

# Provider Bulletin

A quarterly publication for providers. | June 2026



## Three decades of partnering for healthier communities

Thirty years ago in Santa Cruz County, the Alliance began with a core belief: The most effective health care solutions come from a deep understanding of the people and communities we serve. Since then, we have grown to serve five counties, supporting more than 430,000 members through a network of over 14,000 contracted providers.

Our commitment to serving our provider partners and our members remains steadfast. We do this by listening to local needs; strengthening access to care; and promoting equitable, culturally responsive care for people of all ages and health conditions.

None of this would be possible without the expertise and collaboration of providers like you.

To support this partnership, we offer you:

- Competitive reimbursement rates that recognize the value of your care.
- Personalized support from teams who live in and understand our communities.
- Specialized training programs to support quality improvement.
- Incentive programs for primary care providers and specialists focused on reducing health disparities.
- Exclusive access to our Provider Portal for ease of doing business with us.
- In-house behavioral health care services for a more seamless, coordinated experience.
- Our TotalCare (HMO D-SNP) plan, enabling you to work with one insurance plan for dual-eligible members.

### Alliance Board Meetings

**Wednesday, June 24**

3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

**Wednesday, Aug. 26**

3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

### Whole Child Model Clinical Advisory Committee Meetings

**Wednesday, July 22**

Noon to 1 p.m.

### Physicians Advisory Group Meetings

**Thursday, Sept. 3**

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

As we mark this 30-year milestone, we acknowledge the difficult road ahead with the reassurance that together, we will navigate the ever-evolving Medi-Cal landscape. Thank you for your partnership and for your shared commitment to helping people live healthier lives.



*Michael Schrader*

Michael Schrader, CEO

# Care can't wait: Encouraging timely care for Alliance members

Timely care plays an important role in preventing serious health concerns and supporting long-term health outcomes. When routine visits and screenings are delayed, small health issues can become more complex over time.

To help reinforce the importance of preventive care, the Alliance is launching a member-focused campaign called "**Care Can't Wait.**" Members may see this message across multiple communication channels, including newsletters, web content, text message and community engagement efforts.



The campaign encourages members to take an active role in their health and schedule recommended checkups, screenings and vaccines.

## Why this matters

Many members face barriers that can make it difficult to prioritize preventive care. Consistent messaging from trusted providers can help reinforce the value of staying engaged in care and addressing health concerns early.

Providers play an essential role in helping members understand the importance of routine visits and recommended screenings.

## How you can support this effort

You can help reinforce the "**Care Can't Wait**" message by encouraging members to:

- Schedule routine checkups and preventive care visits.
- Stay up to date on recommended vaccines.
- Complete routine health screenings.
- Ask questions and discuss concerns during visits.

Encouraging preventive care and early screening helps support better health outcomes and strengthens continuity of care for Alliance members.

We appreciate your continued partnership in helping members stay connected to the care they need.



## Provider reminder: Complete Model of Care training

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requires all contracted Medicare Advantage Special Needs Plan and TotalCare providers to complete Model of Care training.

All employed, contracted and temporary staff, including in-network and out-of-network providers who routinely participate in a member's

interdisciplinary care team, must complete this training upon onboarding and annually thereafter.

### To complete the requirement:

1. Review the training at [www.thealliance.health/moc-training](http://www.thealliance.health/moc-training).
2. Complete the attestation form at [www.thealliance.health/moc-attestation](http://www.thealliance.health/moc-attestation).

The Alliance maintains training attestation records in compliance with CMS regulations.

**Questions?** Contact your Provider Relations Representative or call Provider Services at **831-430-5504**.

# Welcome, new providers!

## New ECM/CS providers

- **Central Coast Overdose Prevention.** ECM. Monterey County.
- **Exceptional Parents Unlimited.** ECM/CS. Housing Components, Respite Services, Personal Care and Homemaker Services. Mariposa and Merced counties.
- **Health Projects Center.** CS. Housing Transition Navigation and Housing Tenancy and Sustaining Services. Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties.
- **MindCure.** ECM/CS. Housing Components. Mariposa and Merced counties.
- **Sobriety Works.** ECM. Santa Cruz County.
- **United Way of Merced County.** CS. Transitional Rent. Merced County.
- **The Village Project Inc.** ECM/CS. Housing Components, Respite Services, Personal Care and Homemaker Services. Monterey County.

