



Health Care Legislation Affecting Low-Income Consumers as of April 10, 2019

As the deadline to pass out of policy committee for house of origin looms, many bills were given additional depth and substance. Bills that were introduced earlier this year and late last year are now being heard by their policy committees of jurisdiction. All bills with a cost must be heard by April 26 in their policy committee and after that will go the respective Appropriations Committees, which must wrap by May 17. The next month will see a flurry of activity, with a week long recess for Spring Break from April 12-21. Following is a summary of bills in the Legislature that affect the health of low-income Californians.

Medi-Cal

Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 4	Bonta	Medi-Cal: eligibility.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would expand full-scope Medi-Cal to all income-eligible adults regardless of immigration status.	Support
AB 316	Ramos	Medi-Cal: benefits: beneficiaries with special dental care needs.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would require DHCS to implement a special needs treatment and management benefit for providers who render Denti-Cal services to Medi-Cal beneficiaries with special dental care needs.	Support
AB 526	Petrie-Norris	Medi-Cal: California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.	Assembly Appropriations	Creates the WIC to Medi-Cal express lane eligibility gateway.	Support
AB 577	Eggman	Medi-Cal: maternal mental health.	Assembly Appropriations	Extends Medi-Cal and MCAP eligibility for up to one year for individuals with a maternal mental health condition.	
AB 683	Carrillo	Medi-Cal: eligibility.	Assembly Appropriations	Eliminates the assets test for the Medicare Savings Programs and raises the assets limit for other Non-MAGI Medi-Cal programs. Co-sponsor: Justice in Aging & Western Center.	Co-Sponsor
AB 715	Wood	Medi-Cal: program for aged and disabled persons.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would raise the Medi-Cal Aged and Disabled income level to 138% FPL, an amount equivalent to most other Medi-Cal income levels for adults. Co-sponsors: DRC, Justice in Aging, and Western Center.	Co-Sponsor
AB 741	Kalra	Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Program: trauma screening.	Assembly Health	This bill would require DHCS to provide trainings for providers on how to identify and make appropriate referrals for Medi-Cal children who have tested positive in trauma screenings; require the department to create specified codes for the administration of trauma screening requirements; and to submit a related annual report to the Legislature.	Support
AB 744	Aguiar-Curry	Healthcare coverage: telehealth.	Assembly Health	This bill would delete provisions that require Medi-Cal patients receiving telehealth services be notified of the right to receive interactive communication with a distant specialist physician, optometrist, or dentist.	
AB 763	Gray	Medi-Cal specialty mental health services.	Assembly Health	This bill would require DHCS to convene a stakeholder workgroup to develop standard forms to be used by Medi-Cal managed care providers for performing the intake of, the assessment of, and the treatment planning for children on Medi-Cal who are eligible for specialty mental health services.	

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AB 914	Holden	Medi-Cal: inmates: eligibility.	Assembly Appropriations	Requires suspension of Medi-Cal eligibility while incarcerated (instead of termination after a year) and requires DHCS to develop a simplified annual redetermination for these individuals.	Support
AB 990	Gallagher	Medi-Cal managed care plans: financial incentives.	Assembly Health	Requires Medi-Cal managed care plans to implement wellness programs with incentives of at least \$100 annually.	
AB 1004	McCarty	Developmental screening services.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would require screening services under the EPSDT program include developmental screening services for individuals zero to 3 years of age and be in compliance with the periodicity schedule and screening tools that are established by the Bright Futures/American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for Preventive Pediatric Health Care.	
AB 1042	Wood	Medi-Cal: beneficiary maintenance needs: home upkeep allowances: transitional needs funds.	Assembly Appropriations	Increases the allowed home upkeep allowance and transitional needs fund for persons likely to leave nursing home care.	Support
AB 1088	Wood	Medi-Cal: eligibility.	Assembly Appropriations	Stops beneficiaries from bouncing between free and share-of-cost Medi-Cal by treating Part B premium deductions the same for applicants as for recipients. Co-sponsors: Justice in Aging & Disability Rights CA	Co-Sponsor
AB 1494	Aguiar-Curry	Medi-Cal: telehealth: state of emergency.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would allow for telehealth in states of emergency if federal financial participation is available.	
AB 1642	Wood	Medi-Cal: managed care plans.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would impose additional requirements on Medi-Cal managed care plans that are unable to meet network adequacy standards; require the department to conduct preventative outreach and education for Medi-Cal enrollees; and increase the department's sanction authority against plans.	Support
SB 29	Durazo	Medi-Cal: eligibility.	Senate Appropriations	This bill would expand full-scope Medi-Cal to all income-eligible adults regardless of immigration status.	Support
SB 66	Atkins	Medi-Cal: federally qualified health center and rural health clinic services.	Senate Appropriations	This bill would allow FQHC and RHCs to bill Medi-Cal two visits if a patient is provided mental health services on the same day they receive other services.	Support
SB 214	Dodd	Medi-Cal: California Community Transitions program.	Senate Health	This bill would require DHCS to implement and administer the California Community Transitions program, which provides funding for low-income people with disabilities to transition from skilled nursing facilities back into homes of their own.	Support
SB 289	Archuleta	Medi-Cal: home- and community-based services: military.	Senate Veterans Affairs	Keeps family members of a military service member on the HCBS waitlist while the member is deployed as long as they retain California residence.	
SB 361	Mitchell	Medi-Cal: Health Home Program.	Senate Appropriations	This bill would remove restrictions around State funding and termination of Health Home Program after two years to eliminate perception that program is "pilot" and ensure chronically homeless individuals are targeted through partnership with homeless systems, enhanced outreach rate, and data collection. Cosponsors: Corporation for Supportive Housing, Housing California, and Western Center.	Co-Sponsor
SB 503	Pan	Medi-Cal: managed care plan: subcontracts.	Senate Health	This bill would align state sanction authority with federal sanction authority; codify language that makes clear health plan's responsibility, regardless of subcontracting; require plans to conduct annual audits of delegated entities and report on data of delegated entities. Co-sponsors: National Health Law Program and WCLP.	Co-Sponsor

