



Health Net Drives Health Equity Across California

MAINTAINING CONTINUITY OF CARE IS CRITICAL TO FURTHER PROGRESS



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Introduction

Health Net drives equity and reduces health disparities through innovation and local partnerships. We do this through our whole-person care model, which emphasizes addressing social drivers of health. Together with our local partners, we develop culturally responsive programs that our members access in ways and places most convenient to them and their families.

Our Medi-Cal members, in particular, must often overcome unique barriers to health that other people don't face. These include lack of housing, inadequate transportation, varying health literacy skills and other issues.

We also know that each person has a unique background, including age, income, immigration status and mobility. For those reasons, health care is not one-size-fits-all.

That's why Health Net connects with the people and works to meet their needs as we:

- Leverage our experience and expertise;
- Build access to drive equity and deliver care when, where and how people need it;
- Prioritize and drive quality and innovation; and
- Invest in, and partner with, trusted voices in local communities

To close health equity gaps even further in California will require unprecedented organizational stability, innovation and strong partnerships. Health Net remains committed to providing the continuity of focus, investment and engagement with our state, county and provider partners to make this a reality for years to come.



Spotlight: We leverage experience, expertise and empathy

Health Net provides access to care for more than three million Californians at every stage of life from newborns to seniors.

Two million of our members are enrolled in Medi-Cal, some of California's most vulnerable residents. We work with the state, counties and public health departments to expand Medi-Cal and serve those who depend on its essential services and supports.

In fact, since 2018, we have invested more than \$4 million to upskill practitioners and bring new providers into the Medi-Cal system. This ensures local providers reflect the people they serve and reach more patients.

Everyone, member and non-member alike, deserves seamless, coordinated care no matter the stage of life. And, we understand that coverage is just one piece of health care.

That's why **we build bridges to care between patients, doctors, community-based organizations and public agencies.** We fund programs to support a tighter net of support and continue to add local staff. This includes regional leaders who make decisions based on the needs of their local area.

In fact, our teams live in, and reflect, the communities that we serve. We have a presence on the boards of local clinics and community-based organizations. In addition, our leaders, such as our medical directors, practice locally each month. We also recruit diverse providers to ensure our network meets the unique cultural, linguistic, clinical and social needs of our communities. In this way, we're better connected to the unique needs of each local community, which our partners appreciate.



There are many Black maternal and infant health efforts throughout California, but much of the work is siloed, which can leave advocates feeling overburdened...,
said Dana Sherrod, Birth Equity & Racial Justice Manager of Cherished Futures.

Until now, there has not been adequate investment in a statewide collaborative that centers around Black birth justice. We're grateful for Health Net's support in this important endeavor.

Health Net takes the same approach as we lead on California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) implementation.

Community Supports via CalAIM address social drivers, which were not historically covered by Medi-Cal. These include, housing aid, medically tailored meals, asthma remediation and more.

“...For people with chronic conditions, by separating these Community Support services, we have noticed that what used to take two to three months to resolve is now literally taking one to three weeks. That’s a huge difference, and we’ve only just begun,” said Anwar Zoueihid, Vice President of Long-Term Services & Supports at **Partners in Care Foundation**.



With the support of CalAIM, now I can put an air purifier in an asthmatic’s home. I can get somebody to come out and fix their air conditioning unit so we can put a new filter in it and make it safer for them to breathe, said Kevin D. Hamilton, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director of **Central California Asthma Collaborative (CCAC)**.



Spotlight: We build access to drive equity and deliver care when, where and how people need it

Health equity means that everyone has a fair and equal opportunity for their best possible health outcome. We develop structures and processes that support that equity and reduce disparity. Our leadership and efforts in this area often garner recognition from the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and third parties, like the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

In 2006, Health Net was one of 10 health plans **recognized by NCQA** for bridging cultural and linguistic divides in health care. We were awarded the Recognizing Innovation in Multicultural Health Care Award for creating the first cross-border product (Salud Con Health Net) in the country. This NCQA award was a precursor to the NCQA Multicultural Health Care Distinction.