## New physicians/specialists

### Mariposa County

#### Referral physician/specialist

- **Prahalad Jajodia, MD,** Gastroenterology

### Merced County

#### Primary care

- **Ian Carlo Cadiz, MD,** Family Medicine
- **Irma Castro, MD,** Family Medicine
- **Bernadette Chiu, MD,** Family Medicine
- **Shatha Hajja, MD,** Pediatrics



- **Harjot Hayer, DO,** Family Medicine
- **Agnes Nyeck, MD,** Family Medicine

#### Referral physician/specialist

- **Mildrede Bonglack, MD,** Obstetrics and Gynecology
- **Garima Handa, MD,** Cardiovascular Disease
- **Jenna Heath, MD,** Obstetrics and Gynecology
- **Jackie Leong, MD,** Radiologist
- **Eric Lu, MD,** Internal Medicine
- **Carmen Metildi, MD,** Diagnostic Radiology
- **Jennifer Rose-Nussbaumer, MD,** Ophthalmology
- **Anthony Waechter, MD,** Emergency Medicine

### Monterey County

#### Primary care

- **Eleanor Battino, MD,** Family Medicine
- **Claudia Castelnovi, MD,** Pediatrics
- **Hsini Chu, DO,** Pediatrics
- **Arnold Cruz, DO,** Emergency Medicine
- **Steven Hand, MD,** Emergency Medicine

- **Larkin Holt, MD,** Family Medicine
- **Chun Ning Hu, DO,** Family Medicine
- **Cassandra Mahan-Richards, MD,** Pediatrics
- **Ginger Tissier, MD,** Family Medicine

#### Referral physician/specialist

- **Najib Allabadi, MD,** Surgery
- **Stephanie Chang, MD,** Obstetrics and Gynecology
- **Leo Fong, MD,** Vascular Surgery
- **Tatiana Hoyos Gomez, MD,** Surgery
- **Ollie Jackson, MD,** Surgery
- **Christopher Kim, MD,** Surgery
- **Divya Kishore, MD,** Diagnostic Radiology
- **Daniel Kosoy, MD,** Surgery
- **Vadim Leyenson, MD,** Pulmonary Disease
- **Henry Sanchez Ortigoza, MD,** Family Medicine
- **Frank Primus, MD,** Surgery
- **Kinza Sultan, DO,** Internal Medicine
- **Louis Zhang, MD,** Vascular Surgery

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## Expanding maternal support: Doula services available through the Alliance

The Alliance is proud to offer doula services as a covered benefit for eligible members. Doulas play an important role in supporting healthy pregnancies and positive birth experiences. The Alliance continues to expand access to these services across our region.

Today the Alliance has 90 doulas contracted within our provider network, serving members throughout Mariposa, Merced, Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties. This growing network helps ensure members have access to culturally responsive, community-based services across the perinatal period.

### What is a doula?

A doula is a trained professional who provides non-medical support during pregnancy and after birth. Doulas offer emotional, physical and

educational support before, during and after childbirth. Their services can include helping members prepare for labor, providing comfort techniques during delivery, supporting communication with care teams, and assisting with recovery and infant care after birth.

### Who qualifies for doula services?

Doula services are available to Alliance Medi-Cal members who are pregnant or recently gave birth. The benefit is designed to improve maternal health outcomes, provide additional guidance during pregnancy, and help families feel more confident and prepared throughout their birthing journey.

### How members can access doula services

Members can access services by choosing a doula from the

Alliance's contracted provider network. A list of participating doulas is available through the Alliance Provider Directory, where members and providers can search by county.

