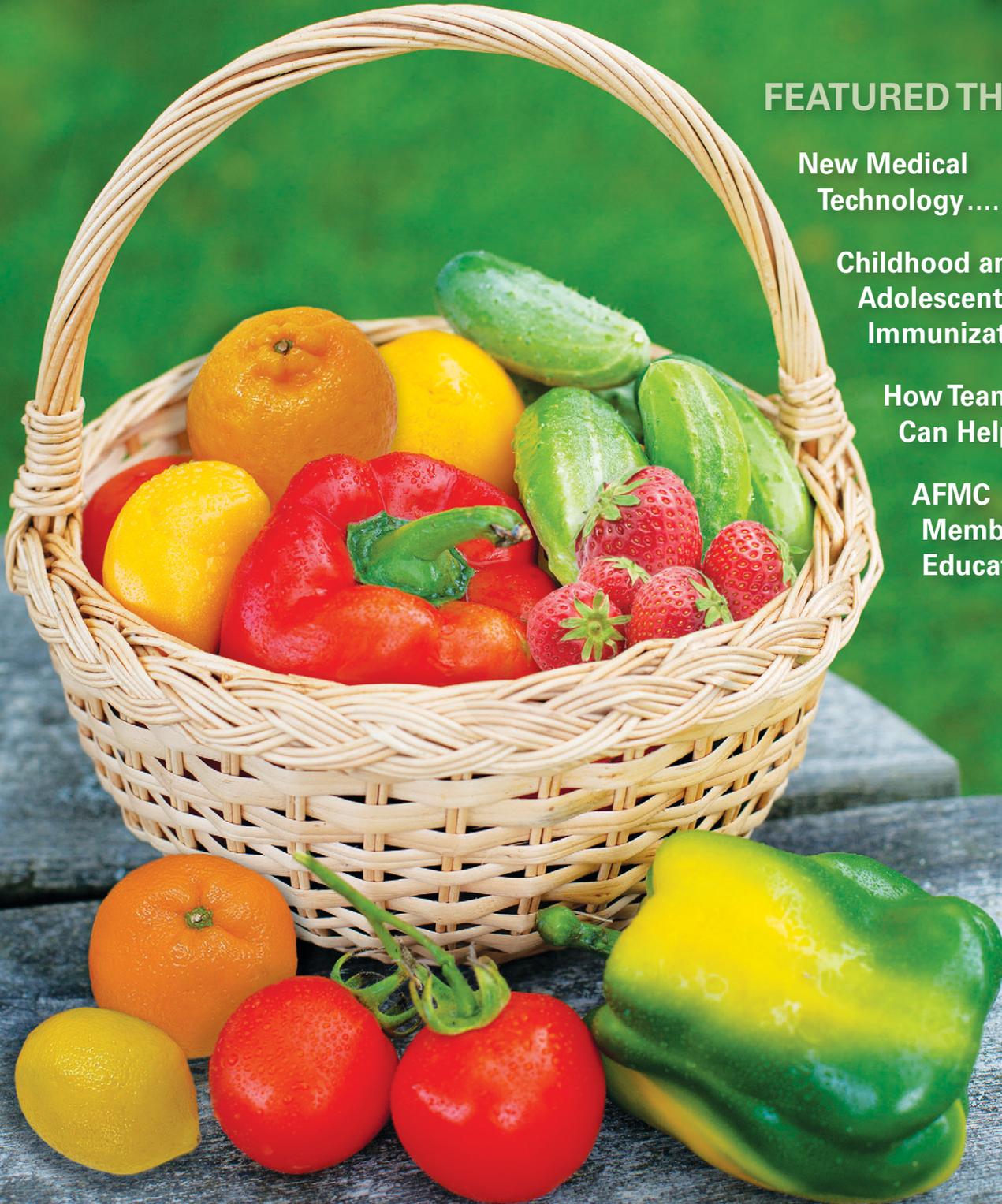




VENTURA COUNTY  
HEALTH CARE PLAN

# MEMBER NEWSLETTER

SPRING ISSUE • MARCH 2016



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**VENTURA COUNTY  
HEALTH CARE PLAN**  
SPRING ISSUE • MARCH 2016

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Ventura County Health Care Plan**

Regular Business Hours are:

Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- [www.vchealthcareplan.org](http://www.vchealthcareplan.org)
- Phone: (805) 981-5050
- Toll-free: (800) 600-8247
- FAX: (805) 981-5051
- Language Line Services:  
Phone: (805) 981-5050  
Toll-free:(800) 600-8247
- TDD to Voice: (800) 735-2929
- Voice to TDD: (800) 735-2922
- Pharmacy Help: (800) 811-0293 or  
[www.express-scripts.com](http://www.express-scripts.com)
- Behavioral Health/Life Strategies:  
(24 hour assistance)  
(800) 851-7407  
[www.liveandworkwell.com](http://www.liveandworkwell.com)

**VCHCP Utilization Management Staff**

Regular Business Hours are:

Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- (805) 981-5060



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# Patient Emergency & Provider After Hours Contact

## Ventura County Medical Center Emergency Room

3291 Loma Vista Road,  
Ventura, CA 93003

**(805) 652-6165** or **(805) 652-6000**

## Santa Paula Hospital

A CAMPUS OF VENTURA COUNTY MEDICAL CENTER  
825 N 10<sup>th</sup> St.

Santa Paula, CA 93060

**(805) 933-8632** or **(805) 933-8600**

## Ventura County Health Care Plan

on call Administrator available  
24 hours per day for  
Emergency Providers

**(805) 981-5050** or **(800) 600-8247**

## THE NURSE ADVICE LINE



THE NURSE ADVICE LINE IS AVAILABLE AT:

**1-800-334-9023**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for Member questions regarding their medical status, about the health plan processes, or just general medical information.

THERE IS ALSO A LINK ON THE MEMBER WEBSITE:

[www.vchealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx](http://www.vchealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx) that will take Members to a secured email where they may send an email directly to the advice line. The nurse advice line will respond within 24 hours.

