

Provider BULLETIN



JANUARY-MARCH 2008



This Bulletin applies to:

- Medi-Cal
- Medicare
- Other programs

Alameda Alliance for Health Has a Fresh New Look!

The Alliance started 2008 with a modern new logo. Look for our new logo in our future communications with you. The bold teal stripe is easy to spot!

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Our New Look



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Practice Information
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Health care you can count on.
Service you can trust.

The Alliance updated its logo design to better reflect its friendly and personal service, and local presence. The Alliance has made additional exciting changes that build on its successes with the launch of Alliance CompleteCare, our new Medicare Advantage Special Needs Plan, and our new public outreach office at Oakland City Center. We continue to evolve and grow, and maintain our members as our primary focus. We are here to serve our community—and that never changes.

*What do you think of our new look?
Let us know by calling 510-747-4510*




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Verifying Member Eligibility



The Alliance strives to make verifying member eligibility as easy as possible. We recommend that member eligibility be checked prior to rendering services to any health plan member. Alliance providers have the three following options for member eligibility verification available to them:

1. Call the Alliance's Automated Eligibility Verification Line at 510-747-4505.
2. Log onto the Alliance provider portal at www.alamedaalliance.org and select the "Provider Connection" tab. Providers are required to have a user name and password in order to access this feature. To establish a user ID, apply online and request provider access at the same link.
3. Contact the California State AEVS (Automated Eligibility Verification Service) at 1-800-427-1295, or check AEVS online at www.medi-cal.ca.gov. **NOTE:** AEVS cannot distinguish whether a member's coverage is managed directly through the Alliance or if the member is assigned to a contracted delegated entity such as Community Health Center Network or Children's First Medical Group. We recommend verifying eligibility by contacting the Alliance directly or accessing the provider portal.



Two New Alameda Alliance Covered Benefits: **HPV, Gardasil, and the Prevention of Cervical Cancer**

In 2006 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Gardasil as the first vaccine for prevention of cervical cancer. Effective beginning October 13, 2006, Gardasil is an Alliance covered benefit for females from 9 to 26 years of age.

Providers must use the current recommended Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guideline when using Gardasil. Be sure to inform patients, parents, and guardians that Gardasil does not substitute for routine cervical cancer screening with routine pelvic examinations and cytology screening. Providers must document immunization and provide HPV immunization data to the local immunization registry.

- For Alliance Medi-Cal members **9 to 18 years of age**, providers should obtain the vaccine through the Vaccine for Children (VFC) program and bill the Alliance for the administration.
- For Alliance Medi-Cal members **19 to 26 years of age** and for all other Alliance lines of business, providers may bill for both the vaccine and the administration.

For more information, please contact the Alliance Provider Services department at 510-747-4510.



Topical Fluoride Varnish Covered for Children under Six

Primary Care Physicians may now offer the best hope for preventing or controlling tooth decay through the application of fluoride varnish. Topical application of fluoride (HCPCS code D1203) to prevent or control tooth decay (prophylaxis not included) is now an Alliance Medi-Cal covered benefit for children younger than six years old for up to three times in a 12-month period. This benefit is covered for service dates on or after June 1, 2006. The application does not require special dental equipment and may be applied by physicians, nurses, and supervised medical assistants with qualified training.

Tooth decay is the single most prevalent medical condition of childhood. Early Childhood Caries (ECC) is also an infectious, transmissible disease causing significant tooth decay in children younger than six years old. ECC may cause chronic pain and/or infection linked to delayed growth and decreased concentration. The early application of fluoride varnish protects the primary teeth, and ideally should be performed as soon as possible after the teeth first erupt.

Dental assessments and fluoride varnish applications must be documented in the member's medical record and may be included on the CHDP Confidential Screening/Billing Report (PM 160) form. For more information on training with the application process, please go to www.first5oralhealth.org. Let's get children under six into the office to assess their current dental status!



Health Programs at Your Service:

Asthma

The American Lung Association of California provides intensive home-based asthma education and case management for children and their families in Alameda County. Health educators assess the home environment for asthma triggers, provide remediation supplies, educate the family on best practices for successful asthma management and make referrals to other providers as needed. This free program accepts children ages 0-18 years with repeat admissions to the emergency room or who otherwise exhibit poor asthma control. For more information or to make a referral contact Lisa Rosenstreich at 510-893-5474, ext. 317 or LRosenstreich@alac.org.