Providers and care teams are encouraged to inform eligible members about this benefit and help connect them with doulas in the network, as appropriate. Expanding access to doula services reflects the Alliance's commitment to improving maternal health outcomes and ensuring members receive compassionate, community-centered care.

The Alliance offers a Specialty Care Incentive (SCI) Program measure to incentivize obstetrics and gynecology providers to refer patients to doulas. Learn more at [www.thealliance.health/sci](http://www.thealliance.health/sci).

# The Alliance offers language assistance training and resources

The Alliance offers a variety of language assistance services that our provider network can utilize to communicate with our members, including:

- Telephonic interpreting services.
- Face-to-face interpreting services.
- Virtual remote interpreting (VRI) services.

The Alliance's Cultural and Linguistics (C&L) team can provide training and support to make sure providers and staff know how to use the available interpreting services.

The Alliance can provide resources such as language assistance flyers and materials for office staff to use when working with members. Additionally, providers can use the Alliance Interpreter Services Provider Quick Reference Guide: [www.thealliance.health/interpreter-services-quick-reference-guide](http://www.thealliance.health/interpreter-services-quick-reference-guide).

For more information, visit [www.thealliance.health/language-assistance](http://www.thealliance.health/language-assistance) or call the Alliance Health Education Line at **800-700-3874, ext. 5580**.



Providers can also reach out to their Alliance Provider Relations Representative for any language assistance training needs.

A woman with curly hair is smiling and looking towards the right. In the background, other people are seated, suggesting a workshop or community meeting.

## The Alliance offers health education workshops for members

The Alliance offers workshops to help members achieve healthier outcomes. The Alliance Health Programs team provides community resources and assists members with techniques for staying healthy.

Alliance members who participate in a workshop can receive up to a **\$50 Target gift card**.

Members who would like to sign up for a workshop can call the Alliance Health Education Line at **800-700-3874, ext. 5580**, or providers may fax a completed Health Program Referral form to **831-430-5852**. Forms are available at [www.thealliance.health/health-programs-referral-form](http://www.thealliance.health/health-programs-referral-form).

Members can also sign up for a workshop online at [www.thealliance.health/health-programs-sign-up](http://www.thealliance.health/health-programs-sign-up).

### Workshops available:

- **Healthier Living Program (HLP)**. This program is available for adult members with chronic condition(s). The program teaches skills to help members manage issues including pain, fatigue, stress, anxiety and sleep loss. Members also learn about action planning, healthy eating and staying active. These workshops are offered in person, virtually and telephonically.
- **Healthy Weight for Life (HWL)**. This program is available for parents or guardians of Alliance members ages 2-18. The program teaches parents about healthy eating for children, increasing physical activity and making healthy lifestyle changes to support children to reach a healthy weight. These workshops are offered in person and virtually.
- **Live Better with Diabetes (LBD)**. This program is available for adult members with diabetes or prediabetes. The program teaches skills to help members manage diabetes or prediabetes. Members learn about the importance of healthy eating, physical activity and symptom management. Action planning and communication with their health care providers is included. These workshops are offered in person, virtually and telephonically.

# Strengthening inclusive, affirming care for LGBTQ+ members

June is Pride Month: a time to celebrate the strength, diversity and resilience of our LGBTQ+ members and communities. This month reminds us to look at ways we can create a more inclusive, safe and affirming environment where LGBTQ+ individuals can feel seen, respected and supported.

In their 2025 State of LGBTQ Health Survey, the National Coalition for LGBTQ Health found the top two barriers to accessing care were distrust in the health system and the fear of stigma and discrimination ([www.thealliance.health/lgbtqhealthsurvey](http://www.thealliance.health/lgbtqhealthsurvey)).