To speak with VCHCP UM Staff, please call

The Ventura County Health Care Plan at the numbers below:

**QUESTIONS? CONTACT US: MONDAY - FRIDAY, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

Phone: **(805) 981-5060** or toll-free **(800) 600-8247**, FAX **(805) 981-5051**

TDD to Voice: **(800) 735-2929** Voice to TDD: **(800) 735-2922**

Ventura County Health Care Plan 24-hour Administrator access for emergency providers:

**(805) 981-5050** or **(800) 600-8247**

Language Assistance - Language Line Services: Phone **(805) 981-5050** or toll-free **(800) 600-8247**

## Sign Up for the 2016 VCHCP Wellness Program

### CHECK OUT THESE GREAT PORTAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES!

- Wellness Workshops
- Health Trackers: Food Log, Steps Log, Exercise Log, Weight Log, etc.
- Health Education Library
- Get Answers!
- Message a Certified Personal Trainer
- Message a Registered Dietitian
- And Much More!

Are you new to the VCHCP Wellness Program?

Visit [vchcp.cernerwellness.com](http://vchcp.cernerwellness.com) to sign up today!

ENROLL IN THE  
HEALTHY HEART  
Exercise Challenge!  
*(now in progress)*



# New Medical Technology

**D**id you know that VCHCP has a policy in place to evaluate any new technology or new applications of existing technology on a case by case basis?

There are four categories we look at – medical procedures, behavioral health procedures, pharmaceuticals (medications) and medical devices.

VCHCP's Medical Director, or designee, evaluates new technology that has been approved by the appropriate regulatory body, such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Scientific evidence from many sources, specialists with expertise related to the technology and outside consultants when applicable are used for the evaluation. The technology must demonstrate improvement in health outcomes or health risks, the benefit must outweigh any potential harm and it must be as beneficial as any established alternative. The technology must also be generally accepted as safe and effective by the medical community and not investigational.

For help with new medication evaluations, the Plan looks to our Pharmacy Benefit Manager, Express Scripts, for their expertise. For new behavioral health procedures, the Plan uses evaluations done by our Behavioral Health delegate, OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions of California (also known as Life Strategies).

Once new technology is evaluated by the Plan, the appropriate VCHCP committee reviews and discusses the evaluation and makes a final decision on whether to approve or deny the new technology. This final decision may also determine if any new technology is appropriate for inclusion in the plan's benefit package in the future.

**For any questions, please contact the VCHCP Utilization Management Department at (805) 981-5060.**



## How Often Should You See Your Primary Care Physician?

Your Primary Care Provider (PCP) is responsible for treating you when you are sick or injured, and at times the coordinator of referrals to specialists and other services. Some members rarely see their PCP, which can make care difficult, especially in an emergent situation. Children and Adults should be seen by their PCP at least yearly (more frequently for children under 2 years of age). Preventive Health Visits, or Check-ups should occur regularly to have appropriate preventive screenings, immunizations, and an overall review of your health. This is an important visit to discuss health concerns or even health goals. Staying in contact with your PCP by having annual check-ups can help with establishing a good relationship with your PCP. This relationship can make times of illness or injury run smoother and give you peace of mind for the care you receive.

If you haven't had a checkup in the last year, please call your PCP today to make an appointment. If you need assistance or have questions, please call Member Services at (805) 981-5050.





EXPRESS SCRIPTS®



## PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

The Ventura County Health Care Plan provides pharmacy coverage through Express Scripts. Members have the ability to create an online Express Scripts profile account at <https://www.express-scripts.com/>. Members have access to the following services and information once their profile is established.

- Manage Prescriptions – Refill/Renew
- Determine Financial Responsibility for a Drug
- View Recent Orders & Status
- View Prescription History – Ability to Search by RX Number
- View Health and Benefit Information
- View Account Information
- Find the location of an in-network Pharmacy – Ability to Search by Zip-code

If you have any questions or need to reach an Express Scripts Representative, please call (800) 811-0293.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Annual vision check exams are covered when provided by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist. You can submit a Reimbursement Claim Form to VCHCP with a copy of the bill and receipt and you'll be reimbursed for your copay up to \$50.00. It's easy...the only thing you need to be aware of is you only have 180 days after the date of service to submit the request. Failure to submit within the timeframe will result in a denial for reimbursement.



## Pharmacy Updates

The following is a list of additions and deletions for the Ventura County Health Care Plan's formulary recently approved by the Plan's Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee. Additional information regarding the High Performance Formulary is available thru Express Scripts and thru the Plan's Member Website: <http://www.vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/countyEmployees.aspx>

### Recently Approved Drug Policy

Harvoni

### Recently Updated Drug Policy

Afinitor (Policy updated to include off label use)

### Nonpreferred to Preferred 2016

CETROTIDE  
CRINONE  
ESTRACE CREAM  
FARXIGA  
GLYXAMBI  
STRIVERDI RESPIMAT  
SUBOXONE SUBLINGUAL FILM  
TANZEUM  
XIGDUO XR

### Preferred to Nonpreferred 2016

ENDOMETRIN  
FORTEO  
GANIRELIX ACETATE  
INVOKAMET  
INVOKANA  
NAMENDA XR  
OLYSIO  
VAGIFEM

### Additions: 4Q-2015 New Brand/Chemicals

ADCETRIS  
BILTICIDE  
COAGADEX  
DAKLINZA  
EPIPEN/JR  
GLEOSTINE  
GRANIX

KYPROLIS  
LONSURF  
NUCALA  
ONIVYDE  
PRALUENT  
REPATHA  
STRENSIQ  
STRIVERDI RESPIMAT  
TECHNIVIE  
YERVOY  
YONDELIS  
ZARXIO

### Deletions 3Q-2015 Formulary Deletions

AUVI-Q\*  
NAMENDA Solution\*\*  
Zyvox 100 mg/5 ML  
SUSPENSION\*\*

*For questions or concerns, please call Ventura County Health Care Plan at (805) 981-5050 or (800) 600-8247, or if you would like a copy mailed to your home address please call Member Services at (805) 981-5050 or toll free (800) 600-8247. You may also contact Express Scripts directly at (800) 811-0293.*

Note: The Plan's Drug Policies, updated Step Therapy and Drug Quantity Limits can also be accessed at: <http://www.vhealthcareplan.org/members/programs/countyEmployees.aspx>

\*Market wide recall with no estimated availability timeframe.  
\*\*Generics available-Multisource Brand Deletion

# Be a Quitter!



How many times have you tried to quit smoking or using tobacco? Is it more than once? If so, you are not alone! Studies show it takes a tobacco user on average 6-10 serious attempts before they quit for good. Each time a tobacco user attempts to quit, they learn more about themselves and the quitting process. On the bright side, there are currently more former smokers than current smokers, proof that you, too, can be a quitter!

