allow opportunities for your loved one to talk about his or her life, to reflect on accomplishments, and to share any regrets.
- Share your goals. What do you need to do to be able to say good-bye? Do you share similar goals with your loved one? Are there goals or desires that you may not be able to honor? It is important to share your goals with your loved one.

#### LOCATION OF DEATH

Your loved one can die at one of several locations, including home, a hospital or nursing home, or possibly a local hospice house. There is no "right" place to die.

- Some people want to die at home surrounded by family members. Hospice services often can help a person be allowed to die at home. Some people may be reluctant to die at home because they are concerned about the welfare of their loved ones or they are fearful about not receiving the medical care necessary to control their symptoms. For more information on hospice services in your area, see the topic Hospice Care.

- Where do you want your loved one to die? You may want him or her at home, where you can help provide care. What concerns do you have about caring for your loved one at home? You may be hesitant to have your loved one die at home because you are concerned about your ability to care for him or her. This is often a concern for family members who are elderly or who have health problems of their own. You may be reluctant to live in a house in which someone has died.

#### FUNERAL PLANS

*Does your loved one want a funeral or memorial service? Does he or she prefer burial or cremation?*

#### FINANCES

- What financial support is available to help you care for your dying loved one? Hospice services are a benefit of many private health insurance policies. Check your health plan for specific information about hospice coverage. Also, if you qualify for Medicare benefits, hospice services are covered through the Medicare hospice benefit.
- When your loved one dies, will you be able to manage the finances? You may want to meet with an attorney to discuss financial and estate issues. A social worker from your local hospital or hospice may be available to provide financial consultation.

*Caring for a dying loved one can be a rewarding but difficult experience. Taking care of yourself, letting the person do as much as he or she can, and asking for help are three key tips to help both you and the person you're caring for. Services, such as hospice and support groups, can also provide help.*

#### SOURCES:

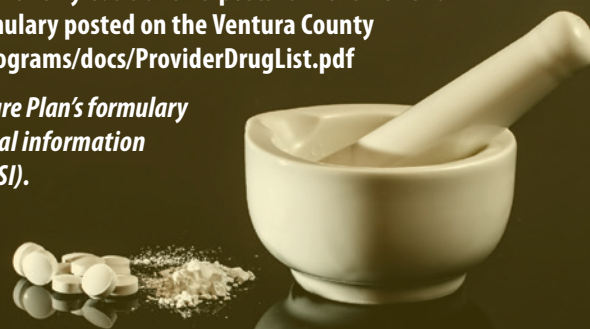
Author: Healthwise Staff  
Medical Review: Anne C. Poinier, MD - Internal Medicine  
Adam Husney, MD - Family Medicine  
Kathleen Romito, MD - Family Medicine  
Gayle E. Stauffer, RN - Registered Nurse

# Pharmacy Updates

Ventura County Health Care Plan updates the formulary with changes on a monthly basis and re-posts it in the VCHCP's member website. Here is the direct link of the electronic version of the formulary posted on the Ventura County Health Care Plan's website: <http://www.vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/docs/ProviderDrugList.pdf>

*The following is a list of additions and deletions for the Ventura County Health Care Plan's formulary recently approved by the Plan's Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee. Additional information regarding the High-Performance Formulary is available thru Express Scripts (ESI).*

Note: The Plan's Drug Policies, updated Step Therapy and Drug Quantity Limits can also be accessed at: <http://www.vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/countyEmployees.aspx>



## Formulary Additions: Q1-2020

### Brand Name for First Generics:

PROAIR HFA	ALLZITAL	NUVARING	ZOHYDRO ER	ISORDIL	DEPEN	TRAVATAN Z
BRETYLOL	JADENU	NUVARING	ZOHYDRO ER	MOXEZA	NEBUPENT	VANATOL LQ
(obsolete)	SILENOR	AFINITOR	CAMPTOSAR	VIMOVO	CARAFATE	