SB 525	Stone	Medi-Cal: reimbursement: blood factors.	Senate Health	This bill would require the reimbursement for blood factors to be either the wholesale acquisition cost or 120% of the average sales price of the last quarter reported, whichever is less.	
Benefits					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 166	Gabriel	Medi-Cal: violence preventive services.	Assembly Health	This bill would provide Medi-Cal coverage for violence prevention services, specifically Hospital-based Violence Intervention Programs, for gunshot victims.	
AB 678	Flora	Medi-Cal: podiatric services.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would restore podiatric services as a Medi-Cal benefit.	Support
AB 848	Gray	Medi-Cal: covered benefits: continuous glucose monitors.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would add continuous glucose monitors and related supplies required for use with those monitors as a Medi-Cal when medically necessary.	Support
SB 154	Pan	Medi-Cal: restorative dental services.	Senate Appropriations	This bill would add silver diamine fluoride as a caries arresting agent as a covered Medi-Cal benefit.	
SB 207	Hurtado	Medi-Cal: asthma preventive services.	Senate Appropriations	This bill would include asthma preventive services as a covered Medi-Cal benefit and require DHCS to develop with external stakeholders a coverage policy consistent with specified federal and clinically appropriate guidelines.	Support
SB 446	Stone	Medi-Cal: hypertension medication management services.	Senate Health	This bill would provide that hypertension medication management services as a covered pharmacist service under the Medi-Cal program.	
Covered CA					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 174	Wood	Health care coverage: financial assistance.	Assembly Appropriations	Adds additional state-funded premium tax credits for individuals from 0% to 800% FPL.	Support
AB 929	Rivas, Luz	California Health Benefit Exchange: data collection.	Assembly Appropriations	Requires the Covered CA Board to make public plan-specific data on cost reduction efforts, quality improvements, and disparity reductions.	Support
AB 1063	Petrie-Norris	Healthcare coverage: waivers.	Assembly	This bill would prevent Covered CA section 1113 waivers that reduce eligibility for Covered CA plans or the affordability and scope of those plans by requiring legislative approval for waiver requests.	Co-Sponsor
AB 1309	Bauer-Kahan	Health care coverage: enrollment periods.	Assembly Appropriations	Extends the Covered California open enrollment period by two weeks back to January 31st.	Support
SB 65	Pan	Health care coverage: financial assistance.	Senate Appropriations	Adds Covered California financial assistance for households below 600% FPL.	Support
SB 260	Hurtado	Automatic health care coverage enrollment.	Senate Appropriations	Allows Covered California to automatically enroll people losing Medi-Cal and reach out to others losing health coverage.	Co-Sponsor
Disparities Reduction					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 229	Nazarian	In-home supportive services: written content translation.	Assembly Appropriations	Requires DSS to translate written materials for providers of IHSS services such as timesheets, notices, etc.	

