January 25, 2022

The Honorable Board of Supervisors

County of Sacramento

700 H Street, Suite 1450

Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Board Members:

I am honored to provide the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors with the first annual update of the activities of the Sacramento County Health Authority (SCHA). On December 8, 2020, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors introduced an ordinance to add Title 2 of the Sacramento County Code establishing the Sacramento County Health Authority (SCHA) to expand the County’s oversight over the quality, cost and access to Medi-Cal services provided by Managed Care Plans (MCPs) operating in the County. On December 15, 2020, the Board approved the ordinance.

The SCHA will play a pivotal role in the upcoming selection by the State of California of Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans that will serve the approximately 500,000 Medi-Cal beneficiaries beginning in January 2024. Health plans seeking to provide these services have requested a letter of support from the Board of Supervisors. The SCHA’s primary focus in these initial months has been defining and implementing a robust process that will inform selection of health plans to recommend to the Board of Supervisors. This work is critical if Sacramento County is to make progress in improving the quality of services rendered to nearly a third of its residents.

To support this work, the SCHA quickly stood up its standing committees: Consumer Protection Committee and Quality Improvement/Quality Assurance Committee. The Committees informed the development of our key goals and [the assessment process](https://dhs.saccounty.gov/PRI/Documents/Healthcare%20Resources/Sacramento%20County%20Health%20Authority/SCHA_Approved_RFQ_Final.pdf) we will use to select health plans we will recommend to the Board of Supervisors.

Appendix A provides more detail of our actions.

The timing of the establishment of the SCHA meant that we had to jump quickly into the immediate task of identifying health plans for your consideration. As we look forward, the SCHA will focus attention on issues such as:

* Articulating a 3-year work plan that prioritizes our activity to accomplish our 14 goals;
* Developing public input processes to assure that we hear the voice of our customers in all our work;
* Expanding beneficiary participation in our standing committees;
* Assessing the best way to gain insight into health plan and medical group quality efforts and outcomes;
* Overseeing the care and services provided to our Medi-Cal beneficiaries and seeking operational improvements in care delivery; and
* Overseeing the implementation of CalAIM, the State of California’s ambitious and far-reaching reimaging of care for Medi-Cal beneficiaries statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve 500,000 Sacramento County residents through the important work of this Commission.

Sincerely,

Chet Hewitt

Sacramento County Health Authority Commission Chair

cc: Chevon Kothari, Director, Sacramento County Department of Health Services

Appendix A

During this inaugural year, much of the attention of the Commission was focused on standing up and establishing the Commission and its standing committees, as well as establishing the Commission’s initial strategic goals and preparing our local response for the State’s upcoming Medi-Cal Managed Care Procurement. To this end, key milestones met by the Commission include:

* March 2021: Focus was to seat Commissioners and the first Commission meeting was held on March 10, 2021.
* April 2021: The Commission’s bylaws were finalized and approved at the SCHA Commission meeting on April 13, 2021.
* May 2021: The SCHA Commission’s two standing committees, the Consumer Protection Committee and Quality Improvement/Quality Assurance Committee each held their inaugural meeting on May 27, 2021, and met twice a month thereafter.
* June 2021: Commissioners reviewed the State’s Draft RFP for MCP procurement to understand parameters of the State’s process to inform development of a local process. *The Commission sent a letter to DHCS in response to the draft RFP raising concerns of Commissioners.*
* July 2021: The SCHA Commission developed draft goals around 14 areas of health care, as well as began developing an RFQ assessment process to select which plans would receive letters of support per the State’s process. Using this process, the Commission will recommend the top three MCPs identified in the RFQ assessment process to the Board. These MCPs will receive a letter of support on behalf of the County from the Board, and may submit the letter of support to the California DHCS when they respond to its Medi-Cal MCP Request for Proposal in Spring 2022. Discussion and development of the process and scoring rubric was done through Commission meetings, either the full commission or within each standing committee, with public comment taken during every meeting adhering to the Brown Act. In addition, beneficiary engagement is a key concern of the SCHA’s Consumer Protection Committee. In July, the Consumer Protection Committee began developing a survey to obtain consumer and provider input on key challenges with Medi-Cal plans and services in Sacramento County.
* August 2021: The Commission continued to develop the RFQ process, including developing questions of significant importance to each standing committee. In addition, the Consumer Protection Committee Patient and Provider Survey was finalized and implemented late August.
* September 2021: The Commission finalized RFQ questions for plans, began discussions on the scoring rubric and reviewer conflict process. Other key activities this month include the passage of SB 226, legislation that codifies the role of the SCHA Commission, and Governor Newsom signed the bill into law on October 1, 2021. The legislation mirrors the language of the Sacramento County ordinance.
* October 2021: Once the Consumer Protection Committee Patient and Provider Survey closed in September, those results were analyzed and shared in October along with findings from the Department of Managed Healthcare on grievances pertaining to Sacramento specific Medi-Cal plans. All survey respondents cited access to care challenges. The survey informed the development of access to care questions in the RFQ, as well as establishing future priorities and work for the Committee. The RFQ required MCPs to attest to provide, at a minimum, the following community supports: Housing Transition Navigation Services, Housing Deposits, Housing Tenancy and Sustaining Services, Medical Respite, Short-Term Post-Hospitalization Housing, and Sobering Centers. The RFQ also required each MCP to   
  agree to work collaboratively with the SCHA Commission for the entire duration of its Medi-Cal contract with DHCS and agree to submit data reports to the Commission at no less than a quarterly basis. The SCHA Commission finalized the MCP assessment approach, RFQ process and scoring rubric in October. Upon finalizing the process, all materials were posted and made available to health plans on October 15, 2021.
* November 2021: As part of officially launching the Commission’s RFQ process, the Chair appointed members of an Ad Hoc Committee to oversee the RFQ process, and the Ad Hoc Committee, in turn, selected expert reviewers to participate in scoring the MCP assessment process. The RFQ process is still currently underway and will conclude at the end of January 2022.
* December 2021: After launching the RFQ review process, the Commission turned its attention back to planning the work of the Commission and its committees, including identify which goals fall under the purview of which committees and identifying short-term and long-term priorities to guide the work of the Commission in 2022 and beyond. This work includes identifying 2022 workstreams for the Consumer Protection and Quality Improvement/Quality Assurance Committees and full Commission. The SCHA Commission is expected to continue this work in early 2022.

Looking ahead, in 2022, the Commission will complete the RFQ assessment process and ratify its work, and recommend to the Board three MCPs to receive letters of support from Sacramento County. The State expects to announce the award recipients in mid to late 2022. The SCHA Commission also anticipates developing and refining its goals for the short and long term, including building out its process for MCP oversight and monitoring, working with the County to collect beneficiary input, help ensure successful implementation of CalAIM, and support health care delivery system transformation.