Advancing Care Coordination with the Pediatric Care Management System in Alameda County

Background

Access to and engagement with high-quality, culturally appropriate, clinically recommended pediatric services and supports is associated with improved lifetime outcomes for children and their families. Family feedback and research findings[1] point to the importance of care coordination in navigating to services and resources for child, family, and health system outcomes. Children go to the pediatrician up to 14 times prior to their fifth birthday – a touchpoint that can serve as a **single point of entry for screening and navigation to needed services**. Children in Medi-Cal are entitled to a more robust set of benefits than adult beneficiaries[2]. The federal Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) mandate[3] guarantees comprehensive and preventive health services for people less than 21 years who are enrolled in Medicaid. A 2018 Audit by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) finding that 2.4 million children enrolled in Medi-Cal do not receive all required preventive services and screenings[4]. *Approximately 43,000 children under age 6 are enrolled in Medi-Cal in Alameda County. We estimate that 1 in 4 have a developmental, trauma, and/or social determinant of health need.*

There is an opportunity now to leverage local, state, and federal policy to enhance local pediatric early screening and identification capacity, and care coordination through Help Me Grow (HMG) to support family access to resources.

First 5 is proposing to:

➢ *Scale developmental screening widely across pediatrics*
➢ *Scale care coordination/navigation to 10,000 to meet the needs of those 1 in 4 families*

Goals for Scale, Coordination, and Sustainability in Service to Children

Alameda County has a historic opportunity to create a stronger, more integrated, and responsive pediatric system of care.

- Build capacity in pediatric sites to conduct screening and referral.
- Nest services where parents/caregivers are already going (13 pediatric visits before age 5) and ensure that they have support to access services deemed medically necessary post-screening.
- Connect more children to preventive care and routine check-ups.
- Provide more children, ages 0-5, being screened and identified with a developmental or behavioral issue, trauma, or social determinant of health need in a timely fashion and routed care coordination support so they are connected to the appropriate service provider with a closed loop referral to the pediatric provider.
- Increase collaboration across systems and reduce duplication of services for children and families that will result in economies of scale and improved outcomes.

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[1] McNally Keehn, R., Enneking, B., Ramaker, M., Goings, M., Yang, Z., Carroll, A. and Ciccarelli, M., 2020. Family-Centered Care Coordination in an Interdisciplinary Neurodevelopmental Evaluation Clinic: Outcomes From Care Coordinator and Caregiver Reports. [online] Frontiers in Pediatrics. https://www.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fped.2020.538633

[2] The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, "EPSDT - A Guide for States: Coverage in the Medicaid Benefit for Children and Adolescents" (The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, June 2014), https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/epsdt_coverage_guide.pdf.

[3] The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, "EPSDT - A Guide for States: Coverage in the Medicaid Benefit for Children and Adolescents" (The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, June 2014), https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/epsdt_coverage_guide.pdf.

[4] Department of Health Care Services, "Millions of Children in Medi-Cal Are Not Receiving Preventive Health Services" (California State Auditor, March 2019), https://www.auditor.ca.gov/pdfs/reports/2018-111.pdf.

About Help Me Grow

Since 2009, First 5 Alameda County has served as a pediatric quality improvement funder and a care coordination provider through what is now Help Me Grow (HMG). HMG supports the early identification and intervention of developmental or behavioral concerns in young children and provides family navigation to resources. It is a national model that addresses the fragmentation of systems, and the resultant challenges families face in accessing services. Close to 80% of HMG referrals come from pediatric providers. In addition to pediatrics, HMG also partners with early care and education, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), Regional Center, and community organizations.