**N**icotine withdrawal can make quitting difficult, but there are tools to help increase your ability to succeed:

- Set a quit date and use a quit plan that works best for you
- Use resources and appropriate medication to cope with nicotine withdrawal
- Stay positive, reminding yourself why you want to stay quit

Speak with your primary care provider about programs and medications available to help you quit. Support programs can increase your chances for success.

## Resources available:

- California Smoker's Helpline 1-800-No-Butts
- Ventura County Public Health Services Tobacco Education & Control Program (Call it Quits Phone-line) (805) 652-3377 or (805) 201-STOP. <http://vchealthcareplan.org/members/docs/healthEducation/TobaccoFree.pdf>
- Becomeanex.org (Interactive quit plan)
- Smokefree.gov

From the first day you quit, your body starts to heal itself. Every day you do not use tobacco, you are improving your health. Start working on your plan for a healthier you today!

If you have questions about coverage, please call Member Services at

**(805) 981-5050**

(Source [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov))



# Diabetes Roadmap Sessions

The Ventura County Health Care Plan (VCHCP) provides a great learning opportunity for members with diabetes. The Diabetes Roadmap Sessions are collaborative group discussions lead by a nurse facilitator. The goals of these sessions are to provide support and knowledge to help achieve a healthier life and prevent complications of diabetes. The next sessions will be Tuesday evenings - April 5, 12, 19, 26, 6pm-8pm. All Roadmap Sessions are held at VCHCP at 2220 E. Gonzales Rd. Suite 210B, Oxnard. For more information on session dates or to register, please call (805) 981-5060 and ask to speak with the Wellness and Prevention Program Administrator. Registration is also available through the events calendar at <https://vchcp.cernerwellness.com>. Hope to see you there!

Just a friendly reminder...

**COPAY'S ARE NOT AN OPTION**

and are due at the time of your appointment.

## FAQ's FOR MEMBERS ABOUT SPECIALTY MEDICATIONS

### What is a "Specialty Medication"?

Specialty Medications are high-cost medications, regardless of how they are administered (injectable, oral, transdermal, or inhalant), and are often used to treat complex clinical conditions that require close management by a physician due to their potential side effects and the need for frequent dosage adjustments.

### What if my Doctor prescribes a "Specialty Medication" for me?

Most "Specialty Medications" require prior authorization from the plan. Your doctor will need to complete a Prescription Drug Prior Authorization Request form and submit it to the Health Plan for approval.

### How do I know if my medication is a "Specialty Medication"?

Contact Accredo at (866) 848-9870. Accredo is Express Scripts specialty pharmacy provider.

### How much will my specialty medication cost?

You can look up your out-of-pocket cost for any medication (whether specialty or not) by going to the Express Scripts website at [www.express-scripts.com](http://www.express-scripts.com) and creating an online account. Or you can call Express Scripts directly at (800) 811-0293 to find out your out-of-pocket cost for a particular medication or for help logging into their website.

### How do I get my specialty medication?

Once the Health Plan approves your doctor's Treatment Authorization Request, Accredo (Express Script's specialty pharmacy provider) verifies the approval and contacts the patient to coordinate shipment of the medication to the patient's address within 24 to 48 hours. Accredo will also provide any equipment necessary for you to take your medication. You can call Accredo directly with any questions at (866) 848-9870.

### What if I need to start taking my medicine right away?

If your doctor determines that it is medically necessary for you to begin taking the medication right away, he/she can write a prescription for a 1 time 30 day supply to be filled at a local pharmacy upon approval by the Plan.

### What if my medication hasn't arrived yet?

If you are concerned about the amount of time it is taking for your medication to be shipped to you, or if you have any other questions or concerns, please call the Plan's Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050 or toll free at (800) 600-8247 Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.

*For more information about the Plan's Specialty Medication policies or Prescription Medication Benefit Program please see the Plan's website at [www.vhealthcareplan.org](http://www.vhealthcareplan.org) or call the Plan's Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050 or toll free at (800) 600-8247 between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm Monday-Friday.*

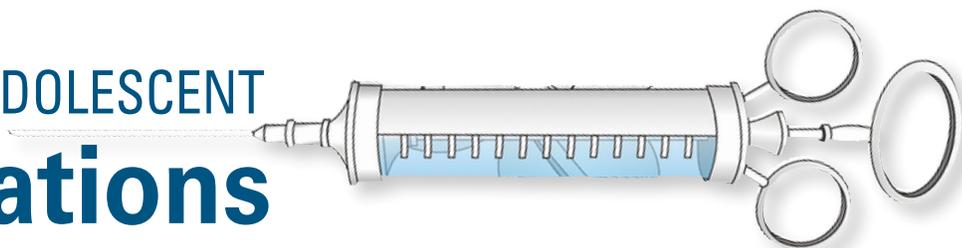
# FOLLOW-UP FOR Depression

Depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest.

ALSO CALLED MAJOR DEPRESSION, major depressive disorder or clinical depression, it affects how you feel, think and behave and can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems. You may have trouble doing normal day-to-day activities, and depression may make you feel as if life isn't worth living. More than just a bout of the blues, depression isn't a weakness, nor is it something that you can simply "snap out" of. Depression may require long-term treatment, but don't get discouraged. Most people with depression feel better with medication, psychological counseling or both. Other treatments may also help. Regular follow-up with your Primary Care Provider (PCP) and Behavior Health Provider after starting medications to treat depression is crucial in finding the right treatment medication, dosing and length of time to be on medications. It is also very important to discuss with your physician before stopping any antidepressant medications. If you have any questions, discuss them with your PCP or Behavior Health Provider.

For additional resources, visit: [www.liveandworkwell.com](http://www.liveandworkwell.com)

## CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENT Immunizations



Immunizations help to protect our children from life-threatening illnesses. Immunizing our children also helps to protect people who cannot receive them, such as the very old, people with vaccine allergies, and people with weakened immune systems.