Providers can make a difference! Based on current best practices and research, including the American Medical Association's recommendations for creating an LGBTQ+-friendly practice ([www.thealliance.health/lgbtqfriendlypractice](http://www.thealliance.health/lgbtqfriendlypractice)), health care providers can strengthen inclusivity by:

- **Using inclusive, affirming communication**, including asking about and using patients' pronouns and chosen names.
- **Creating visibly welcoming environments** with inclusive signage, updated forms and nondiscrimination statements.
- **Engaging in LGBTQ+ cultural competency training and continuing medical education (CME)/continuing education (CE) programs** to enhance knowledge about unique LGBTQ+ health needs. Help non-clinical staff access this training too.
- **Adopting evidence-based, gender-affirming care practices** to improve satisfaction and health outcomes.
- **Connecting patients to LGBTQ+ affirming resources**, including provider directories and specialty clinics with up-to-date resources.
- **Promoting institutional advocacy** to support policies and organizational changes that strengthen inclusion.
- **Remaining open, empathetic and curious.** Practice cultural humility, including active listening, acknowledging lived experience and recognizing the impact of stigma.



Learn more about behavioral health services for Alliance members at [www.thealliance.health/bh](http://www.thealliance.health/bh). If you would like additional resources, contact Provider Services at **831-430-5504**.

Looking to learn more? Review the following resources.

## Clinical guidelines for gender-affirming care

- UCSF Gender Affirming Health Program – Guidelines for the Primary and Gender-Affirming Care of Transgender and Gender Nonbinary People: <https://transcare.ucsf.edu/guidelines>.

## Health care guidance

- American Psychological Association – Guidelines for Psychological Practice With Transgender and Gender Nonconforming People: [www.apa.org/practice/guidelines/transgender.pdf](http://www.apa.org/practice/guidelines/transgender.pdf).
- American Academy of Family Physicians LGBTQ+ Health Toolkit: [www.thealliance.health/lgbtqtoolkit](http://www.thealliance.health/lgbtqtoolkit).

## Training, CME/CE and implementation support

- National LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center – webinars, publications, tool kits and CME/CE opportunities: [www.lgbtqiahealtheducation.org](http://www.lgbtqiahealtheducation.org).



## Ensuring accuracy when measuring blood pressure

### Best practices and resources for clinicians

Accurate blood pressure (BP) measurement is essential to effectively identify and manage hypertension. Reliable readings support appropriate clinical decision making, help prevent cardiovascular events such as stroke and heart failure, and reduce the risk of overtreatment or undertreatment.

Controlling High Blood Pressure, a Care-Based Incentive measure, recently moved from an exploratory measure to a paid programmatic measure in 2026. With this in mind, providers are encouraged to reinforce proper BP measurement techniques in both clinical and home settings, including:

- Appropriate patient positioning with back supported, legs uncrossed with feet flat on the floor and arm supported with BP cuff at heart level.

- Correct cuff sizing on a bare arm, not over clothing.
- Allowing patients to sit quietly before and during measurement.

Remember: If the first BP measurement is high, it is important to repeat the measurement after the patient rests quietly for five minutes to obtain a confirmatory measurement.

#### Provider training resources

Obtaining accurate BP values is a valuable clinical skill! The American Medical Association has published two training resources for office staff:

- BP Measurement Skills Assessment: [www.thealliance.health/bp-skills-assessment](http://www.thealliance.health/bp-skills-assessment).
- BP Measurement Competency Assessment: [www.thealliance.health/bp-competency](http://www.thealliance.health/bp-competency).

#### Blood pressure monitors for Alliance members

Did you know that blood pressure monitors are a covered benefit for Alliance members through Medi-Cal Rx? AllCare Pharmacy partners with clinics within Alliance service areas to ship blood pressure monitors directly to eligible members' homes at no cost.

#### How to send a prescription:

- Select the appropriate Microlife WatchBP Home Blood Pressure Monitor/Cuff from the Medi-Cal Rx Covered List ([www.thealliance.health/bloodpressure](http://www.thealliance.health/bloodpressure)).
- Remember to add a note on the prescription: "Please ship to patient's home. Please contact the patient to set up shipping."

# Using Cozeva for TotalCare risk adjustment

The key to successful risk adjustment is to maintain accurate data and full documentation in order to capture the health plan’s full disease burden. That’s why the Alliance has contracted with Cozeva to seamlessly integrate with common industry electronic health record (EHR) systems and help close care gaps for patients.

