MHLA PROVIDER BULLETIN #13
Specialty Care and eConsult

The purpose of this Provider Bulletin is to inform Community Partners (CP) about a new update in eConsult. As of November 30, 2022, eConsult will resume accepting specialty care referrals for individuals who are *age 50 and over and ineligible for Full-Scope Medi-Cal*. This group of older, uninsured, undocumented individuals who do not qualify for Full-Scope Medi-Cal will continue to have specialty care options available at Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (DHS) via eConsult.

BACKGROUND:
- On August 1, 2022, DHS disenrolled all MHLA participants age 50 and older due to their eligibility for Full-Scope Medi-Cal. DHS also programmed eConsult so it would not be able to accept eConsults from CPs for individuals 50 and older since most residents, age 50 and over would be eligible for Full-Scope Medi-Cal (whether they were enrolled or unenrolled). That is because, in part, eConsult cannot determine whether or not someone is eligible for Full-Scope Medi-Cal.
- There is a small percentage of individuals who are over 50 who do not qualify for Medi-Cal (e.g. over income requirements), who would benefit from specialty care access at DHS.
- Previously, DHS recommended that if a patient is uninsured, age 50 and over and does not qualify for Medi-Cal, the patient could be seen at one of our DHS urgent care facilities for specialty care. That was a temporary plan until DHS could implement a new process.

SUBMITTING eCONSULTS:
- eConsult will now resume accepting specialty care referrals for individuals who are *age 50 and over and ineligible for Full-Scope Medi-Cal*.
- For instructions on how to submit an eConsult for Medi-Cal ineligible individuals who are age 50 and over, please refer to the **Job Aid – SENDING eCONSULTS ON MEDI-CAL INELIGIBLE PATIENTS WHO ARE OVER 50 YEARS OLD** (see *Attachment* and available within the eConsult system).
- CPs must select a "Medi-Cal Ineligible Over 50" clinic.
    - When asked to select a clinic, look for the region of the originating clinic.
    - Select the corresponding Medi-Cal Ineligible clinic by region.
- It is critical that CPs select the correct region to route the eConsult to the proper specialist who will schedule the patient to a site geographically convenient to them. For agencies with more than one cluster, CPs will have to choose a cluster.
- Appointment locations are linked to the CP cluster. If the geographic location is inconvenient, the patient can inform the Specialty Care Linkage (SCL) line at scheduling. Be advised that some specialties cannot be cross-scheduled, e.g. surgical.

SERVICES:
- For a list of specialty services that are available in eConsult, please refer to **DHS Specialties Live in eConsult** listing available on the MHLA website**.**

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CP INSURANCE SCREENING/INAPPROPRIATE REFERRALS:
- ➢ CPs must screen individuals' insurance status before submitting referrals for Medi-Cal Ineligible Individuals, age 50 and over.
- ➢ Any individuals who are Medi-Cal eligible and those with Medi-Cal are not eligible for a referral through eConsult.
- ➢ **Do not send** these individuals through eConsult:
  - o Individuals with full-scope Medi-Cal
  - o Medi-Cal eligible individuals, even if they have not yet applied
  - o Individuals on Medi-Cal Managed Care
  - o Individuals on Medi-Cal Fee-For-Service
  - o Individuals with any other health insurance
- ➢ Individuals who are Medi-Cal eligible and sent through Medi-Cal Ineligible Clinics will not get an appointment at DHS (even if the specialist recommended a visit).
- ➢ If an appointment was made by error, the appointments will be **cancelled** when the DHS financial screening team determines that the person falls into one of the categories above. The individual may also be provided the option to switch to DHS for primary care, or connect with Patient Financial Services to assist patient to apply for coverage or eligible programs.
- ➢ Individuals who are Medi-Cal eligible and sent through Medi-Cal Ineligible Clinics will not get an appointment at DHS (even if the specialist recommended a visit).
- ➢ The eConsults that are part of this process will be periodically audited to be sure eConsults for only qualifying individuals are being submitted.

FOR THOSE 26 to 49:
- ➢ Do not submit eConsults for any individuals who are under 50 using the 'Medi-Cal Ineligible Clinics' process. For MHLA participants who are 26 - 49, CPs should continue to refer through the standard eConsult process using the CP's regular clinic name.
- ➢ DHS will continue to see MHLA participants and uninsured individuals aged 26-49.

URGENT/EMERGENT NEEDS:
- ➢ Individuals with emergent/urgent needs should not be referred to eConsult. Those individuals' health care needs should be addressed in whatever manner the treating provider deems appropriate. This may involve emergency services at the nearest facility.