### Line Extensions - New Dosage Forms/Strengths: PRODUCT NAME

ASMANEX HFA 50 MCG INHALER	DULERA 50 MCG-5 MCG INHALER	GAMMACORE SAPPHIRE 31-DAY
BD NANO 2 GEN PEN NDL 32GX4MM	EGRIFTA SV 2 MG VIAL	XELJANZ XR 22 MG TABLET
DIVIGEL 1.25 MG GEL PACKET	EYLEA 2 MG/0.05 ML SYRINGE	

### New and Existing Brands/Chemicals: PRODUCT NAME

ADAKVEO 100 MG/10 ML VIAL	GAMMACORE-S (10009-40601)	TRUXIMA 100 MG/10 ML VIAL
BAXDELA 300 MG VIAL	GAMMACORE 31 DAY REFILL CARD	TRUXIMA 500 MG/50 ML VIAL
BAXDELA 450 MG TABLET	OGIVRI 150 MG VIAL	VUMERITY DR 231 MG CAPSULE
ESPEROCT 500 UNIT VIAL	OGIVRI 420 MG VIAL	ZIEXTENZO 6 MG/0.6 ML SYRINGE
ESPEROCT 1,000 UNIT VIAL	RUXIENCE 100 MG/10 ML VIAL	ZIOPTAN 0.0015% EYE DROPS
ESPEROCT 1,500 UNIT VIAL	RUXIENCE 500 MG/50 ML VIAL	ZIRABEV 100 MG/4 ML VIAL
ESPEROCT 2,000 UNIT VIAL	TALICIA DR 10-250-12.5 MG CAP	ZIRABEV 400 MG/16 ML VIAL
ESPEROCT 3,000 UNIT VIAL	TRAZIMERA 420 MG VIAL	

## Formulary Removals Q1-2020

### Multisource Brand Removals: PRODUCT NAME

APRISO ER 0.375 GRAM CAPSULE	DEPEN 250 MG TITRATAB	NUVARING VAGINAL RING
CARAFATE 1 GM/10 ML SUSP	FASLODEX 250 MG/5 ML SYRINGE	TRAVATAN Z 0.004% EYE DROP

### Exclusion List Additions: PRODUCT NAME

BUDESONIDE-FORMOTEROL 160-4.5	INSULIN ASPART 100 UNIT/ML CRT	RELION NOVOLIN N U-100 FLEXPEN
BUDESONIDE-FORMOTEROL 80-4.5	INSULIN ASPART 100 UNIT/ML PEN	RELION NOVOLIN R U-100 FLEXPEN
CALCIPOTRIENE 0.005% FOAM	INSULIN ASPART 100 UNIT/ML VL	SIMVASTATIN 20 MG/5 ML SUSP
CALCIPOTRIENE-BETAMETH DP SUSP	INSULIN ASPART PROT-INSULN ASP(pen & vial share label name)	SULCONAZOLE NITRATE 1% CREAM
CONSENSI 10-200 MG TABLET	NOVOLIN N 100 UNIT/ML FLEXPEN	SULCONAZOLE NITRATE 1% SOLN
CONSENSI 5-200 MG TABLET	NOVOLIN R 100 UNIT/ML FLEXPEN	TRILURON 20 MG/2 ML SYRINGE
CONSENSI 2.5-200 MG TABLET	NOVOLIN R 100 UNIT/ML FLEXPEN	VYONDYS-53 100 MG/2 ML VIAL
DUAKLIR PRESSAIR 400-12MCG INH	OXBRYTA 500 MG TABLET	

### Exclusion List Removals: PRODUCT NAME

ORFADIN 2 MG CAPSULE	ORFADIN 20 MG CAPSULE	ZELNORM 6 MG TABLET
ORFADIN 5 MG CAPSULE	ORFADIN 4 MG/ML SUSPENSION	ZIOPTAN 0.0015% EYE DROPS
ORFADIN 10 MG CAPSULE	RHOFADE 1% CREAM	

For questions, concerns, or if you would like a copy mailed to your home address please call Ventura County Health Care Plan at (805) 981-5050 or (800) 600-8247. You may also contact Express Scripts directly at (800) 811-0293.

