

**SLO Healthcare Workforce Partnership  
Funding & Advocacy Committee  
May 15, 2024**

**Attendees:** Michelle Shoresman (PH), Jessica Peckham (NP), Lisa Fraser (CFS), Susan McGraw (Coordinator)

**Discussion Results:**

- **Behavioral Health Funding Legislation:** Jessica Peckham provided an update on her meeting with John Pershore, County Supervisor. He is knowledgeable about healthcare issues in the County and is aware of the Partnership. They spoke specifically about behavioral health workforce challenges. Prop.1 going through could potentially cause a loss of funding for SLO County because money may be reallocated to communities that are considered higher need.
- **Healthcare Services to the Military:** We haven't touched on the need to provide healthcare for military personnel/families, but we provide a majority of their healthcare services in the County. Fort Hunter Liggett is near north county, so they are served by Monterey County or Paso Robles/Templeton and Camp Roberts is on the SLO County border and the majority of the families live in Paso Robles/Atascadero.
  - Behavioral health is a key need, particularly for kids: autism, etc. Tri-Care provides insurance for the military, but there is not an active military base close enough to healthcare services. They get referred out to Tri-Care Prime/Remote so soldiers and their families can access civilian services.
  - There is a small VA clinic in SLO but that does not serve active military personnel. VA is only for vets/retired service personnel.
- **MCO Tax Research:** potential advocacy area
  - Jessica will send her research to Susan.
  - The MCO Tax gets funding from the Managed Care Organizations, but the legislation was only approved through 2026. This could be a funding and advocacy issues since it has to be re-voted on to continue past 2026. For the next 2 years, the money generated is allocated for services for the Medi-Cal population and goes back into key services like primary care and behavioral health.
    - We need to support advocacy efforts to make it a permanent tax, so that it doesn't need to be renewed every 2 years.
- **Medi-Cal/Medicare Reimbursement, MSSA designations, and HCAI funding:** Susan McGraw provided an update on these topics:
  - From conversation with Jordan Turetsky regarding Medi-Cal/Medicare: Medi-Cal rates are established at the state level and are the same for every region within the state. Managed care plans have flexibility in what they pay in their local service areas. Generally, managed care plans pay more than state level rates. The negotiate above that.
  - 95% of the Medi-Cal population in SLO is CenCal Health managed care. There are hardly any "fee for service" Medi-Cal clients left in the county.

- MSSA/HPSA and funding: Susan uploaded the presentation materials from the recent Health Professional Service Area conference. She is working to schedule a meeting with experts at the state level who can provide more specific information on the HPSA/MSSA data for SLO County.
  - One factor may be that the contracted physicians/behavioral health providers at ASH are distorting the data since they are state employees and, from what we can tell, only federal employees are excluded from the provider counts for the HPSAs. Also, contracted physicians could be an impact rather than employees. As an example, Jennifer works at Tenet/Adventist but works for a contracted company...outside the system.
- **October Community Forum Agenda/Focus Options:**
  - **Possible option:** A panel of the MCO's from the area. When you have an HMO group, they are required to provide the care to their group (CenCal, CC Choice/Medicare Advantage). What are they doing to meet these needs in the community with the money they are getting? CenCal Health does not have any dental providers in North County. What are the HMOs/MCOs doing to meet their needs? Is there alignment with the Partnership work?
    - CCPN group is the largest HMO for Medicare Advantage plans in the county and a large number of people choose because of the are less expensive and many seniors are living on a fixed income.
    - Managed Care Organization, MCO: HMO Groups (CenCal, CCPN/Central Coast Physician Network with 2 prongs, one private and one Medicare Advantage....runs under different groups like Blue Cross; Physician Choice is private Dignity group).
    - Tri-Care is MCO too.
    - Accountable Care Organizations, ACOs, are at the hospital level: Focus on cost reduction, reimbursement rates based on quality, efficiency, etc. Operates more like a third party, watch group with physicians joining their network and sharing in any realized savings.
    - Perhaps an FAQ with definitions might be helpful....what do they do, what is their purpose, who are the local ones?
  - **CWH/Promotores:** How does this fit in with this initiative/fall agenda?
    - They are part of the Central Coast CHW/P Collaborative and are working with HCAI guidelines to certify Community Health Workers.
    - CenCal Health wants them at the table, wants them to develop this....preparing providers for local organizations to use them more effectively.
    - Michelle: This was a big focus of 2019 forum.
    - For upcoming forum, should we take a more overarching focus? How can we support this as a partnership? How can we support physical, behavioral, and oral health rather than a specific job type? Should we take an ecosystem approach: link to funding already received and how to create linkages and build bridges between programs?

- **Agenda:** Include Networking time for Partnership Members and with the Community.
  - We have enough information to do content for an entire day. How to balance with people's commitment of time?
  - Partnership member time/committee time?
- **San Jose State Nursing Program:** Jessica met with the director of the nursing department. She is interested in partnering with us. They offer BSN to doctorate career pathways, so could provide collaborative options for us to support ADN students into RN to BSN to Doctorate pathways.
- **Next steps:**
  - Connect with HCAI to research HPSA/MSSA data: Susan & Michelle
  - Jordan: To present to the Partnership next month on Medi-Cal/Medicare rates
  - Keep planning for October.
  - Next meeting: same time, same place.