

Setting the Standard in Health Care Excellence

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February 6, 2024

Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California 93009

SUBJECT:

Approval of, and Authorization for the Health Care Agency (HCA) Director or Designee to Sign, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ventura County Medi-Cal Managed Care Commission, Doing Business as Gold Coast Health Plan (Gold Coast), for Health Plan Navigator Services, Effective January 1, 2024; Ratification of HCA's Authorization for Gold Coast to Provide Services Under the Terms of the MOU in Anticipation of your Board's Approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) That your Board approve, and authorize the Health Care Agency (HCA) Director or designee to sign, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Ventura County Medi-Cal Managed Care Commission, doing business as Gold Coast Health Plan (Gold Coast), for health plan navigator services, effective January 1, 2024;
- (2) That your Board ratify HCA's authorization for Gold Coast to provide services under the terms of the MOU in anticipation of your Board's approval;
- (3) The your Board delegate to the HCA Director authority to approve and execute further amendments and exhibits to this MOU that increase or adjust details regarding the placements of Gold Coast staff, with approval as to form by County Counsel.

REASON FOR RATIFICATION:

HCA authorized Gold Coast to provide health plan navigator services beginning January 1, 2024, as outlined in the MOU, in anticipation of your Board's approval.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact with this item.

STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY:

The item presented in this Board letter supports the Healthy, Safe, and Resilient Communities strategic priority of the County Strategic Plan as it is designed to meet the goal of providing access to quality healthcare required for our community to thrive.

DISCUSSION:

Under the proposed MOU, Gold Coast will provide community health navigators and clinicians at Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) and County clinics; the MOU can also serve as the “Master Agreement” for placement of Gold Coast staff at County facilities in other roles.

At VCMC, a Gold Coast community health navigator will work in the Emergency Department (ED) to provide guidance for patients being discharged with a primary mental health diagnosis. Two new Quality Incentive Program (QIP) measures this year will track VCMC’s rates of 7-day and 30-day follow up appointment compliance for patients discharged with these diagnoses. To help reach these vulnerable members of our patient population, Gold Coast will provide a full-time community health navigator who will be notified when a patient presents to the ED at either campus with a primary mental health condition. The navigator will see the patient in person if at VCMC or by phone (if at Santa Paula Hospital) to provide mental health resources for follow up upon discharge. After this initial meeting, if the patient is a Gold Coast member, the navigator will assist the patient to meet with a behavioral health clinician immediately post discharge in person (VCMC) or by phone (SPH). Facilitation of these encounters by the Gold Coast staff will provide an invaluable service to the patients and improve VCMC’s performance in the QIP program.

In the clinics, community health navigators will assist ambulatory clinics, the call center and the quality team in contacting patients to schedule preventive services appointments and assist patients with management of their chronic diseases. The QIP ties more than \$50 million in funding to improving utilization rates of services such as cervical cancer screening, well child visits, and childhood vaccines. In addition, Gold Coast’s Quality Incentive Pool and Program (QIPP) ties close to an additional \$7.5 million to helping patients obtain these services. Community health navigators will contact patients using telephone, text message, and traditional mail to invite them into the ambulatory clinics to complete and obtain these recommended preventive services, using the patient’s preferred language. This work will occur under the direction of the Ambulatory Care quality improvement team. The addition of Gold Coast’s navigators will support achievement of QIP metrics, QIPP metrics, and ensure that patients obtain needed services.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, County Counsel and Auditor-Controller's Office, If you have any questions regarding this item, please contact John Polich, HCA Deputy Director for Government and Regulatory Affairs, at (805) 677-5140.

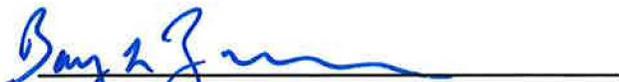

Barry L. Zimmerman
Health Care Agency Director

Exhibit 1 – Gold Coast Health Plan – Memorandum of Understanding