FY 2021-22 Help Me Grow Budget	
Total	**$3,196,926**
Prop. 10	$1,300,000
MAA	$585,000
Alameda Alliance for Health	$572,473
CHDP*	$449,344
ACSSA	$139,592
Stupski Foundation	$100,000
Aurrera Health Group	$ 50,517

Help Me Grow Services for Families and Providers
Outcomes for Children and Families

- In FY 2020-21, HMG Alameda County served 5,878 unduplicated children and provided 20,364 developmental screenings to children 0-5 through partnerships**.**
- **Approximately 85% of children receiving support through HMG are insured through Medi-Cal. In FY 20-21, 62% of families referred to HMG self-disclosed that the Alameda Alliance for Health (AAH) is their child's health plan, with an additional 10% indicating that they had Medi-Cal but were not able to identify the plan.**
- Of HMG vs non-HMG AAH members in a 2017 data match, where **78% of HMG families were identified to have AAH as their Medi-Cal plan,**
  - Average age of *developmental diagnosis was two years earlier* for HMG children
  - HMG children had *higher utilization of pediatric preventive services*
- More than *2 out of 3 children were linked to at least one service*, and *9 out of 10 families report being linked to services that* met their needs

Outcomes for Providers

- In FY 2020-21, HMG supported 729 child-serving providers with care access, training, and resources for screening and navigation.
- Over *9 out of 10 pediatricians felt HMG increased their ability to talk to families* about developmental concerns
- Almost *ALL pediatricians said that the HMG phone line was a useful resource*

Help Me Grow and Alameda Alliance for Health Partnership

- The Alameda Alliance for Health (AAH) began partnering with HMG in FY19-20 with a $165,000 Pediatric Pilot. In 2021, we launched the second phase with an additional $572,000.
- FY 2020-21 HMG outreached to over 1298 AAH families to ensure access and utilization of pediatric care and immunizations.
- In FY 2020-21 *62% (1305) of AAH children were connected to their provider for their well child visit.*
- First 5 submitted a proposal to the Alliance in January 2022 to increase the funding to $1.5 million for FY 2022-23 and hope to continue building out the screening and navigation infrastructure (programmatic, technology and financial) to ensure access to all Medi-Cal insured children.

Opportunity in Alameda County

State Landscape

- Position local work to support the State's CalAIM proposal[5] targeted at transforming the health care delivery systems across California. CalAIM's 1115 Waiver is an avenue for additional resources to support and sustain Alameda County's local pilots and provides opportunities with potential connectivity to pediatric care management - enhanced care management (ECM), community supports and population health.
- Anticipate that *CHDP will transition to the managed care plans in July 2023, per the Governor's budget[6]. Secure continued funding to HMG through the local managed care plan at the point of transfer to them of CHDP to ensure continuity and program capacity.
- Align with the new Medi-Cal Strategy to Support Health and Opportunity for Children and Families[7]
- Increase utilization of preventative care through newly established Medi-Cal reimbursement for ACEs and developmental screenings.
- Plan for potential expanded continuous Medi-Cal eligibility for children until their fifth birthday (AB 2401 Rubio). If adopted, this legislation will result in providing some stability to managed care plan revenue and "return to source" reinvestment into the children's service delivery system is appropriate.
- Implement components of the state's Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI)[8] to ensure all children and youth, regardless of payer, are screened, supported, and served for emerging and existing behavioral health needs.

Local Landscape

- Continue to grow the Help Me Grow and Alameda Alliance for Health Partnership, to expand screening and care coordination capacity for all Medi-Cal insured children.
- Ensure that all young children and their families are served as Alameda County moves to a County Organized Health System (COHS).
- Leverage philanthropic support such as the $275,000 Stupski grant (split between First 5 and UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland) to support local planning efforts to expand screening and care coordination.

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[5] California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) High Level Summary CalAIM High Level Summary
[6] Department of Health Care Services Proposal to Discontinue the Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program CHDP Public Proposal (ca.gov)
[7] Department of Health Care Services (March 2022). Medi-Cal's Strategy to Support Health and Opportunity for Children and Families. https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Documents/DHCS-Medi-Cal%27s-Strategy-to-Support-Health-and-Opportunity-for-Children-and-Families.pdf
[8] National Center for Youth Law, "School Mental Health 101: A Primer for Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans" SchoolMentalHealth101_final.pdf (cachildrenstrust.org)

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