

The CP Connection

The Community Partner Newsletter

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"A life without love is
like a year without
summer."

~Swedish Proverb

MHLA and Mental/Behavioral Health Services

Welcome to the June edition of *The CP Connection*.

This issue focuses on a very important topic: **mental health**. I think with the anxiety around immigration and child separations happening around us, it is important for us to focus on how our MHLA patients may have anxiety and fears that are manifesting in ways where access to mental health services might be helpful. Does MHLA offer mental health services to MHLA patients? Yes! Depending on the severity of the issue, sometimes the patient can get their care at their medical home. Sometimes the issue is more complex, in which case a referral to the Department of Mental Health (DMH) is needed. We need your help communicating to patients that they can get mental health services through MHLA.

We have been doing a lot of work around mental health (and substance abuse disorder treatment) with our community partners and advocates. The MHLA program launched a Behavioral Health Workgroup this year and we held our first meeting on February 15, 2018. We have met every month since then. This workgroup has had strong and engaged turnout from diverse stakeholders including CCALAC, DPH SAPC, DMH, Material and Child

Health Access, California Pan Ethnic Health Network, California Immigrant Policy Center, Advancing Justice-LA, and Community Health Councils. Together we have worked to better understand how MHLA patients can access behavioral health services at DMH and DPH/SAPC at various access points.

We updated our patient and clinic fact sheets on behavioral health (coming soon), revised our member handbook to be more "patient friendly" in our discussion of these types of services, and even developed MHLA's first clinic poster, which outlines in patient-appropriate language the availability of behavioral health services at MHLA (also coming soon). We also learned how DMH Access Phone Line staff handle calls from patients in need of behavioral health care. It has really opened my eyes to how we need to do a better job communicating that we can provide mental and behavioral health to our patients enrolled in MHLA. To this end, this week's article provides good information about behavioral health resources for MHLA participants.

Have a great start to summer. - Amy Luftig Viste

Mental Health Services in MHLA

We all want our MHLA participants to have a healthy state of mind, now more than ever. And within the MHLA program, mental health services are provided either at the medical home clinic or at the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH), depending on what the MHLA participant needs or requires.

Assessing the participants for any of the following can be helpful to identify potential mental health issues:

- ◇ Feeling sad for a long time;
- ◇ Very high and low feelings;
- ◇ Been hearing voices or strange sounds;
- ◇ Very strong fears, worries and anxieties;
- ◇ Suicidal thoughts;
- ◇ Very strong feelings of anger, or finding it hard to handle daily problems and activities.



DMH is available if the patient needs more complex mental health resources than what can be provided at the clinic. We want

to make sure the MHLA population has access to all available services when needed and/or requested.

What Mental Health Services can Participants receive?

The following mental health services are available to the MHLA participants:

- Individual and Group Therapy
- Family Therapy (children services)
- Medications
- Case Management
- Parenting Education (children services)
- Intensive Mental Health Services

Note that DMH works with many contracted mental health clinics who may also be able to help.

Accessing Mental Health Services

There are **three** ways participants can access mental health services in the MHLA program:

1. Participants can talk with you, the Medical Home Clinic staff and ask if mental health services are available on-site.
2. Participants can call the Department of Mental Health Access Center directly at **1-800-854-7771**, or visit the DMH website at **dmh.lacounty.gov/**.
3. Medical Home Clinic staff can give the participant a referral to a DMH clinic near them.

The Mental Health Access Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If the Access Center refers a patient to a DMH clinic for care, the patient should be seen within fifteen days. This is true for uninsured/ MHLA patients. Please call the Access Center if your patient is having problems getting care at DMH.

A Note on MHLA Renewals

Please communicate to your MHLA patients that enrollments and renewals are to be completed at a Community Partner enrollments site. Recently, prospective enrollees and participants have shown up in person at the MHLA Program Office looking to be screened for reenrollment. We have to refer them back to their medical home enrollment sites.

Check out the MHLA Website!

The MHLA program is always adding new and updated content to the website. We invite you to check it out. From the program participants section to the clinic log-in area, this up-to-date information is available to help you find the information you need.

In the sign-in section “For DHS and Community Partners” (log-in username: **mhlacpp** and password: **Lacounty1**), we’ve added eConsult information in the Specialty Referrals tab and in the DHS and MHLA General Info tab we uploaded the most updated CP contact list for the DHS Patient Linkage Process. You can check the roster to make sure we have the correct person listed for your CP clinic site. And a form to request a contact revision is also available.

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