# FAQ's FOR MEMBERS ABOUT SPECIALTY MEDICATIONS

*It is very important that you remain proactive in following up with your specialty medication. This will minimize the delay in getting timely medications.*

## What is a “Specialty Medication”?

Specialty Medications are high-cost medications, regardless of how they are administered (injectable, oral, transdermal, or inhalant), and are often used to treat complex clinical conditions that require close management by a physician due to their potential side effects and the need for frequent dosage adjustments.

## What if my Doctor prescribes a “Specialty Medication” for me?

Most “Specialty Medications” require prior authorization from the Plan. Your doctor will need to complete a Prescription Drug Prior Authorization Request form and submit it to the Health Plan for approval.

## How do I know if my medication is a “Specialty Medication”?

Contact Accredo at (866) 848-9870. Accredo is Express Scripts’ specialty pharmacy provider.

## How much will my specialty medication cost?

You can look up your out-of-pocket cost for any medication (whether specialty or not) by going to the Express Scripts website at [www.express-scripts.com](http://www.express-scripts.com) and creating an online account. Or you can call Express Scripts directly at (800) 811-0293 to find out your out-of-pocket cost for a particular medication or for help logging into their website.

## How do I get my specialty medication?

Once the Health Plan approves your doctor’s Treatment Authorization Request, Accredo verifies the approval and contacts the patient to coordinate shipment of the medication to the patient’s address within 24 to 48 hours. Accredo cannot ship your medication without speaking with you directly to arrange shipment. If you receive a message from Accredo, you will need to call Accredo back. Accredo will also provide any equipment necessary for you to take your medication. You can call Accredo directly with any questions at (866) 848-9870.

## What if I need to start taking my medicine right away?

If your doctor determines that it is medically necessary for you to begin taking the medication right away, he/she can write a prescription for a 1 time 30-day supply to be filled at a local pharmacy upon approval by the Plan.

## What if my medication hasn’t arrived yet?

If you are concerned about the amount of time it is taking for your medication to be shipped to you, or if you have any other questions or concerns, please call the Plan’s Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050 or toll free at (800) 600-8247 Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.

*For more information about the Plan’s Specialty Medication policies or Prescription Medication Benefit Program please see the Plan’s website at [www.vhealthcareplan.org](http://www.vhealthcareplan.org) or call the Plan’s Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050 or toll free at (800) 600-8247 between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm Monday-Friday.*



## Nondiscrimination

VCHCP complies with applicable Federal and California laws and does not exclude people or otherwise discriminate against them because of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, marital status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or disability.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces certain Federal civil rights laws that protect the rights of all persons in the United States to receive health and human services without discrimination based on race, color, national origin, disability, age, and in some cases, sex and religion.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against you may file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR). You can file your complaint by email at [OCRcomplaint@hhs.gov](mailto:OCRcomplaint@hhs.gov), or you can mail your complaint to:

**Centralized Case Management Operations**  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Room 509F HHH Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

*If you have any questions, or need help to file your complaint, call OCR (toll-free) at*  
**1-800-368-1019** (voice) or  
**1-800-537-7697** (TDD),  
or visit their website at: <https://www.hhs.gov/ocr>.  
You may also send an email to [OCRAMail@hhs.gov](mailto:OCRAMail@hhs.gov).



# Utilization Management

**A**s part of our continuing commitment to serve our members, VCHCP conducted a 2019 Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and System (CAHPS) survey. The purpose of this survey is to measure how well the Health Plan meets members' expectations and goals. SPH Analytics was selected by VCHCP to randomly select eligible members to participate in the survey using a combination of mail and telephone outreach.