In order for these very important immunizations to be most effective, they must be given within certain timeframes.

Between birth and the child's second birthday they should receive immunizations for: Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis (DTaP), Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR), Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (HiB), Hepatitis B, Varicella (chicken pox), Pneumococcal, Hepatitis A, Rotavirus, and Influenza.

Adolescents should receive immunizations for: Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap) between their 10th and 13th birthday.

They should also receive immunization for Meningococcal (Meningitis) between the 11th and 13th birthday.

Lastly, Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a virus found to cause cancer including cervical and oral cancers. By having your child immunized within this specific timeframe, they are less likely to contract HPV. The HPV vaccine should be given in 3 doses between the adolescents' 9th and 13th birthdays.

If you have found that your child may have missing immunizations, speak with your child's doctor regarding a catch up schedule. If you have any questions regarding appropriate or needed immunizations for your child or adolescent, contact your PCP. You can also visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/> for the Center for Disease Control and Prevention vaccine schedules.

# How Teamwork Can Help You

**Y**our brain is part of the rest of your body. If you are seeing a mental health specialist and your mental health specialist and medical doctor (Primary Care Physician or PCP) talk, you get better treatment. The way to make this possible is to sign a Confidential Exchange of Information Form and Authorization for Release of Information Form for each one of your providers. If you are seeing a mental health specialist, inform them how to contact your PCP and other healthcare providers. Also your PCP will want to know that you are seeing a mental health specialist.

Some reasons why working together is important:

- You may be getting medicines from your psychiatrist as well as your PCP.
- Some medicines do not work well together.
- Your doctors need to know all the medicines, including non-prescription medicines you are taking.
- Medical problems can cause mental health problems.
- Mental health problems can cause medical problems.

You can find the OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions of California Confidential Exchange of Information Form and Release of Information Form on [www.liveandworkwell.com](http://www.liveandworkwell.com) and also available at [www.vhealthcareplan.org](http://www.vhealthcareplan.org) (click the "Forms" link at the top of any page when logged in). The information your healthcare providers share is private to the fullest extent permitted by law. Your PCP may decide to use their own Release of Information form. If so, make sure it includes the ability to exchange mental health information.

List the names of all your healthcare providers. Share this list with each person you listed and ask them to work together. If you are seeing a PCP, be sure that your PCP is collaborating care with any of your other treating providers including a mental health specialist. Communication is the key for your overall health care.



## Continuity and Coordination of Care

The Ventura County Health Care Plan would like all members to experience continuous caring relationships with their health care provider(s). Continuity of care is important to ensure all medical and mental health needs of each member are being met. When providers and practitioners communicate regarding mutual members care the member receives the best quality of care with a decreased opportunity for error, duplication and/or omission of needed services.

Members can assist providers with their own coordination and continuity of care by:

- Ask specialists to send your PCP the consultation result/report for each visit
- If you have to visit the emergency room or urgent care, follow up with your PCP to discuss the need/outcome of the visit
- If you see a mental or behavioral health specialist, sign the Release of Information form to allow communication between your mental or behavioral health specialist and PCP
- If you are having difficulty getting an appointment with your PCP in a timely manner, call Member Services at (805) 981-5050

**For additional information or questions, please contact Member Services at (805) 981-5050 or via email at [VCHCP.MemberServices@ventura.org](mailto:VCHCP.MemberServices@ventura.org).**

# A CONCERNING TREND: Substance ABUSE IN ADOLESCENTS



According to our Mental Health Services, Life Strategies, visits and admissions for substance abuse decreased in the 18-21 and 22-26 year old age groups. Unfortunately, the same services increased for the 9-17 year old age group. This is a worrisome trend and worth looking at more closely by primary care providers, parents and adolescents.

Here is a list of the possible warning signs of substance use in teenagers taken from one of the articles from the Life Strategies website <https://www.liveandworkwell.com> which can also be found through the VCHCP website <http://www.vchealthcareplan.org>.

**Although teenagers can exhibit several of these warning signs without having an addiction problem, a behavioral health evaluation may be appropriate for any concerning changes noticed. Call Life Strategies at (800) 851-7407 for an authorization to a Behavioral Health provider. No referral is needed from the Ventura County Health Care Plan.**

**The Life Strategies website, noted above, has other articles that can be helpful for identifying substance abuse as well as articles for other issues for all age groups.**

## PHYSICAL SIGNS

- Slurred or slow speech
- Loss of motor skills
- Sudden weight gain or loss (change in appetite)
- Poor personal hygiene
- Larger or smaller pupils than usual
- Difficulty sleeping or hyperactivity

## PSYCHOLOGICAL SIGNS

- Short attention span, trouble concentrating, forgetfulness
- Increased frustration, anger or being overwhelmed easily
- Personality changes such as becoming aggressive, angry, hostile, irritable or lying
- Increased complaints about medical or emotional problems such as stomach aches, paranoia or talk of suicide

## SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SIGNS

- Worsening relationship with parents and sibling
- Money or valuables disappear
- Spending unusually large amounts of time in the bathroom
- Changes in friends, evasive about new ones
- Use of Visine, room deodorizers, incense, Vicks VapoRub or Vicks nasal Inhalers
- Drug-related graphics or slogans
- Pipes, small boxes or containers, baggies, rolling papers or other drug-related items; strange odors or butts, seeds, and/or leaves in ashtrays or pockets
- School tardiness, truancy, declining grades; trouble with the law or at school
- Lack of motivation or energy; loss of interest in extracurricular activities

**Request  
Case Management or  
Disease Management**

**MEMBERS NOW HAVE**

an opportunity to seek assistance for complex and or chronic medical needs such as asthma, diabetes, and the coordination of challenging care online!

Visit <http://www.vchealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx>, and on the right side of the website, click "Request Case Management or Disease Management". You will be prompted to enter member specific information. You will then submit this form to a secure email address. A nurse will evaluate your request and call you within 2 business days. If you would like to speak directly with a nurse, please call (805) 981-5060 and ask for a Case Management Nurse.

**Don't Forget:**

Three new VCMC clinics opened in 2015 and are available to you...