Since 2011, NCQA has awarded Health Net their Multicultural Health Care Distinction award. Health Net was the first health plan to earn this award for all three lines of business.

In 2022, Health Net was one of nine health care organizations in the nation selected to participate in the first-ever Health Equity Accreditation Plus Pilot.

Health Net was awarded Health Equity Accreditation Plus in September 2022 for all lines of business. This program sets a robust framework to improve health equity by helping organizations identify and close care gaps and identify processes to mitigate social risks and address social needs.

One way involves screening for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which are a key driver of health in youth and later in life. This is part of our person-centered approach. We help children grow and improve their wellness beyond traumatic experiences with a resiliency focused approach both for the child and the parent.

Health Net has partnered with DHCS and the California Office of the Surgeon General's ACEs Aware initiative since inception to support and lift the ACEs work into the health system. We recently became part of five ACE PRACTICE grantee teams to further trauma-informed care and practices by increasing the workforce and services needed for primary care clinics. This will expand and sustain screening and response to ACEs and toxic stress in local communities. One program that we have deployed to support this is Family Hui.



Health Net also invests in grants and programs to **help the unsheltered.**

We funded the creation and launch of the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital (MLKCH) Street Medicine program, which is a partnership with the USC Keck School of Medicine. Street Medicine Sacramento and many other programs, including a mobile health van in the Central Valley, also receive support.

Because of the unique needs (behavioral health, food insecurity, addiction, sanitation and more) unhoused people have, we invest in training for specialized care teams. As we did early on, we will increase our investments even as more state and federal funds come along.

For these and other initiatives, Health Net has been recognized for the company's industry leadership.

The Institute for Medicaid Innovation (IMI) leads a project focused on Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs). The project focuses on innovative initiatives that address social determinants of health and disparities exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. IMI highlighted some of Health Net's initiatives as part of a compendium resource sent out nationally via its website, newsletter, webinar and media outlets.

Our four programs included were:

- ✓ COVID-19 Telehealth Capacity Support
- ✓ MLKCH Street Medicine Program
- ✓ Family Hui Initiative
- ✓ Los Angeles Food Bank Pilot

IMI also reached out to Health Net to propose a follow-up webinar focused on addressing the unique needs of children and adolescents in communities who need better behavioral health care. Health Net selected Camarena Health, a Telehealth Capacity grantee, to participate on a panel during the webinar to provide their experience with our grant and to speak to how their programs evolved.



During the COVID-19 pandemic, we launched our **RVax180 initiative.** Together with trusted community partners, we held more than 210 COVID-19 vaccination clinics in 70 cities (across 15 counties). In total, the Health Net team traveled more than 40,000 miles across California to provide more than 22,000 vaccines to residents.



In 2022, we launched the Mobile Outreach for Value, Equity and Sustainability (MOVES) program, which leverages mobile clinics to create new access points for care within communities.

We tailor our MOVES pop-up clinics and services based on local needs, offering a range of pediatric and adult health screenings, such as vaccinations, vision and dental care and our innovative Member Connect kiosks. With our MOVES initiative, we have brought essential screening and preventive services to hundreds of Californians in communities of greatest need.



Health Net's Member Connect kiosks give access to resources for:

- 1 Housing, food & transportation
- 2 Public programs
- 3 Telehealth information
- 4 Mental health
- 5 Health Net public website

We prioritize health equity for all Californians

For more than 20 years, our Health Equity Department also has worked to understand and value our stakeholders, such as care providers, enrollees and employees. It's why **we partner with local groups and conduct clinical trainings that advance equity.**

Health Net also gathers data (on an opt-in basis) and analyzes key equity indicators of our members. We use data to understand where we need to provide access to resources such as transportation, food and housing support.