ASSISTANCE:
- ➢ For eConsult system questions or issues, including account changes, please contact the Enterprise Help Desk at helpdesk@dhs.lacounty.gov or 323-409-8000.

The information in this Provider Bulletin may be further updated. Relevant information about this project is on the MHLA website.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Sothida Tan, MHLA Program Advocate at stan4@dhs.lacounty.gov.

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JOB AID – SENDING ECONSULTS ON MEDI-CAL INELIGIBLE PATIENTS WHO ARE OVER 50 YEARS OLD (CP)

On August 1, 2022, eConsults for patients over 50 years old could no longer be sent to DHS. The reason for this was most California residents over 50 years old would be eligible for Medi-Cal and would no longer be part of the MHLA program. However, there is a small percentage of patients who are over 50 who do not qualify for Medi-Cal, e.g., over income requirements, who still need specialty care from DHS.

Please note:
1) Do **not** send any **Medi-Cal or Medi-Cal eligible** patients to DHS using Medi-Cal **Ineligible** clinics. This includes:
   a. Non-DHS empaneled Medi-Cal Managed Care patients
   b. Medi-Cal Fee-for-service patients
   c. Non-DHS empaneled Medi-Cal Managed Care patients, Medi-Cal Fee-for-service patients and patients who are eligible for Medi-Cal but have not applied for Medi-Cal
2) Patients who are Medi-Cal eligible and sent through Medi-Cal **Ineligible** clinics will **not** get an appointment at DHS (even if the specialist recommended a visit)
3) Do **not** submit any patients who are under 50 using Medi-Cal **Ineligible** clinics.
4) All patients under 50 should be sent using the usual (sites, i.e., choosing the actual originating clinic name when submitting the eConsult.
5) eConsults submitted to Medi-Cal **Ineligible** clinics will be periodically audited to be sure only qualifying patients are being submitted.

How to submit an eConsult for a Medi-Cal ineligible patient who is over 50 years old:
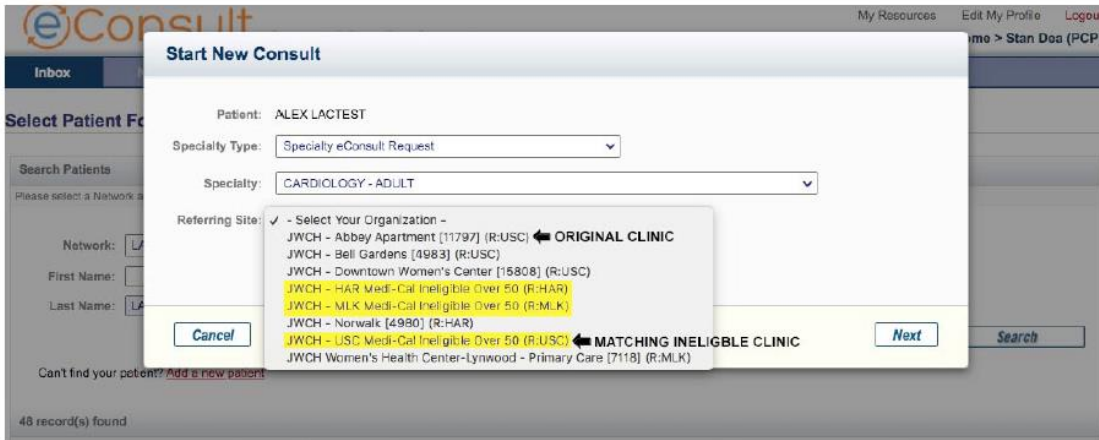
DHS has created **Medi-Cal Ineligible** clinics to be used only to submit eConsults for those patients over 50 who are not eligible for Medi-Cal.

1. Start the eConsult normally
2. When asked to choose a clinic, look for the region of the originating clinic. In the example below, we are using JWCH- Abbey Apartment as our originating clinic. At the end of the name is "(R:USC)". This means the region of that clinic is LAC-USC.

3. Choose the corresponding Medi-Cal Ineligible clinic (by region). The Medi-Cal Ineligible clinic will have the nomenclature:

   Agency – Region Medi-Cal Ineligible Over 50 (R:*REG*)

   In this example, we will choose:

   JWCH – USC Medi-Cal Ineligible Over 50 (R:USC)

   It is **critical** that you choose the matching region (in our example above, there are 3 different Medi-Cal Ineligible clinics for the regions HAR, MLK, and USC). Choosing the correct region will route the eConsult to the proper specialist and schedule the patient to a site geographically convenient to them.

4. If you choose a Medi-Cal Ineligible Over 50 clinic, the eConsult can be submitted for patients over 50.