**Mountain View in Simi Valley**

Opened January 5, 2015

**Camarosa Spring Medical Group in Camarillo**

Opened July 6, 2015

**Citrus Grove Medical Clinic in Santa Paula**

Opened October 5, 2015

Contact Member Services at **(805) 981-5050** to change your PCP or ask any questions about these clinics!

**Online Member Portal**



Would you like to access your personal Health Plan information online?

Sign up for the Member Portal today! As a VCHCP Member, you can easily access your personal Health Plan information online. Visit the VCHCP website to create an online profile by following these simple steps

- Visit [www.vchealthcareplan.org](http://www.vchealthcareplan.org)
- Click on "For Members" link
- Click on:

VCHCP MEMBER PORTAL LOGIN

Once you are logged in you will be able to access personalized information about your:

- Benefits
- Eligibility
- Claims status
- Authorization status

You will also be able to:

- Change your PCP
- Reorder ID Cards
- Print Temporary ID Cards

**For questions on accessing the Member Portal, please contact the Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050 or toll free at (800) 600-8247 Monday – Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm, or via email at [vchcp.memberservices@ventura.org](mailto:vchcp.memberservices@ventura.org).**

**2•1•1 is a great resource in Ventura County.**

They can assist patients with counseling, food assistance, domestic violence services, employment resources, health care, senior services, legal assistance, substance abuse services, housing, resources for parents, and much more! 2•1•1 is available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. You can also visit [www.211ventura.org](http://www.211ventura.org).



**WATCH YOUR MAILBOX!**

*You probably receive a variety of surveys from various agencies throughout the year, but how do you know the impact or importance of them all?*

The 2016 Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers & System (CAHPS) Survey is one of the most important surveys to the Ventura County Health Care Plan (VCHCP). This national survey conducted by SPH Analytics (formerly The Myers Group) is sent out to randomly selected health care members and if selected, your participation would be greatly appreciated. This is the best way you as a member can let us know how the VCHCP can better serve you!

# COMPLEX

## Case Management & Disease Management

# SERVICES



VCHCP has two programs for members with severe illnesses and chronic diseases to help them plan their care with their primary doctor and learn more about self-care. These programs have nurses who work with members over the phone to guide them towards the best possible health for their conditions.

### COMPLEX CASE MANAGEMENT

VCHCP has created a Complex Case Management Program to help our high-risk members to work closely with their doctors to plan their care. The goals of Complex Case Management are to help members get to their best health possible in the right setting; coordinate and manage healthcare resources; support the treatment plan ordered by the doctor; and to take action to improve member overall quality of life and health outcomes. As a member in Complex Case Management, members with complicated health care issues and their family have a truly coordinated plan of care.

VCHCP identifies members for Complex Case Management through a number of referral sources, including health care provider referrals and member self-referrals. Some examples of eligible medical conditions or events include multiple hospital admissions or re-admissions, multiple chronic conditions, major organ transplant candidates, and major trauma. After a nurse Case Manager evaluates a member, the Case Manager creates a care plan with member and healthcare team input. The care plan is shared with the member's doctor for his/her input and review. The care plan is monitored by the Case Manager and coordinated with the member and doctor.

### DISEASE MANAGEMENT

The VCHCP Disease Management Program coordinates health care interventions and communications for members with conditions where member self-care can really improve their conditions. VCHCP has two Disease Management programs: Asthma and Diabetes. Members with these chronic conditions can come from referrals from a number of sources: VCHCP staff, practitioners, facility staff, vendors, or self-referral by a Member or caregiver. The Disease Management team

works with doctors and licensed professionals at VCHCP to improve these chronic conditions so members get the best possible quality of life and functioning. Included in the Disease Management Program are mailed educational materials, provider education on evidence-based clinical guidelines, member education over the phone, and care coordination. VCHCP has a variety of materials about diabetes and asthma that they give to members to help members better understand their condition and manage their chronic disease.

### PARTICIPATION IN THESE PROGRAMS

is free and voluntary for eligible members. Members can opt out at any time and being in these program does not affect benefits or eligibility. For more information or to submit a referral for the Disease Management or Complex Case Management Programs, please call (805) 981-5060 or discuss with your doctor. Members can also self-refer to the program online on the Member page at [vhealthcareplan.org](http://vhealthcareplan.org) and click on the box labeled "Request Case Management or Disease Management".

# PCP Changes

If you wish to change your Primary Care Provider (PCP), you may do so by contacting the Member Services Department, or by logging into the VCHCP Member Portal through the VCHCP website: [www.vhealthcareplan.org](http://www.vhealthcareplan.org). Changes will take effect on the day of your request.

When you change to a new PCP, it is recommended that you call to schedule an appointment to “establish care” with your new doctor. New patient appointments may require a longer wait time, and therefore it is best to establish care with the office before urgent services are required.

Also, please keep in mind that the PCP must be accepting new members in order to select him/her as your PCP.

For questions or assistance with changing your PCP or accessing the VCHCP Member Portal, please contact the Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050 or toll-free at (800) 600-8247 Monday thru Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm, or via email at [vchcp.memberservices@ventura.org](mailto:vchcp.memberservices@ventura.org).

## Medical Policy UPDATES

New and updated medical policies are posted on The Plan’s website at [www.vhealthcareplan.org/providers/medicalPolicies.aspx](http://www.vhealthcareplan.org/providers/medicalPolicies.aspx). No new medical policies were posted this quarter.

# Access to Care Task Force Created for our Members

## What is the Purpose?

The task force was created in August of 2015 to identify and track Access to Care barriers and collaborate with our County partners to identify and implement potential solutions, thus improving overall customer satisfaction and access with the Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) Clinics and the Ventura County Health Care Plan.

## Who is on this Task Force?

The team includes representation from Clinic Managers, Ambulatory Chief Operations Officers, Plan Members, and leadership from the Ventura County Health Care Plan.

## What’s been Accomplished?

- The hiring of providers for many specialties, which include Orthopedics, Rheumatology, Endocrinology, and Dermatology.
- The addition of new clinics – Camarosa Springs Medical Group and urgent care – Mariposa Urgent Care in Camarillo and Citrus Grove Medical Clinic in Santa Paula.
- The addition of a dedicated provider for walk-in patients at Magnolia Family Medical Center.
- Additional triage slots were added for patients at Magnolia Family Medical Center.

