

# MHLA PROVIDER BULLETIN #16

## Specialty Care and eConsult Post-MHLA

Revised February 6, 2024



As a result of Medi-Cal expansion for all age groups, the MHLA program ended on January 31, 2024, and all participants were disenrolled from the program. The purpose of this provider bulletin is to inform Community Partners (CP) about specialty care and eConsult after the My Health LA (MHLA) program sunsets. Beginning January 1, 2024, a new law in California allowed eligible adults ages 26 through 49 to apply for Full-Scope Medi-Cal, ensuring all age groups can qualify, regardless of immigration status.

After MHLA sunsets, there may still be individuals who are ineligible for Full-Scope Medi-Cal and remain uninsured. DHS will continue to provide specialty care for eligible uninsured individuals and will still make eConsult available to CPs for this purpose. ***Beginning February 1, 2024, and until August 31, 2024, DHS will make eConsult available to CPs at no cost for individuals who are ineligible for Full-Scope Medi-Cal and uninsured. Please note: a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DHS and a signed Business Associate Agreement (BAA) with Safety Net Connect will be required to access eConsult after the MHLA program ends.***

### **BACKGROUND:**

- The MHLA program will cease to operate on January 31, 2024.
- There may be a small percentage of program participants who will not qualify for Medi-Cal, (e.g. over 138% of the Federal Poverty Level).
- DHS recognizes that there may be some individuals eligible for Medi-Cal but who remain apprehensive about Public Charge. Please read [here](#) for more information about Public Charge and the Medi-Cal expansion.
- Under the MHLA program, DHS contracts directly with Safety Net Connect, a third-party developer and vendor for eConsult. All MHLA CP clinic site user fees and associated costs for access and utilization of eConsult are currently covered by DHS.

### **AFTER MHLA ENDS:**

- After the sunset of MHLA, specialty care for those who are **Medi-Cal ineligible and uninsured** will still be available through eConsult until August 31, 2024.
- The DHS agreement with Safety Net Connect will continue until August 31, 2024.
- The use of eConsult will require CPs to have:
  - a direct MOU with DHS and
  - a direct Business Associate Agreement, for data sharing protocols, with Safety Net Connect.
  - Both documents must be signed before CPs can access eConsult between February 1, 2024 – August 31, 2024.
- DHS will continue to cover eConsult system fees through August 31, 2024.

### **AFTER August 31, 2024:**

- Further information will be shared out with CPs when more details are available.

**SUBMITTING eCONSULTS:**

- Beginning February 1, 2024, CPs should submit eConsults for individuals who are both ***ineligible for Full-Scope Medi-Cal and uninsured.***
- CPs will submit eConsults through your agency’s original orgs.
- Patients should be advised that anyone coming to DHS will be financially screened for eligibility and payor source. Details about financial resources can be found on the [DHS website](#). Patients may have to pay for a portion of their care, depending on their income and eligibility for County’s low-cost assistance programs.

**SERVICES:**

- For a list of specialty services that are available in eConsult, please refer to [DHS Specialties Live in eConsult](#).

**SCHEDULING:**

- Appointment locations are linked to the CP cluster. If the geographic location is inconvenient, the patient can inform Specialty Care Linkage at scheduling.
- Some specialties cannot be cross-scheduled, e.g. surgical.

**FINANCIAL and MEDI-CAL SCREENING Starting February 1, 2024:**

- CPs must check for patients’ insurance status before submitting eConsults for Medi-Cal ineligible individuals.
- Any individuals who are determined to qualify for Medi-Cal may have their appointment cancelled.
- If individuals are in a transition period for assignment to their Medi-Cal Managed Care plan (MCP), it is unlikely an eConsult will result in a DHS specialty care visit for the patient.
- Referred individuals to DHS will be financially screened at every service delivery point. For individuals over 138% of the FPL, DHS will determine what County No Cost/Low-Cost Programs, (e.g. Ability to Pay, Discounted Payments) are appropriate.
- Patients may be given the option to switch to a DHS primary care provider, where capacity exists, to continue to receive their services at DHS.

**SPECIALTY VISIT SCHEDULING:**

<b>Insurance Status</b>	<b>Starting February 1, 2024</b>
Uninsured and Medi-Cal Eligible	May have their appointment cancelled. If Medi-Cal eligible, patients may be given the option to switch to DHS for primary/specialty, referred for Medi-Cal enrollment.
Medi-Cal FFS	Will be scheduled for the visit. <b>Note: DHS recommends CPs review urgency of eConsults and look toward establishing care in MCP network.</b>
Full Scope Medi-Cal and Enrolled in a Non-DHS MCP	DHS will either: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Encourage them to establish care in their new plan network and cancel the visit or</li><li>2. Offer them the opportunity to switch to DHS for primary care so they can get both primary care and specialty care together at DHS and schedule the visit.</li></ol> The patient or PCP may submit a Continuity of Care (COC) to the health plan to maintain specialty care at DHS.

Medi-Cal Ineligible/Over 138% FPL	Will be scheduled for the visit and screened by DHS Financial Services to determine what County No Cost/Low-Cost Programs, (e.g. Ability to Pay, Discounted Payments) are appropriate.
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**ASSISTANCE:**

- After the MHLA program sunsets on January 31, 2024, there will be no MHLA staff to facilitate between CPs and eConsult. The monthly Specialty Care Referrals meeting also will not continue.
- For all eConsult system questions or issues, please contact the Enterprise Help Desk at [helpdesk@dhs.lacounty.gov](mailto:helpdesk@dhs.lacounty.gov) and include in the subject line, "Attn: eConsult." Provide as many details as possible, including an eConsult # regarding your inquiry. CPs can also call EHD directly at (323) 409-8000.
- For central scheduling updates or support, CPs can reach out to the Specialty Care Linkage (SCL) department at [SCLInquiry@dhs.lacounty.gov](mailto:SCLInquiry@dhs.lacounty.gov). Again, please provide as many details as possible, including eConsult # and patient information.
- To set-up a new eConsult user account, only agency OrgAdmins can submit a request for the CP Provider. eConsult will no longer use the MHLA Master Provider Database (MPD) to verify a Provider's status. OrgAdmins can submit a new user account through the access request section in eConsult.
- Please note that the eConsult team via the Help Desk may need to contact you for additional information or clarification regarding your request(s) and as such a response from you will be required. If no response is received, your request will be closed without further action.
- Also note that any direct facility radiology phone numbers listed on the MHLA website may change. As the MHLA website will no longer be updated, the new/current phone numbers may not be reflected.

If you have any questions, please contact MHLA Senior Program Manager Philip Barragan at [pbarragan@dhs.lacounty.gov](mailto:pbarragan@dhs.lacounty.gov) through March 15, 2024.