We would like to thank the 201 members who responded to our survey, yielding a 22% response rate. Based on your responses, specifically with regards to your "experience with our Utilization Management" (UM), the Plan is committed to improving member survey results and experiences. The specific questions in the survey that pertain to your experience with our Utilization Management are:

**Q14: IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, how often was it easy to get the care, tests, or treatment you needed?**

**Q25: IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, how often did you get an appointment to see a specialist as soon as you needed?**

*We heard your feedback and recognize we have opportunities for improvement. We have implemented actions to improve your experience with our Utilization Management such as:*

► **VCHCP continues to utilize our Direct Specialty Referral Program for our VCHCP health plan members.**

The Primary Care Physicians can directly refer members to certain in network/contracted specialty providers without requiring prior authorization. This program was updated to include additional specialties, along with adding procedures available under the direct referral.

► **In addition to expanding the specialists in the direct specialty referral program, the Plan's Utilization Management (UM) removed prior authorization on services that the Plan generally approve, reducing the barrier of having to obtain prior authorization.**

The intent is to make it easy for members to get these services.

► **The Plan continues to work with the VCMC ambulatory clinics to send timely referrals to the Plan through:**

- Triad Ops Meeting
- For those Treatment Authorization

Requests (TARs) not received by the Plan, the Plan's member services continue to educate members to remind provider to send TARs to our UM

- The Plan's UM intakes continue to educate and call providers to submit the TARs timely

► **Interventions/processes implemented in the Plan's UM Department:**

- Plan medical director reviews all pend and denial letters for appropriateness prior to mailing/faxing.
- In addition to existing process of sending messages through Cerner to the requesting VCMC providers for the information needed on pending cases, the UM RN started calling non – VCMC providers to request the needed information on pending cases.

► **Throughout 2019 the Plan ensured that there is staffing coverage for live call transfers from Member Services.**

► **Throughout 2019 the Plan ensured that voicemails in the UM line are**

**returned as soon as possible, within 1 business day.**

► **Our UM department continues to utilize an electronic prior authorization referral process at the Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) through the Cerner system.**

VCHCP continues to work with VCMC to improve access to timely appointments by improving the VCMC referral center process.

► **The Plan's Member Services department measures/monitors access issues through Plan complaint and grievance data.**

The Plan assists members to get appointments or may arrange case agreement with providers. Access issues are addressed for continued improvement with collaboration between the Plan and providers.

► **The Plan has made concerted efforts to contract with needed specialists in geographic areas of need.**

**OUR UM DEPARTMENT** continues to monitor the timeliness of our UM prior authorization processing daily to ensure timely review. Certain benefits require prior authorization from the VCHCP in order to be covered. This means that visits to certain specialists, specific tests, and some prescription medications require the requesting physician to submit a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) to VCHCP. VCHCP UM Department reviews the request and it is either approved or denied based on medical necessity. For more information about the TAR review process please see your plan's Evidence of Coverage (EOC) Booklet available at [www.vhealthcareplan.org](http://www.vhealthcareplan.org). VCHCP must approve the request in order for the Plan to pay for the cost of the service(s). Generally, routine authorization requests are processed within 5 business days.

Additionally, did you know that our UM department tracks how long it takes to respond to each request it receives? This is reported to our Utilization Management Committee on a quarterly basis as the UM Turn-Around-Time. There are strict regulatory requirements for the time UM takes to respond to requests that are received by the Plan. When turn-around-times do not meet specified goals, a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) is activated to ensure improvement occurs. So far in 2020, over 99% of requests received have been completed within the specified regulatory requirement.

In order to meet the steps of prior authorization, the prescribing physician must submit the TAR. Without the TAR, the Plan is not aware that you are in need of services. Some members call the Plan with concerns that they have not received authorization for the service

requested, and it is found that the physician has not submitted the request yet, or the request has not been processed through the physician's office referral system. This delay in the process can lead to increased time it takes to get the services needed. The Plan is working closely with physician offices to ensure that the offices submit the TARs to the Plan's UM Department as soon as possible. This will help prevent delays in the process.