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AB 318	Chu	Medi-Cal materials: readability.	Assembly Appropriations	Requires DHCS and the plans to field test translated Medi-Cal documents and establishes a readability workgroup to identify and improve a minimum of 10 key Medi-Cal documents. Co-sponsor: California Pan Ethnic Health Network	Co-Sponsor
AB 537	Wood	Medi-Cal managed care: quality improvement and value-based financial incentive program.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would improve the quality of health care services provided by Medi-Cal managed care plans and reduce health disparities by holding plans accountable so that Medi-Cal enrollees achieve better health outcomes. Co-sponsors: CPEHN and Western Center.	Co-Sponsor
AB 1105	Gipson	Sickle cell disease.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would require the Department of Public Health, in collaboration with DHCS, to establish a 3-year sickle cell disease center pilot program to establish 5 sickle cell disease centers as special care centers.	Support
SB 165	Atkins	Medical interpretation services.	Senate Appropriations	Extends the medical interpretation pilot project for Medi-Cal.	Support
SB 458	Durazo	Public health: pesticide: chlorpyrifos.	Senate Environmental Quality	Prohibits the use of chlorpyrifos in pesticides which can cause brain damage and developmental delays in children and disproportionately affects agricultural workers and those in agricultural zones.	Support
SB 464	Mitchell	California Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Act.	Senate Appropriations	Requires implicit bias training for all perinatal providers and improved data collection in order to reduce the maternal mortality disparity between black women and other women in California.	Co-Sponsor
Civil Rights					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 648	Nazarian	Wellness programs.	Assembly Appropriations	Regulates wellness programs to prevent the sharing of personal information collected in such a program and to prohibit penalizing employees for not participating in wellness programs.	Support
AB 1572	Chen	Mental health services: gravely disabled.	Held in Assembly Health	Changes the definition of "gravely disabled" thereby expanding who can be conserved and creates a \$20 mil grant program to fund increased conservatorship caseloads. Now a 2-year bill.	Oppose
AB 1764	Carrillo	Forced Sterilization Compensation Program.	Assembly Public Safety	Establishes the Forced Sterilization Compensation Program to compensate victims of state-sponsored sterilization. Victims were primarily low-income people of color.	Support
SB 40	Wiener	Conservatorship: serious mental illness and substance use disorders.	Senate Public Safety	Follow up from last year's SB 1045 - removes the requirement to offer assisted outpatient treatment first.	Oppose
SB 640	Moorlach	Mental health services: gravely disabled.	Held in Senate Health	This bill changes the definition of "gravely disabled" thereby expanding who can be conserved. 2-year bill.	Oppose
Health Coverage					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 45	Stone, Mark	Inmates: medical care: fees.	Assembly Appropriations	Prohibits jails and prisons from charging inmates for medical services.	Support
AB 414	Bonta	Healthcare coverage: minimum essential coverage.	Assembly Appropriations	Reinstates the individual mandate penalty and mandates that funds collected be used to make health coverage affordable.	
AB 598	Bloom	Hearing aids: minors.	Assembly Health	This bill would require health plans to cover hearing aids for children.	
AB 810	Gipson	Organ and tissue transplantation: uninsured or undocumented individuals.	Assembly Appropriations	Requires DPH to convene a workgroup and publish a report by 1/1/21 on recommendations for covering transplants for uninsured or undocumented residents.	