If you are a TotalCare (HMO D-SNP) provider, we encourage you to participate in our Risk Adjustment Coding & Documentation Accuracy Incentive Program and use Cozeva to support risk adjustment efforts.

By integrating Cozeva with your EHR or electronic medical record (EMR) system, you can:

- Securely send data.
- Automate manual data entry.
- Improve data integrity and quality measure scores.
- Reduce administrative burden and save office staff time.

## How to get started with Cozeva

1. Sign the agreement to participate in the CDA incentive program. Learn more about the program at [www.thealliance.health/risk-adjustment-incentive](http://www.thealliance.health/risk-adjustment-incentive).
2. To implement Cozeva at your practice, email [emrintegration@cozeva.com](mailto:emrintegration@cozeva.com).

## Cozeva technical specifications

- Bi-directional and omni-directional.
- Options differ by EHR vendor.
- Set up at practice or group level.

Thank you for partnering with us to provide accessible, quality health care guided by local innovation!

Vendor	Connectivity	Benefits	Details
Veradigm	To Cozeva	Signed encounter notes are automatically sent to Cozeva and close care gaps weekly.	Connect through third-party vendor.
athenahealth	Bidirectional	Cozeva will automatically push care gaps for incoming patients into the appointment scheduler. Signed encounter notes are automatically sent to Cozeva and close care gaps weekly.	One solution fits all; no local installation needed.
eClinicalWorks	To Cozeva	Signed encounter notes are automatically sent to Cozeva and close care gaps weekly.	
Elation Health	To Cozeva	Signed encounter notes are automatically sent to Cozeva and close care gaps weekly.	One solution fits all; no local installation needed.
Epic	To Epic	Patient due report can be opened directly in Epic iframe.	Supports Epic Version 2017 or higher.
NextGen Healthcare	To Cozeva	Signed encounter notes are automatically sent to Cozeva and close care gaps weekly.	Uses NextGen’s Rosetta engine.
Office Ally	Bidirectional	Office Ally will pull patient due reports in Cozeva from the patient page within the EHR. Signed encounter notes are automatically sent to Cozeva and close care gaps weekly.	One solution fits all; no local installation needed.

If you are working with an EHR system not listed here, or if you have additional questions about Cozeva, please reach out to your Provider Services Representative.



# What you need to know about TotalCare drug coverage and prior authorizations

Drugs for TotalCare (HMO D-SNP) members are covered under either Part B or Part D.

Part B	Part D
<p>Drugs that are not usually self-administered and injected or infused during doctor, hospital outpatient or ambulatory surgery center services.</p>	<p>Outpatient drugs, vaccines and some supplies not covered by Medicare Part A or B or Medicaid.</p>
<p>Immunizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pneumonia.</li> <li>■ Influenza (flu).</li> <li>■ Hepatitis B – high or intermediate risk.</li> <li>■ COVID-19.</li> <li>■ Human papillomavirus (HPV).</li> <li>■ Other vaccines if the member is at risk and meets Medicare Part B coverage rules.</li> </ul>	<p>Immunizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Vaccines reasonable and necessary to prevent illness, except those covered by Part B.</li> </ul>
<p>Diabetes supplies: blood glucose monitors and test strips, lancets, continuous glucose monitors, etc.</p>	<p>Diabetes supplies: needles for insulin pens, insulin delivery devices, insulin pens and vials, etc.</p>
<p>Prior authorizations will be reviewed within 72 hours for routine requests by the Alliance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Phone: <b>831-430-5507</b>.</li> <li>■ Fax: <b>831-430-5851</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>Prior authorizations will be reviewed within 72 hours for routine requests by MedImpact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Phone: <b>800-347-5841</b>.</li> <li>■ Fax: <b>858-790-7100</b>.</li> </ul>

## Part D formulary prior authorization and step therapy criteria

To search for Part D drugs, prior authorization and step therapy criteria using the online formulary search tool, visit [www.thealliance.health/totalcare-formulary](http://www.thealliance.health/totalcare-formulary).