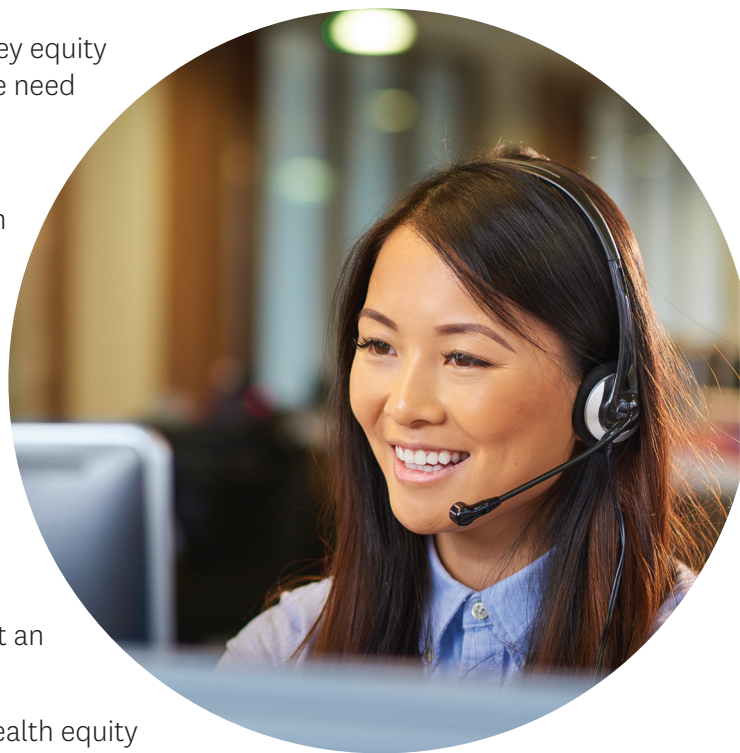
We also screen our individual members for social needs, through getting the information from providers and asking when we talk to our members on the phone. Then, we develop community and provider partnerships to best support our members.

In addition, **Health Net's Language Assistance Program (LAP) includes interpreters (in more than 250 languages), translation services and materials in alternate formats.**

Members get access to the services and programs as part of their coverage, whether they speak American Sign Language, Mandarin or K'iche'.

Doctors and specialists can also call Member Services to request an interpreter for Limited English Proficient members.

These are just a few of the ways in which Health Net increases health equity and improves the lives of Californians. We will continue to use new tools and channels to address disparities.



Spotlight: We prioritize and drive quality and innovation

Health Net collaborates with grant recipients, identifies successes and challenges providers. **As part of the pandemic response, Health Net awarded cash grants to 138 Medi-Cal providers across California, totaling \$13.4 million.** The grants enabled providers to continue offering patient screenings, routine check-ups, wellness checks, mental health services and more.

We use direct insights, compiled in a **report from Harder+Company**, to make sure we enhance access to care for the most vulnerable communities.

This means that a single parent with a part-time job or seasonal agricultural worker can talk to a doctor by video from their phone. Telehealth lets them minimize disruption or missed wages.

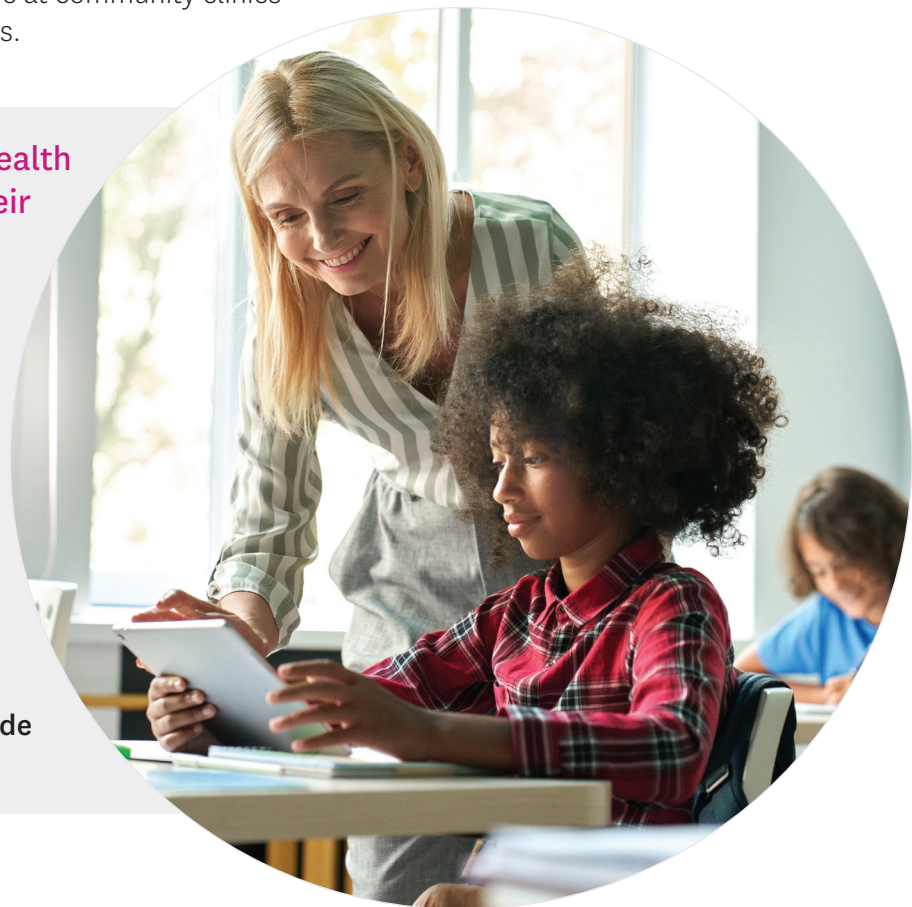
Even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, barriers in access to care made in-person appointments difficult. The pandemic increased the urgent need to provide safe access to medical care.