*If you would like the ability to know if VCHCP has received your TAR, you may call the Plan's Member Services Department at 805-981-5050 from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Your continued participation in our annual member satisfaction surveys and other feedback will help us identify areas of opportunity for improvement, which in turn aids us in increasing the quality of care you receive.*

## REQUEST Case Management or Disease Management

Members now have an opportunity to seek assistance for complex and or chronic medical needs such as asthma, diabetes, and coordination of challenging care online! Visit <http://www.vhealthcareplan.org/members/memberindex.aspx>, and on the right side of the site, click "Request Case Management or Disease Management". You will be prompted to enter member specific information. You will then submit this form to a secure email. A nurse will evaluate your request and call you within 2 business days. If you would like to speak directly with a nurse, please call **(805) 981-5060** and ask for a Case Management Nurse.

## Have your say about your experience with Disease Management & Case Management

All VCHCP members who are in our Disease Management or Case Management Programs will receive a survey to evaluate the program they are enrolled in. These surveys are to measure how useful our programs are to the members, and to evaluate where we need to improve. Programs being surveyed include, Diabetes Disease Management, Asthma Disease Management, and Autism Case Management. When you receive the survey, simply complete the questions and return it in the pre-paid envelope. Your responses are completely anonymous. As a special thank you for completing our survey, you have the option to receive a free Goody Bag (includes recipe books) from Champions for Change: Network for a Healthy California. Please click on the link listed on your survey so we know where to send your bag. Thank you in advance for helping us evaluate our programs, making them even better! If you have questions regarding surveys or any of our Disease Management or Case Management programs, call Utilization Management at (805) 981-5060.

## NEW TO THE NETWORK

**Benjamin Dirkx, D.O.**, a pain management specialist at Spanish Hills Interventional Pain Specialists in Camarillo has been added, effective August 2020.

**College Estates Dialysis**, an outpatient dialysis facility in Oxnard has been added, effective March 2020.

**Dean Smith, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at Channel Island Med Group in Ventura has been added, effective June 2020.

**Derek Andrzejewski, P.A.-C.**, a physician assistant at Ventura Orthopedic Medical Group in Camarillo and Simi Valley has been added, effective August 2020.

**Donald Thomas II, M.D.**, a cardiothoracic surgeon at Dignity Health Medical Group Ventura County in Oxnard has been added, effective July 2020.

**Emem Brown, P.A.-C.**, at Magnolia Family Medical Center (VCMC) in Oxnard has been added, effective March 2020.

**Gary Winston, M.D.**, a pediatrician at Surfside Pediatrics has been added, effective July 2020.

**Grace Hunter, M.D.**, an internal medicine physician at Las Islas Family Medical Group (VCMC), and Las Islas Family Medical Group North (VCMC) both in Oxnard has been added, effective July 2020.

**Ian Joel, M.D.**, a pulmonary disease specialist at Ventura Pulmonary and Critical Care Medical Group in Ventura has been added, effective August 2020.

**Jennifer Garcia, F.N.P.**, at Santa Paula West Medical Group & Pediatrics (VCMC) in Santa Paula has been added, effective January 2020.

**Jessica Fennewald, N.P.**, a nurse practitioner at Insite Digestive Health Care in Camarillo and Oxnard has been added, effective July 2020.

**John Quinn, M.D.**, an orthopedic surgeon at Ventura Orthopedic Medical Group in Oxnard and Camarillo has been added, effective September 2020.

**Jolie Macrito, D.O.** at Santa Paula West Medical Group & Pediatrics (VCMC) in Santa Paula has been added, effective January 2020.

**Jonathan Guinto, P.A.**, at California Dermatology Institute in Thousand Oaks and Ventura has been added, effective January 2020.

**Leah Patrick, D.O.**, a family medicine physician at Conejo Valley Family Medical Grp (VCMC) in Thousand Oaks has been added effective March 2020.

**Lily Mallare, M.D.**, an OB/GYN at Dignity Health Medical Group Ventura County in Oxnard has been added, effective May 2020.

**Lydia Suryakumar, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at Clinicas Del Camino Real in North Oxnard has been added, effective September 2020.

**Maria Choudhary, M.D.**, an ophthalmologist at Miramar Eye Specialist in Thousand Oaks has been added, effective April 2020.