## What’s in the Future?

- Identifying and hiring providers where there is a need.
- Relocation and expansion of the VCMC Call Center and VCMC Referral Center.

If you have questions or comments, please send an email to: [VCHCP.ProviderServices@Ventura.org](mailto:VCHCP.ProviderServices@Ventura.org) or call us at (805) 981-5050.

## Academic Family Medicine Center (AFMC)

***DID YOU KNOW?*** Academic Family Medicine Center is Ventura County Medical Center’s Family Medicine Residency Program.

Due to AFMC being a resident training facility whereby residents may rotate within the clinic, it is imperative that you inquire about your providers’ schedule/availability so you can plan accordingly and be prepared when trying to schedule any follow-up visits. If you are a new patient and have not established care with your provider, please schedule an appointment as soon as possible. These appointments are scheduled with additional time to ensure the provider has the appropriate time to discuss your medical history.

*Don’t wait until you’re sick...make that appointment!*

# Standing Referrals

A standing referral allows a member to see a specialist or obtain ancillary services, such as lab, without needing new referrals from their primary care physician for each visit.

**M**embers may request a standing referral for a chronic condition requiring stabilized care. The member's primary care physician will decide when the request meets the following guidelines.

A standing referral may be authorized for the following conditions when it is anticipated that the care will be ongoing:

- Chronic health condition (Diabetes, COPD, etc.)
- Life-threatening mental or physical condition
- Pregnancy beyond the first trimester
- Degenerative disease or disability
- Radiation treatment
- Chemotherapy
- Allergy injections
- Defibrillator checks
- Pacemaker checks
- Dialysis/end-stage renal disease
- Other serious conditions that require treatment by a specialist

A standing referral is limited to 6 months, but can be reviewed for medical necessity as needed, to cover the duration of the condition.

If you change primary care physicians or clinics, you will need to discuss your standing referral with your new physician. Changing your primary care physician or clinic may require a change to the specialist to whom your primary care physician makes referrals. Additional information regarding Standing Referrals is located on our website: [www.vhealthcareplan.org/providers/providerIndex.aspx](http://www.vhealthcareplan.org/providers/providerIndex.aspx) or by calling Member Services at (805) 981-5050 or (800) 600-8247.

## Ventura County Health Care Plan's Referral & Prior Authorization Process and Services Requiring Prior Authorization

Need information on how and when to obtain referrals and authorization for specific services? Please visit our website at [www.vhealthcareplan.org](http://www.vhealthcareplan.org), click on "For Members," and then click on "Referrals and Prior Authorization." This area provides links for members to obtain specific information on the Plan's prior authorization process, what services require prior authorization, timelines, and direct referral information. If you have any questions, please call member services at (805) 981-5050.

# Direct Specialty Referrals

A "Direct Specialty Referral" is a referral that your Primary Care Physician (PCP) can give to you so that you can be seen by a specialist physician or receive certain specialized services.

**D**irect Specialty Referrals do not need to be pre-authorized by the Plan. In January 2011, The Ventura County Health Care Plan greatly expanded the specialties available for direct referral. This has been very successful for the Plan, the providers and the members.

**The following specialties are a part of the "Direct Specialty Referral" program:**

Cardiology, Dermatology, Endocrinology, ENT, Gastroenterology, General Surgery, Hematology- Oncology, Neurology, Neurosurgery, Obstetrics-Gynecology, Ophthalmology, Orthopedics, Podiatry, Pulmonology, Rheumatology, Thoracic Surgery, Urology, Vascular Surgery, Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy

Appointments to specialists when you receive a direct referral from your PCP should be made either by you or by your referring doctor. Make sure to check with your referring doctor about who is responsible for making the appointment.

Appointments are required to be offered within a specific time frame, unless your doctor has indicated on the referral form that a longer wait time would not have a detrimental impact on your health. Those time-frames are: Non-urgent within 15 business days, Urgent within 48-96 hours.

If you or your doctor feel that you are not able to get an appointment within an acceptable timeframe please contact the Plan's Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050 or (800) 600-8247 so that we can make the appropriate arrangements for timeliness of care.

The Direct Referral Policy can also be accessed at: <http://www.vhealthcareplan.org/providers/providerIndex.aspx>. To request to have a printed copy of the policy mailed to you, please call Member Services at the numbers listed above.

## VCHCP Utilization Management

uses Milliman Care Guidelines, VCHCP Medical Policies and VCHCP Prior Authorization Drug Guidelines as criteria in performing medical necessity reviews. Due to proprietary reasons, we are unable to post the Milliman Care Guidelines on our website, but a hard copy of an individual guideline can be provided as requested.

A complete listing of VCHCP medical policies and prescription drug policies can be found at: <http://www.vhealthcareplan.org/providers/providerIndex.aspx>

To obtain printed copies of any of our VCHCP Medical/Drug Policies or Milliman Care Guidelines, please contact Member Services at (805) 981-5050 or at (800) 600-8247.

## NEW TO THE NETWORK!

**Amy Chow, M.D.**, internal medicine physician, at West Ventura Medical Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added, effective December 2015.

**Anaya Trumler-Sebring, M.D.**, an ophthalmologist at Miramar Eye Specialist Medical Group in Ventura and Camarillo, has been added effective December 2015.

**Andrea Rudolph, N.P.**, at Citrus Grove Medical Clinic in Santa Paula and Moorpark Family Care Center (VCMC), has been added, effective September 2015.

**Andrew Langroudi, D.P.M.**, a podiatric surgeon at Foot and Ankle Concepts, has been added effective December 2015.

**Angelika DeLoa, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at Identity Medical Group in Ventura, has been added effective December 2015.

**Anthony Le, D.P.M.**, a podiatric surgeon, in Oxnard, as been added effective December 2015.

**Anthony Wall, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at Santa Paula Hospital Clinic at Santa Paula, has been added, effective October 2015.

**Benjamin Lucas-Robert, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at Las Islas Family Medical Group North in Oxnard, has been added, effective July 2015.

**Brian Bai, M.D.**, a family medicine physician in Oxnard, has been added, effective October 2015.

**Christina Barba, P.A.-C.**, a physician assistant at Clinicas del Camino Real in Oxnard, has been added, effective October 2015.

