
To: All Medi-Cal PCPs (Serving Members Under 21 Years of Age)
From: IEHP Provider Relations Team
Date: 05/19/2023
Subject: **REMINDER: DHCS APL 23-005, “Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment Services (EPSDT) for Medi-Cal Members Under the Age of 21”**

We would like to inform you that the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) recently released **All Plan Letter 23-005, “Requirements for Coverage of Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) Services for Medi-Cal Members Under the Age of 21.”**¹ While this APL, which supersedes APL 19-010, primarily sets forth requirements for the Plan around Member Outreach and Education, as well as Provider Training, the Plan takes this as an opportunity to remind its Providers serving Members Under the Age of 21 of the following:

EPSDT Coverage

The Plan and its IPAs provide and cover all medically necessary services for Members under 21 years of age, when these services are determined to be necessary to correct or “ameliorate” (make more tolerable or to make better) defects and physical and mental illness or conditions unless otherwise carved out of the Plan’s contract with DHCS.

1. A service does not need to cure a condition to be covered under EPSDT.
2. Services that maintain or improve the child’s current health condition, or those that can prevent adverse health outcomes, are also covered under EPSDT because they ‘ameliorate’ a condition.

Delivering Care

Primary Care Providers (PCPs) must use current American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Bright Futures periodicity schedule and guidelines when delivering care to any Member under the age of 21, including but not limited to health and developmental screening services, physical examination, dental services, vision services, and hearing services.²

¹ <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Documents/MMCDAPLsandPolicyLetters/APL2023/APL23-005.pdf>

² <https://www.aap.org/periodicityschedule>

Timely Access to Care

All Members under the age of 21 must receive EPSDT preventive services, including screenings, designed to identify health and developmental issues as early as possible. Appropriate referrals for diagnosis and treatment must be provided without delay and initiated as soon as possible, but not later than 60 calendar days following either a preventive screening or other visit that identifies a need for follow-up.

To ensure timely access to care, IEHP expects Providers to submit referral requests and supporting documentation within these timeframes:

- Urgent preservice or urgent concurrent referrals - Within 24-hours of the determination that the referral is necessary; and
- Non-urgent preservice or concurrent referrals - Within two (2) working days of the determination that a referral is necessary.

Please see Policy 14A1 “Utilization Management- Primary Care Provider Referrals” for information on timely submission of referrals.

Member Outreach and Education

By June 1st 2023, IEHP will be mailing to its Members under the age of 21 or their family/caregivers DHCS-developed child and teen-focused brochures and Medi-Cal for Kids & Teens: Your Medi-Cal Rights” letter in their threshold language.^{3,4,5} These documents provide an overview of EPSDT, including covered services, how to access these services, and the importance of preventive care, and what to do if Medi-Cal care is denied, delayed, reduced, or stopped including who to contact, how to file grievances and appeals, and how to access other Member assistance resources.

For consistent messaging, IEHP will be updating any Member-facing materials that reference EPSDT with “Medi-Cal for Kids & Teens.”

Provider Training

IEHP is actively working to develop a comprehensive training plan to ensure its Network Providers complete EPSDT-specific and other required Provider trainings beginning January 2024. Updated policies and procedures will be published as soon as the Plan obtains approval from DHCS.

³ <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Medi-Cal-For-Kids-and-Teens/Documents/DHCS-WellCare-Brochure-Child-Bv33ag.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Medi-Cal-For-Kids-and-Teens/Documents/DHCS-WellCare-Brochure-Teens-Bv31ag.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Medi-Cal-For-Kids-and-Teens/Documents/DHCS-MediCal-Rights-Letter-B.pdf>



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We look forward to providing you with more information as we continue to implement the requirements of this APL.

All communications sent by IEHP can also be found at: www.iehp.org > For Providers > Correspondence

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the IEHP Provider Call Center at (909) 890-2054 or 866-223-4347, or email ProviderServices@iehp.org.

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