**Mini Pharmacy**, a diabetic medical equipment and supplies provider has been added, effective July 2020.

**Nisha Vyas, M.D.**, an OB/Gyn and maternal & fetal specialist at Obstetrix Medical Group of Central Coast in Santa Barbara has been added, effective October 2020.

**Ramona Bahnam, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at Clinicas del Camino Real in Oxnard has been added, effective September 2020.

**Robin Evans, M.D.**, a plastic surgeon at Pediatrics Diagnostic Center (VCMC) and Anacapa Plastic and Hand Reconstruction (VCMC) both in Ventura has been added, effective May 2020.

**Sally Smith, M.D.**, a pediatrician at Channel Island Med Group in Ventura has been added, effective June 2020.

**Sarah Roberts, F.N.P.**, at Fillmore Family Medical Group (VCMC) and Santa Paula Medical Clinic (VCMC) has been added, effective January 2020.

**Savannah Harris, N.P.**, a nurse practitioner at Ventura Cardiology Consultants Medical Group in Ventura has been added, effective March 2020.

**Sherwin Nikamal, D.P.M.**, a podiatry physician at Foot & Ankle Concepts Inc. in Oxnard has been added, effective May 2020.

**Tamra Travers, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at Academic Family Medicine Center (VCMC) in Ventura has been added, effective April 2020.

**Wendy Bell, N.P.**, at Anacapa Neurosurgery (VCMC) in Ventura has been added, effective January 2020.

**William Cusick, D.O.**, a family medicine physician at West Ventura Medical Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura has been added, effective July 2020.

**Zade Batarseh, P.A.-C.**, a physician assistant at Ventura Orthopedic Medical Group in Simi Valley has been added, effective August 2020.

## LEAVING THE NETWORK<sup>k</sup>

**Adam Martidis, M.D.**, an ophthalmologist at Miramar Eye Specialist in Camarillo, Thousand Oaks, and Ventura has left, effective May 2020.

**Ananda Ananda, M.D.**, an internal medicine physician at Santa Paula Medical Clinic (VCMC) in Santa Paula has left, effective June 2020.

**Aviva Bernat, M.D.**, an internal medicine physician at Fillmore Family Medical Group (VCMC) in Fillmore has left, effective July 2020.

**Brenda Means, F.N.P.**, at Las Posas Family Medical Group (VCMC) in Camarillo has left, effective June 2020.

**David Philips, M.D.**, an interventional cardiologist at Cardiology Associates Medical Group in Ventura has left, effective December 2019.

**Donald Frambrach, M.D.**, an ophthalmologist at Miramar Eye Specialists in Camarillo, Oxnard and Ventura, has left effective June 2020.

**Elizabeth Worthley, P.A.-C.**, at Ventura Orthopedic in Ventura and Oxnard has left, effective June 2020.

**Eric Kuo, M.D.**, a vascular surgeon at West Coast Vascular in Ventura has left, effective March 2020.

**Geoffrey Loman, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at Dignity Health Medical Group Ventura County in Ventura has left, effective August 2020.

**Hiroki Nariai, M.D.**, a pediatric neurologist at Pediatric Diagnostic Center (VCMC) in Ventura has left, effective February 2020.

**Isabel Gonzalez Diaz, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at West Ventura Medical Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura has left effective July 2020.

**Ishu Rao, M.D.**, a cardiac electrophysiologist at Ventura Cardiology Consultants in Ventura has left, effective March 2020.

**Janet Hiatt, N.P.**, at Mandalay Bay Women & Children's Med Grp (VCMC) in Oxnard has left, effective March 2020.

**Jennifer Gros, P.A.**, at Ventura Orthopedics Medical Group in Simi Valley has left, effective May 2020.

**Lawrence Borelli, M.D.**, an orthopedic surgeon at Conejo Valley Family Med Grp (VCMC) in Thousand Oaks has left, effective July 2020.

**Miriam Parsa, M.D.**, a pediatric rheumatologist at Pediatric Diagnostic Center (VCMC) in Ventura has left, effective January 2020.



**Mitch Calmer, P.A.**, at West Ventura Orthopedics and Podiatry Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura has left, effective February 2020.