High Blood Pressure in Children

The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute's newly released "A Pocket Guide to Blood Pressure Measurement in Children" is available from the Alliance department. Call Elizabeth Edwards at 510-747-6178 to request a copy. This guide provides concise directions for measurement and tables for interpretation of pre-hypertension, Stage 1, and Stage 2 hypertension for both boys and girls, by age and height, beginning at 3 years.



Weight Management Classes for Families

The staff of Children’s Hospital Nutrition Services is no longer doing their Fit Families program at the hospital, but they want to take it “on the road,” and are looking for host sites. This 2-hour, family based program covers basic nutrition information, decreasing soda intake, how to snack, controlling TV viewing, the role of exercise and active play in the control of weight. The staff can offer to do this class at clinic/practice sites, and have a minimum requirement of 10-12 families in attendance. The clinic/practice site would be responsible for promotion and motivating families to attend. Although the classes are held in English, for Alliance members who speak other languages, the Alliance provides interpretation services at no charge. Arrangements and questions can be addressed to Afroz Subedar at Children’s Hospital & Research Center at Oakland at 510-428-3885 ext. 2287.



FREE Telecommunications Relay Service – Dial 711

Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) is a telephone service that allows persons with hearing or speech disabilities to place and receive telephone calls. TRS is free in California and is available in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. territories for local and/or long distance calls. TRS uses operators called communications assistants (CAs) to facilitate telephone calls between people with hearing and speech disabilities and other individuals. When a person with a hearing or speech disability initiates a TRS call, he or she uses a TTY or other text input device to call the TRS relay center, and gives a CA the number of the party to call.

To call someone using TRS, use your TTY or telephone, dial 711, and you will automatically be connected to a TRS operator. If you’re a TRS user traveling out of state and want to make a call, there is no longer a need to learn the state’s TRS provider’s telephone number—just dial 711. **It’s fast, functional, and free**, and can be used anywhere in the United States. The 711 dialing access does not work for Video Relay Service (VRS) or Internet Protocol (IP) Relay calls because such calls are initiated through the Internet. Hearing persons initiating a VRS or IP Relay call may do so by calling a provider’s 800 number. For more information on TRS, go to: <http://ftp.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/711.html>





Upcoming Events

A Call for Transformation:

The Integration of Primary Care Services with Mental Health Care Services

Presented by John Newcomer, MD, Washington University School of Medicine

Alameda Alliance for Health and Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services invite you to a **Complimentary CME dinner for physicians** on **Wednesday, April 2, 2008, at 6:00 p.m.** at Scott's Seafood Restaurant, Jack London Square, Oakland. The program will describe the increased risk of medical morbidity and premature mortality in individuals with major mental disorders, particularly due to cardiovascular disease; identify key modifiable risk factors for cardiovascular disease, and the risk equivalent condition of diabetes mellitus; and list sources of risk, including potential adverse effects of psychotropic medications, and strategies for screening, monitoring and intervention to reduce risk.

Space is Limited! Register by Friday, March 21, 2008, for guaranteed attendance. For information, contact Jamie Perreira at the Alliance at 510-747-6188 or email: jperreira@alamedaalliance.org.



2nd Annual East Bay Diabetes Care Improvement Conference **“Building on Progress, Overcoming Obstacles”**

Friday, April 11, 2008

8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Summit Health Education Center, Oakland

(Breakfast and lunch provided)

Join your colleagues to accelerate the pace of chronic care system change in Alameda County. Participants will leave with tangible action plans for helping improve diabetes care in their clinic or practice and their community. All provider office staff is welcome.

Space is Limited! Register by March 28, 2008. CE units available. Register online at <http://www.cht-rg.org/searchable/wip3.html>. For information, contact Nitti Champaneria at CHT-Resource Group at 510-625-1256 ext. 115 or at Champaneria@jba-cht.com

Make Your Practice Information Updates in Writing

Keep your practice information in the Alliance's system up-to-date by telling us about changes via mail or fax. These updates must be in writing and may include the following changes: address or suite number, phone and fax, tax identification number (TIN), ownership or group name change, provider staff additions and deletions, or any practice limitations. Note: a W-9 form will be required for any changes regarding a group name, new ownership, or TIN.

Please use the following Provider Information Change Form to send us your updates.