## Medicare Part D excluded class drugs

By law, Medicare can't cover the following types of drugs:

- Drugs used to promote fertility.
- Drugs used for the relief of cough or cold symptoms.
- Drugs used for cosmetic purposes or to promote hair growth.
- Drugs used for the treatment of anorexia, weight loss or weight gain.
- Prescription vitamins and mineral products, except prenatal vitamins and fluoride preparations.
- Outpatient drugs made by a company that states tests or services must be conducted by them.

## Part B co-pay costs

Medicare Part B requires a deductible and/or co-insurance, which may be paid by Medi-Cal Rx.

## Part D co-pay costs

Members may have a co-pay for Part D drugs, depending on their Extra Help level and the drug tier. For more information, visit [www.thealliance.health/medicare/drug-costs](http://www.thealliance.health/medicare/drug-costs).

For more information, visit the TotalCare Pharmacy page: [www.thealliance.health/totalcare-pharmacy](http://www.thealliance.health/totalcare-pharmacy).



## See the newest Medi-Cal Rx DUR article

Please review the following Medi-Cal Rx Drug Utilization Review (DUR) article published since February 2026: "Updated Guidance for the Treatment of High Blood Pressure."

This resource is available on the Alliance's Pharmacy Services webpage under the "Drug Utilization Review (DUR)" section: [www.thealliance.health/more-pharmacy-info](http://www.thealliance.health/more-pharmacy-info).

## The Alliance's PAD List and procedures

The Alliance's Physician-Administered Drug List, restrictions, prior authorization criteria, policies and their updates are available in the Pharmacy area of our website: [www.thealliance.health/pharmacy-services](http://www.thealliance.health/pharmacy-services). If you would like to request physical copies, please contact the Pharmacy Department at **831-430-5507**.

## Important phone numbers

Provider Services . . . . .	<b>831-430-5504</b>
Claims. . . . .	<b>831-430-5503</b>
Authorizations . . . . .	<b>831-430-5506</b>
Status (non-pharmacy) . . . . .	<b>831-430-5511</b>
Member Services. . . . .	<b>831-430-5505</b>
Web and EDI . . . . .	<b>831-430-5510</b>
Cultural & Linguistic Services. . . . .	<b>831-430-5580</b>
Health Education Line. . . . .	<b>831-430-5580</b>

Partnering with local doctors and specialists to ensure that Alliance members get access to the right care, at the right time.



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# Welcome, new providers!

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## San Benito County Referral physician/specialist

- **Stefan Klein, MD,** Orthopedic Surgery
- **Sarathy Mandayam, MD,** Gastroenterology
- **John Wiemann, MD,** Orthopedic Surgery

## Santa Cruz County Primary care

- **Gustavo Diaz, MD,** Emergency Medicine
- **Carolyn McAloon, DPM,** Podiatric Medicine
- **Vijaya Mukthinuthalapati, MD,** Internal Medicine

## Referral physician/specialist

- **Jennifer Etcheson, MD,** Hand Surgery
- **Kimberly Gandy, MD,** Thoracic Surgery
- **Teresa Walsh, MD,** Obstetrics and Gynecology



The Alliance extends a warm welcome to all our newest providers. To see the complete list, please visit [www.thealliance.health/welcome-new-providers-q2-2026](http://www.thealliance.health/welcome-new-providers-q2-2026).

## Some of our new behavioral health providers

### Mariposa County

- **Brian Raines, PsyD**

### Merced County

- **Decinda Allen, LMFT**
- **Ashley Del Valle, LCSW**

### Monterey County

- **Everett Allen, PA**
- **Jennifer Barreto, BCBA**

### San Benito County

- **Merline Covington, PMHNP**
- **Nikkie Galaviz, LMFT**

### Santa Cruz County

- **Erika Abrahamian, LMFT**
- **Rebecca Branch, BCBA**

## Holiday office closures

- **Friday, June 19** (Juneteenth)
- **Friday, July 3** (Independence Day observed)