**Nicholas Bednarski, M.D.**, a nephrologist at Vista Del Mar in Camarillo and Oxnard has left, effective December 2019.

**Patricia Wade, F.N.P.**, at Las Islas Women's Health Clinic (VCMC) in Oxnard has left, effective April 2020.

**Quynh-Chau Hoang, P.A.-C.**, at Ventura Orthopedics Medical Group in Simi Valley has left, effective March 2020.

**Robert Vasko, M.D.**, a pediatrician at Pleasant Valley Pediatric Medical Group in Camarillo has left, effective June 2020.

**Smita Mehta, P.A.-C.**, at Alta California Medical Group in Simi Valley has left, effective November 2019.

**Tesu Lin, M.D.**, a gastroenterologist at Island View Gastroenterology Associates in Oxnard and Ventura, has left effective April 2020.

**Urvi Vyas, M.D.** an internal medicine physician at Clinicas Del Camino Real in Newbury Park has left, effective February 2020.

**Wanda Hu, M.D.**, an Ophthalmologist at Miramar Eye Specialist Medical Group in Camarillo, Oxnard, Thousand Oaks and Ventura has left, effective May 2020.

## CHANGES

**Both the Cardiology Clinic** (VCMC) and **Immunology Clinic** (VCMC) in Ventura have changed their names and has moved to the same suite number as Medicine Specialty Center West (VCMC) also in Ventura, effective March 2020.

**Dignity Health Medical Group** in Oxnard has moved locations from 1700 N. Rose Ave., Ste. 350 in Oxnard to 2901 Ventura Rd. Ste. 120, also in Oxnard, effective August 2020.

**Emily Scibetta, M.D.**, a OB/Gyn & maternal & fetal medicine physician, is no longer with Obstetrix Med Grp of the Central Coast, effective June 2020. However, will remain at Academic Family Medicine (VCMC) and Mandalay Bay Women and Children's Med Grp (VCMC).

**Spanish Hills Surgery Center** has moved locations from 261 Mobil Ave in Camarillo to 4542 Las Posas Rd., Ste. C, also in Camarillo, effective July 2020.

**Ventura Orthopedic Medical Group** has added a new service location for physical therapy in Thousand Oaks, effective March 2020.

**West Coast Hearing & Balance** has added a new service location in Ventura, effective February 2020.

## STANDARDS FOR

# MEMBERS' Rights & Responsibilities

Ventura County Health Care Plan (VCHCP) is committed to maintaining a mutually respectful relationship with its Members that promotes effective health care. Standards for Members Rights and Responsibilities are as follows:

- 1 Members have a right to receive information about VCHCP, its services, its Practitioners and Providers, and Members' Rights and Responsibilities.
- 2 Members have a right to be treated with respect and recognition of their dignity and right to privacy.
- 3 Members have a right to participate with Practitioners and Providers in decision making regarding their health care.
- 4 Members have a right to a candid discussion of treatment alternatives with their Practitioner and Provider regardless of the cost or benefit coverage of the Ventura County Health Care Plan.
- 5 Members have a right to make recommendations regarding VCHCP's Member Rights and Responsibility policy.
- 6 Members have a right to voice complaints or appeals about VCHCP or the care provided.
- 7 Members have a responsibility to provide, to the extent possible, information that VCHCP and its Practitioners and Providers need in order to care for them.
- 8 Members have a responsibility to follow the plans and instructions for care that they have agreed upon with their Practitioners and Providers.
- 9 Members have a responsibility to understand their health problems and participate in developing mutually agreed-upon treatment goals, to the degree possible.

For information regarding the Plan's privacy practices, please see the "HIPAA Letter and Notice of Privacy Practices" available on our website at: <http://www.vhealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx>. Or you may call the Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050 or toll free at (800) 600-8247 to have a printed copy of this notice mailed to you.



VENTURA COUNTY

## HEALTH CARE PLAN

A Department of Ventura County Health Care Agency

2220 E. Gonzales Road, Suite 210-B

Oxnard, CA 93036

