



Correspondence
Bd. 5/10/22, Item 37

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Members:

AltaMed Health Services, Inc.
Camino Health Center
Celebrating Life Community Health Center
Center for Inherited Blood Disorders
Central City Community Health Center
CHOC Health Clinics
Families Together of OC
Family Health Matters
HOPE Clinic – NMUSD
Hurtt Family Health Center
Integrated Community Healthcare Solutions
Korean Community Services
Laguna Beach Community Clinic
Lestonnac Free Clinic
Livingstone CDC
Nhan Hoa Comprehensive Health Care Clinic
Obria Health Clinics
Radiant Health Centers
Serve The People Community Health Center
Share Our Selves Health Centers
Sierra Health Center
Southland Integrated Services
St. Jude Neighborhood Health Centers
UCI Family Health Centers
VCC The Gary Center

Isabel Becerra,
President/Chief Executive Officer

May 5, 2022

The Honorable Doug Chaffee
Supervisor, Fourth District, Orange County
Chairman, Board of Supervisors
Hall of Administration
333 W. Santa Ana Blvd.
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: CalOptima Ordinance Change to Join Covered California

Dear Supervisor Chaffee:

I am writing today on behalf of the **Coalition of Orange County Community Health Centers (Coalition OC)** to express our support for CalOptima's ordinance change to permit the County Organized Health System to offer a Covered California health plan, also known as an exchange or marketplace plan. As you know, Coalition OC serves a diverse membership of 25 independent 501(c)3 non-profit health center organizations with over 80 sites throughout Orange County. Through our primary care safety net, we serve over 370,000 patients annually and are committed to providing quality, culturally and linguistically appropriate health care services to all. As such, which we would love to see your attention and support on the matter during the two upcoming Board of Supervisors hearings on May 10 and May 24.

Orange County is fortunate to have CalOptima as a high quality Medi-Cal plan for our community's vulnerable residents. Further, CalOptima has demonstrated its longstanding commitment to the community since 1995, continually expanding its programs and the number of residents it serves. At this time, 1 in 4 Orange County residents is a CalOptima member.

The Coalition OC shares CalOptima's priority of providing continuity of care for Medi-Cal members. Many residents, due to life circumstances, such as losing or gaining employment or experiencing a family crisis, waver between being eligible for Medi-Cal and being ineligible. The temporary loss of Medi-Cal coverage in which people are enrolled and disenrolled is referred to as "churn." Having to switch insurers, find a new doctor and worry about continued access to care is chaotic, challenging and concerning — particularly for those facing chronic health conditions. If CalOptima had a Covered California plan, former Medi-Cal members could more easily transition to that plan and keep their same providers.

Further, the Coalition OC appreciates that CalOptima has shown nearly three decades of commitment to bolstering the safety net and serving the local community. CalOptima has expressed that its Covered California plan will bring revenue that can be invested back into Orange County. Recently, CalOptima committed a total of \$58 million for grants to community health centers and funding for a street medicine program to

improve homeless health services. With a new revenue stream of premium income from a Covered California plan, CalOptima will be able to further support its community-focused mission as a public agency, which is not beholden financially to shareholders with incentives counter to the mission. CalOptima has stated that it will use any profits to further enhance care and access for all in Orange County.

Like the Coalition OC, CalOptima has deep roots in Orange County and has demonstrated its ability to cultivate relationships and build provider and resource networks. We believe that CalOptima's expansion into a marketplace plan is a natural next step, and the timing is right in the post-pandemic environment. Offering residents the choice of a local health plan that knows them and our county creates a stronger health care system overall.

Again, the Coalition OC extends our full support to CalOptima's proposed Covered California plan for the benefit to both members and the community. We look forward to ensuring the the safety net of the county, our member health centers, can play an integral role in supporting and implementing these changes when the time comes. I thank you in advance for your consideration and should you need additional information on the efforts of health centers in Orange County, and our partnership with CalOptima, please feel free to contact me at ryamamoto@coalitionoc.org or (714) 352-5990.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Yamamoto", written in a cursive style.

Ryan Yamamoto, Chief Operations Officer
Coalition of Orange County Community Health Centers
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