Our \$200,000 grant to the California Primary Care Association (CPCA) helped to improve workflows for virtual patient care at community clinics and train staff to use the right model to meet needs.

Health Net also partnered with Hazel Health through a \$3 million grant to expand their footprint in 200 more schools, to 330 total, in 10 California counties (Butte, Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, Stanislaus and Tulare).

Hazel Health offers students access to care by connecting the students directly with licensed medical professionals for on-demand services, at school or at home, which results in less time spent out of class.

We will continue to work on bridging the divide in access to digital care.



Spotlight: Invest in, and partner with, trusted voices in local communities

Health Net has roots in communities across the state. These roots run deep with community clinics, hospitals, local public health departments, homeless shelters, food banks and our education and justice systems.

About one-third of searches in 2022 (of 20,000+ programs, in 10 topic filters and more than 100 languages) through our online Community Connect portal (via findhelp) were for service food, medical, housing, transportation and utilities in Los Angeles County, followed by Sacramento, Fresno, San Diego and Kern counties.

Health Net expands many programs because of success in the pilot phase.

For example, Medi-Cal enrollees are more likely to experience food insecurity. That's why Health Net has launched innovative programs based on our expertise, which leverage local partnerships including:



Refrigerated Food Truck

Safe and effective delivery of perishable food throughout Kern County is a priority. With Health Net's support, the Community Action Partnership of Kern (CAPK) Food Bank purchased a refrigerated box truck for use throughout Kern County, including at farmers' markets, senior food distribution and commodity distributions.



Los Angeles: Food Pharmacy Pilot

Established a "food pharmacy" program with the Venice Family Clinic that treats food as medicine for patients with conditions linked to diet. We offered:

- Nutrition classes
- Cooking demonstrations
- Direct access to healthy foods



**CODE for
AMERICA**

CalFresh and Code for America

We worked with the nonprofit, Code for America, to create a quick link that allows members to directly access a shorter, simplified CalFresh application in English, Spanish and Chinese. This connects members with resources to obtain and maintain access to food, plus encourage the relationship amongst members, providers and the health plan.



Central Valley: Food Rx Program

Partnered with the Emergency Food Bank of Stockton. Together, we developed a Food Rx initiative to help Black and Latinx residents who suffer from higher rates of diabetes and high blood pressure. We offered:

- Blood pressure and diabetes screenings
- Nutrition education classes
- Weekly delivery of fruits and vegetables



Conclusion

These partnerships, investments and efforts demonstrate what we can do to improve access and outcomes. We will continue looking for ways to reach people and serve them in better ways. We dedicate ourselves every day to how we can impact in California communities – one person at a time. Now is the time to move forward together, and we will do that with our members and partners.