**Christine Lee-Kim, D.O.**, an allergy specialist at Coastal Allergy Care in Camarillo, Simi Valley, and Thousand Oaks, has been added effective October 2015.

**Citrus Grove Medical Clinic** in Santa Paula, has been added, effective October 2015.

**Claudio Bonometti, M.D.**, a cardiac specialist in Santa Barbara, has been added, effective September 2015.

**Colleen Lennard-Love, M.D.**, an otolaryngologist at Anacapa Surgical Associates(VCMC), has been added, effective January 2016.

**Foot & Ankle Concepts**, a podiatry clinic in Camarillo, Oxnard and Ventura, have been added effective November 2015.

**Gary Chang, M.D.**, a pain specialist at Spanish Hills Interventional in Camarillo, has been added, effective October 2015.

**George Chang Chien, D.O.**, a specialist at Anacapa Neuroscience Center (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added, effective September 2015.

**Harold Rosengren, M.D.**, an allergy/immunology specialist, at Allergy, Asthma, Immunology Medical Group in Ventura and Oxnard, has been added effective October 2015.

**Julie Strohsal, P.A.**, a physician assistant at Cardiology Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added effective December 2015.

**Katherine Peters, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at Santa Paula West Medical Group & Pediatrics (VCMC), has been added, effective September 2015.

**Kimberly McCowan, N.P.**, at Camarillo Springs Medical Group (VCMC) in

Camarillo, as been added effective December 2015.

**Lisa Levick, D.P.M.**, a podiatrist, at Foot and Ankle Concepts, has been added effective December 2015.

**Mark Robinson, M.D.**, an orthopedic surgeon at the Orthopedic Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added effective December 2015.

**Martin M. Weiss, M.D.**, a rheumatology specialist at Magnolia Family Medical Center, in Oxnard, has been added effective November 2015.

**Mary Elise Gianos, M.D.**, an allergy/immunology specialist in Camarillo, has been added, effective November 2015.

**Mary Ragsdale, M.D.**, an orthopedic surgeon at Orthopedic Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura and Conejo Valley Family Med Grp (VCMC) in Thousand Oaks, has been added, effective September 2015.

**Omid Fatemi, M.D.**, a cardiologist specialist at Cardiology Associates Medical Group in Ventura and Oxnard, has been added, effective October 2015.

**Philip Mckay, P.A.**, at Magnolia Family Medical Center (VCMC) in Oxnard and Medicine Specialty Center West (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added, effective November 2015.

**Ross Monroe, P.A.-C.**, at Orthopedic Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura, has been added, effective September 2015.

**S Jack Milner, D.P.M.**, a podiatric surgeon at Foot and Ankle Concepts, had been added effective November 2015.

**Samuel Lee, M.D.**, a specialist at Anacapa Neuroscience Center

(VCMC) in Ventura, has been added, effective August 2015.

**Scott Underwood, M.D.**, an internal medicine physician at Magnolia Family Medical Clinic West in Oxnard, has been added, effective December 2015.

**Stacey Lowen, M.D.**, a pediatrics physician at Surfside Pediatrics in Ventura, has been added, effective September 2015.

**Sukhpreet Walia, M.D.**, a gastroenterologist specialist, at Sierra Vista Family Medical Clinic(VCMC) in Simi Valley and Santa Paula Hospital Clinic (VCMC) in Santa Paula, has been added effective December 2015.

**Sunset Sleep Labs** in Oxnard and Simi Valley, have been added effective December 2015.

**Theresa Perales, D.P.M.**, a specialist at Conejo Valley Family Medical Group (VCMC) in Thousand Oaks and Las Islas Family Medical Group (VCMC) in Oxnard, has been added, effective October 2015.

**Two Trees Physical Therapy & Wellness**, third location in Ventura, as been added effective January 2016.

**Virna Veloso, M.D.**, a family physician, at Clinicas Del Camino Real Oxnard and Ventura, has been added, effective October 2015.

## LEAVING THE NETWORK

**Amit Malkani, M.D.**, has left West Ventura Medical Clinic (VCMC) in Ventura, effective September 2015.

**Angela Singh, M.D.**, a family medicine physician, has left both Clinicas-El Rio and Ventura, effective December 2015.

**Daniel Clark, M.D.**, a cardiovascular

disease specialist, has left the Cardiology Clinic in Ventura, effective September 2015.

**David Mescher, M.D.**, an internal medicine physician at Identity Medical Group, has left VCHCP, effective October 2015.

**Douglas K. Nelson, D.O.**, a family medicine physician, at Valley Oaks Family Practice Med Grp, in Ojai, has left VCHCP, effective November 2015.

**Gabriel Ramirez, P.A.-C**, has left Las Islas Family Medical Group(VCMC) in Oxnard, effective October 2015.

**Jack Rotenberg, M.D.**, a gastroenterologist, has left Ventura County Gastroenterology Medical Grp in Camarillo and Ventura, effective August 2015.

**Katherine Peters, M.D.**, a family medicine physician has left, Santa Paula West Medical Group & Pediatrics in Santa Paula, effective January 2016.

**Laura Holder, M.D.**, a family medicine physician, has left Academic Family Medicine Center (VCMC) in Ventura, effective October 2015.

**Maria L. Halvorson, D.O.**, a family medicine physician, at Valley Oaks Family Practice Med Grp in Ojai, has left VCHCP, effective November 2015.

**Oluwatumininu(Tumi) Johnson, M.D.**, a family physician medicine physician, has left the Santa Paula Medical Clinic in Santa Paula, effective November 2015.

**Paulette Mahurin, N.P.**, a nurse practitioner, has left both Las Islas Family Medical Group North and Las Islas Family Medical Group in Oxnard, effective November 2015.

**Philip Mckay, PA-C**, has left Clinicas

Del Camino Real Inc. in Oxnard, effective October 2015.

**Robert Garrison, M.D.**, a family medicine physician, has left Identity Medical Group in Ventura, effective December 2015.

**Rochelle L. Wilson, D.O.**, a family medicine physician, at Valley Oaks Family Practice Med Grp in Ojai, has left VCHCP, effective November 2015.

