

Addressing the Health Care Workforce Shortage in California

Health Net understands improved health outcomes begin with access to quality care providers. To continue fulfilling our mission amid California and the nation's growing health care workforce gap, Health Net is committed to developing solutions that break down barriers to care.

Workforce shortages are a multi-faceted national challenge

The national health care workforce shortage is having a major impact in California and across the United States.¹



A national shortage of up to **122,000** physicians is projected by 2032, as demand continues to outpace supply.²

- Primary care estimates: **21,100–55,200**
- Specialty care estimates: **24,800–65,800**



Shortages are projected to worsen in California as fewer doctors enter into primary care and many practicing physicians will soon retire.¹



The shortage extends beyond physicians to a range of health care professionals, including home lab technicians and community health workers that are expected to be in increasingly high demand in the state and across the U.S.

The shortage negatively impacts Medi-Cal and its patients

For California's Medi-Cal system the provider shortage has a particularly strong impact as the number of physicians who accept Medi-Cal patients has not kept pace with the program's rapid expansion over the past 10 years.



In 2013, there were **59 full-time primary care doctors** per 100,000 Medi-Cal patients – by 2015, the ratio had dropped to **39 doctors** per 100,000 patients, a 33% drop.³



Today, both primary and non-primary physicians per 100,000 enrollees fall well **below** state and national recommendations.⁴

(continued)

Health Net's Solutions to Address Shortages

Health Net is working to address California's health care workforce challenges by deploying a variety of solutions to overcome shortages and limit their impact on Medi-Cal.

We invest in California's health care training and recruitment

Health Net takes a unique and holistic approach to support the training and retention of a wide range of physicians and allied health professionals. From 2017–2019 Health Net invested millions to support health care workforce development programs statewide:

St. John's Well Child & Family Center (Los Angeles):

Improved the training and retention of behavioral health staff to further strengthen the integration of medical care and behavioral health services.

Charles Drew University (Los Angeles):

Supported the development of a psychiatry telehealth curriculum to address the shortage of psychiatrists in South L.A. and increase access to specialty psychiatry services for patients and health centers.

AltaMed Health Services (Los Angeles):

Created a pipeline to train and recruit nurse practitioners at AltaMed and at traditionally underserved locations, thus adding staff at local clinics.

Valley Health Team (Central Valley):

Supported the family medical residency program to enhance access to primary care providers in the region.

Sacramento City College/Los Rios Foundation (Sacramento):

Partnered with local organizations to launch a program to train a new pool of community health workers.

We support and retain providers

Health Net develops new incentives and conducts outreach to expand its network of Medi-Cal specialty and primary care providers. The company:



Leverages its national scale to offer competitive rates:

Able to incentivize providers with some of the most competitive rates in Medi-Cal.



Offers performance-based compensation to partners:

Using performance-based compensation with provider partners – driving efficiency and quality of care.



Funds recruitment programs to enhance clinic availability:

Funding specific initiatives to recruit clinicians at current provider locations to enhance availability.



Augments networks with providers from surrounding regions:

Supplementing network with providers adjacent to or surrounding remote and rural regions.



Invests in provider support and education:

Investing in resources to educate and support existing providers, including regular webinars and toolkits to help ensure timely access for Medi-Cal patients.



Creates onboarding programs:

Integrating and preparing new employees to succeed at their job, and to become fully engaged, productive members of the health care organization.



Provides career ladders:

Supporting the progression from entry-level to higher level positions by increasing skills and responsibilities of health professionals.

¹<https://calmatters.org/projects/californias-worsening-physician-shortage-doctors/>

²www.aamc.org/news-insights/press-releases/new-findings-confirm-predictions-physician-shortage

³www.calhealthreport.org/2018/09/17/california-grapples-growing-physician-shortage-low-income-patients/

⁴www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-ca-california-doctor-shortage-medical-debt-20190716-story.html