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AB 1246	Limón	Healthcare coverage: basic health care services.	Assembly Appropriations	Requires large group health insurance policies to cover medically necessary prescription drugs if they cover prescription drugs.	
AB 1268	Rodriguez	Health care coverage: prospective review.	Assembly Health	Requires plans to report approvals and denials for each health care service requested when prior authorization is required.	
SB 175	Pan	Health care coverage: minimum essential coverage.	Senate Gov & Finance	Reinstates the individual mandate penalty and mandates that funds collected be used to make health coverage affordable.	
Health Plans					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 290	Wood	Health care service plans and health insurance: third-party payments.	Assembly Appropriations	Sets standards governing the reimbursement of financially interested third parties who pay patients' premiums.	
AB 731	Kalra	Health care coverage: rate review.	Assembly Appropriations	Applies the same transparency requirements for rate hikes for large group plans as for small group plans.	Support
SB 343	Pan	Healthcare data disclosure.	Senate Appropriations	Requires Kaiser to file the same information regarding rates and costs as other health plans and hospitals.	Support
SB 612	Pan	Health care: data reporting.	Senate Appropriations	This bill would require health plans, including Medi-Cal managed care plans, and medical groups to report to OSHPD information about their participation in collaboratives and activities that provide incentive payments and resources to providers for achieving clinical integration and collaboration to reduce the total cost of care and improve population health for people with high risk conditions, such as asthma, heart disease and diabetes.	
Medical Debt					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 651	Grayson	Air ambulance services.	Assembly Health	Protects insured consumers by prohibiting any payment greater than the current in-network cost-sharing amount for air ambulance services (and increases the Medi-Cal reimbursement rate for air ambulances).	Support
AB 1611	Chiu	Emergency hospital services: costs.	Assembly Health	Prohibits hospitals from charging insured individuals more in out-of-pocket costs than they would pay for contracted services in an emergency and creates a dispute resolution process for the hospital and health plan.	Support
SB 639	Mitchell	Medical services: credit or loan.	Senate Judiciary	Prohibits medical providers from offering medical credit cards with deferred interest provisions along with other consumer protections to ensure Medi-Cal recipients and others aren't wrongly signed up for medical credit cards.	Sponsor
Mental Health					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 385	Calderon	Medi-Cal: Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment mental health services: performance outcome system platform.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would require DHCS to develop a platform, or integrate with an existing platform, to support the EPSDT mental health performance outcome system that will help reduce need for assessments from different providers.	Support

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AB 389	Santiago	Substance use disorder treatment: peer navigators.	Assembly Health	This bill would establish a pilot program or expand an existing pilot program for purposes of measuring the efficacy and cost avoidance of utilizing trained substance use disorder peer navigators and behavioral health peer navigators in the emergency department of an acute care hospital.	
AB 512	Ting	Medi-Cal: specialty mental health services.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would require county mental health plans, in collaboration with stakeholders, to report on additional criteria in their cultural competency plans; require DHCS to annually review and monitor mental health disparities reduction; and develop performance targets that reduce disparities and improve mental health quality.	Support
AB 565	Maienschein	Public health workforce planning: loan forgiveness, loan repayment, and scholarship programs.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would expand Steven Thompson Physician Loan Repayment program to include physicians who serve in a county mental health plan.	
AB 1058	Salas	Medi-Cal: specialty mental health services and substance use disorder treatment.	Assembly Health	This bill would establish a pilot program in 9 counties to integrate specialty mental health services and substance use disorder treatment provided under the Medi-Cal program.	Support
AB 1175	Wood	Medi-Cal: mental health services.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would strengthen referral, care coordination, continuity of care, and dispute resolution process between Medi-Cal plans and county mental health plans. The bill would also build upon existing data requirements to inform strategies to improve access to mental health services. Cosponsors: NHeLP and Western Center.	Co-Sponsor
AB 1619	Weber	Mental Health Loan Assumption Program.	Assembly Health	This bill would appropriate \$20 million to increase the maximum grant amount for Mental Health Loan Assumption Program recipients to \$15,000 and to implement an informational outreach program to attract diverse applicants. The program is a loan forgiveness program to retain professionals working within the public mental health system.	
SB 10	Beall	Mental health services: peer, parent, transition-age, and family support specialist certification.	Assembly Appropriations	This bill would establish a Peer Support Specialist Certification Program to be administered by DHCS.	Support
SB 11	Beall	Health care coverage: mental health parity.	Senate Health	This bill would prohibit a health plan that provides prescription drug benefits for the treatment of substance use disorders from imposing any prior authorization requirements on FDA-approved prescriptions and require health plans to submit an annual report to certify compliance with state and federal parity laws.	
Other					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 204	Wood	Hospitals: community benefits plan reporting.	Assembly Appropriations	Requires OSHPD to develop regulations to standardize the calculation and reporting of hospital community benefits.	
AB 824	Wood	Business: preserving access to affordable drugs.	Assembly Appropriations	Adds agreements by drug manufacturers to keep generics off the market to the Unfair Business Practices Act.	Support
AB 875	Wicks	Pupil health: in-school support services.	Assembly Education	This bill, known as the Healthy Start Support Services for Children Act, would award grants to local educational agencies or consortia to fund programs in schools that provide support services, which include case-managed health, mental health, social, and academic support services, to eligible pupils and their families.	

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ACR 1	Bonta	Immigration: public charges.	Senate Human Services	Condemns the proposed public charge regulations.	Support
SB 24	Leyva	Public health: public university student health centers: abortion by medication techniques.	Senate Education	Requires CalStates and UCs to offer abortion by medication services.	Support

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