**Shamsuddin Hooda, PA-C**, has left Clinicas Del Camino Real Inc. in El Rio and Moorpark, effective October 2015.

**Stanley Frochtzwajg, M.D.**, in Ventura has left, effective October 2015.

**Theresa Ku Borden, M.D.**, a family medicine physician, has left Las Islas Family Medical Group North in Oxnard, effective November 2015.

**Thomas Ellis III, M.D.**, has left Magnolia Medical Clinic West, effective May 2015.

**Victoria Sarun, PA-C**, a physician assistant, has left Clinicas-Newbury Park , effective November 2015.

## CHANGES

**Alan Lyne, M.D.**, a family medicine physician in Santa Paula, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Allison Blaze, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at Las Islas Women's Health Clinic(VCMC), is closed to new members, effective October 2015.

**Amita Dharawat, M.D.**, will act as Interim Medical Director at the Cardiology Clinic located in Ventura, effective October 2015.

**Benjamin T. Pecht, M.D.**, a pediatrics physician, at Coastal Pediatric Medical Group in Oxnard and

# VCHCP NETWORK Updates

Ventura, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Carey Chronis, M.D.**, a pediatrics physician in Ventura, is closed to new members, effective December 2015.

**Carl A. Gross, M.D.**, a family medicine physician, at Ojai Valley Medicine, in Ojai, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**David S. Blank, M.D.**, a pediatrics physician, at Coastal Pediatric Medical Group in Oxnard and Ventura, is closed to new members effective November 2015.

**Gary D. Wikholm, M.D.**, a family physician at Valley Medical Group in Santa Paula, is closed to new members, effective December 2015.

**Heather F. Nichols, M.D.**, a pediatrics physician, at Coastal Pediatric Medical Group in Oxnard and Ventura, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Helen Petroff, M.D.**, a family medicine physician, at Valley Oak Family Practice Medical Group, in Ojai, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Ingrid Sharpe, PA-C**, is no longer providing services at Clinicas North Oxnard and Clinicas Simi Valley. She is providing services at Clinicas East Simi Valley location full time, effective November 2015.

**James R. Halverson, M.D.**, a family medicine physician, at Ojai Valley Medicine, in Ojai, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Jose Manuel Mendoza, N.P.**, is no longer providing services at the Clinicas East Simi Valley location. He is now full time at Clinicas Del Camino Real in Fillmore, effective November 2015.

**Judy Driscoll, R.N.**, at Coastal Pediatric Medical Group in Oxnard and Ventura, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Kevin White, M.D.**, a pediatrics physician, at Surfside Pediatrics in Ventura, is closed to new members effective, November 2015.

**Linda Lundeen, M.D.**, a family medicine physician at Rose Avenue Family Medical Group in Oxnard, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Mary Ann Williamson, F.N.P.**, in Ojai, is closed to new members, effective December 2015.

**Mary E. Dial, M.D.**, a family medicine physician, at Ojai Valley Medicine, in Ojai, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Mary Nelson, N.P.**, at Ojai Valley Medicine, in Ojai, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Michael S. Datlow, M.D.**, a family medicine physician, in Ventura, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Nancy Merrick, M.D.**, an internal medicine physician at Magnolia Family Medical Clinic West, is closed to new members, effective December 2015

**Niloofar Farmani, M.D.**, a rheumatologist, has left Magnolia Family Medical Center (VCMC) in Oxnard but will still remain at Conejo Valley Family Med Grp (VCMC) in Thousand Oaks, effective November 2015.

**Pawar Gagan, M.D.**, a family medicine physician, is no longer provider services at Clinicas North Oxnard location. He is now providing services at Clinicas Newbury Park location, effective November 2015.

**Richard Tushla, M.D.**, a family medicine physician in Santa Paula, is closed to new members, effective December 2015.

**Robert Lefkowitz, M.D.**, an OB/GYN specialist, is no longer attending patients at AFMC, however, will continue to see patients at Magnolia Family Medical Center, effective November 2015.

**Robert T. Fostakowsky, M.D.**, a pediatrics physician, at Coastal Pediatric Medical Group in Oxnard and Ventura, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Stuart Bloom, M.D.**, family medicine physician in Ventura, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Thomas McBreen, M.D.**, a family medicine physician in Ventura, is closed to new members, effective November 2015.

**Timothy L. Williamson, M.D.**, a pediatrics physician, in Ojai, is closed to new members, effective December 2015.

For a full list of participating providers please see our website at: <http://www.vchealthcareplan.org/members/physicians.aspx> or contact Member Services at (805) 981-5050.

## STANDARDS FOR

# Members' Rights and Responsibilities

Ventura County Health Care Plan (VCHCP) is committed to maintaining a mutually respectful relationship with its Members that promotes effective health care. Standards for Members Rights and Responsibilities are as follows:

- 1 Members have a right to receive information about VCHCP, its services, its Practitioners and Providers, and Members' Rights and Responsibilities.
- 2 Members have a right to be treated with respect and recognition of their dignity and right to privacy.
- 3 Members have a right to participate with Practitioners and Providers in decision making regarding their health care.
- 4 Members have a right to a candid discussion of treatment alternatives with their Practitioner and Provider regardless of the cost or benefit coverage of the Ventura County Health Care Plan.
- 5 Members have a right to make recommendations regarding VCHCP's Member Rights and Responsibility policy.
- 6 Members have a right to voice complaints or appeals about VCHCP or the care provided.
- 7 Members have a responsibility to provide, to the extent possible, information that VCHCP and its Practitioners and Providers need in order to care for them.
- 8 Members have a responsibility to follow the plans and instructions for care that they have agreed upon with their Practitioners and Providers.
- 9 Members have a responsibility to understand their health problems and participate in developing mutually agreed-upon treatment goals, to the degree possible.



For information regarding the Plan's privacy practices, please see the "HIPAA Letter and Notice of Privacy Practices" available on our website at: <http://www.vhealthcareplan.org/members/memberIndex.aspx>. Or you may call the Member Services Department at (805) 981-5050 or toll free at (800) 600-8247 to have a printed copy of this notice mailed to you.



VENTURA COUNTY  
**HEALTH CARE PLAN**

2220 E. Gonzales Road, Suite 210-B  
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