

3 New Providers  
Joining Our  
Expanding Network

5 Reduce  
Out-of-Pocket  
Expenses

6 Important Updates to  
Your 2023 Evidence  
of Coverage

8 CDC Recommends  
Updated COVID-19  
Vaccine for Fall/  
Winter Virus Season

Quarterly Newsletter | Fall 2023

# HealthMatters



## Focusing on Your Family's Health



As we welcome the cooler temperatures and changing colors of fall, it is my pleasure to share the latest exciting changes and updates at Community Care Health (CCH).

First and foremost, it is my pleasure to introduce our new Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Thomas Utecht, who joined CCH this past July (page 3). Dr. Utecht brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to our organization and is responsible for our quality assurance program and continuously reviewing the quality of care provided to you, our members. His dedication to providing top-quality care makes him a valuable addition to our team.

In support of Dr. Utecht's efforts, I am delighted to share that we have expanded our case management services (page 4). This dedicated team provides personalized support, coordinates care, and helps our members navigate the healthcare system. We believe that no one should face health challenges alone, and our case management services are here to ensure you receive the best care possible.

Of course, a key part of getting the care you deserve is understanding what you are entitled to. In that vein, we have updated our 2023 Evidence of Coverage (EOC), to include information on new benefits that became available this year. The EOC is designed to make your healthcare experience as smooth and worry-free as possible, so we encourage you to review it carefully.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to make note of two important highlights in the month of October. First, I remind each of our members about the importance of taking an active role in their health. In October, we honor Breast Cancer Awareness Month by encouraging breast cancer screenings, but every month – and day – is the perfect time to ensure we are taking the necessary steps to enjoy a long and active life. On a more personal level, as a Hispanic myself, I take great pride in Hispanic Heritage month (September 15 – October 15) for recognizing the contributions and influence of Hispanic Americans to the history, culture, and achievements of the United States.

I want to express my gratitude for entrusting your healthcare with Community Care Health. Our entire team is dedicated to providing you with the highest level of care, and we are excited about the journey ahead. Stay well, and know that we are here to support you every step of the way.



**Aldo De La Torre**  
President, CEO  
Community Care Health



# In this issue...



## Fall 2023

- 3 CCH Welcomes New Providers into Our Expanding Network
- 4 Case Management Services: Here to Assist You in Managing Your Care
- 5 Reduce Out-of-Pocket Expenses
- 5 Services at a Glance: Important Contact Information
- 6 Important Updates to Your 2023 Evidence of Coverage
- 7 American Cancer Society Recommendations for the Early Detection of Breast Cancer
- 8 CDC Recommends Getting the Updated COVID-19 Vaccine for Fall/Winter Virus Season
- 8 Access to Care Made Easier
- 9 Medical and Behavioral Wait Times and Timely Access to Care
- 10 How CCH Continues to Support our Community



HealthMatters is a quarterly newsletter brought to you from Community Care Health. Designed to keep members abreast of the latest information impacting their health, we hope you find this a valuable resource.

# CCH Welcomes a New Chief Medical Officer



## Thomas Utecht, M.D.

Community Care Health (CCH) is excited to welcome and to introduce Dr. Thomas Utecht as our new Chief Medical Officer (CMO), overseeing CCH's clinical operations and quality of care delivered to CCH members.

Dr. Utecht grew up in Southern California and attended Loyola Marymount University. He stayed in Los Angeles and attended UCLA Medical School before heading north to Fresno to embark on his residency in Emergency Medicine. Once setting his sights on the San Joaquin Valley, he has never looked back, loving the outdoor activities available, the people, the healthcare challenges and opportunities the region presents.

In 2006, Dr. Utecht joined Community Medical Centers as the Chief Quality Officer, which started a natural arc that has led him to serving the Community family as Community Care Health's new Chief Medical Officer. "This role has been an exciting journey in the effort to provide safe, reliable, efficient, and high quality health care to our patient population."

In this role, Dr. Utecht is responsible for continuously measuring, monitoring, and improving the health care delivery system for CCH plan members, overseeing the clinical services staff, and developing strategies for improving medical outcomes to achieve clinical excellence.

Dr. Utecht also serves as the clinical spokesperson to customers, legislators, and regulators, and develops new opportunities for the health plan to partner with area hospitals and physicians.

Away from the office, his hobbies include aviation, hiking, golf, and skiing.

# New Primary Care Providers Joining Our Expanding Network

CCH continues to grow its provider network helping to give members more choice and access. We know choosing your primary care provider is a personal decision and we want you to learn more about our providers to make the best selection for you.



**Luz Adriana Garcia Aristizabal, M.D., FAAP**  
Pediatrics

**Dizon Pediatrics Copper,**  
A Member of Community Health Partners  
2066 East Copper Ave., Stes 101 and 102  
Fresno, California 93730  
Office: (559) 299-2997 Fax: (559) 701-2356

Board Certification: FAAP  
Residency: Pediatrics, Hospital Episcopal San Lucas-Ponce School of Medicine, Ponce, Puerto Rico  
Medical School: Universidad del Norte, Barranquilla, Colombia

Other Spoken Language: Spanish



**David F. Carey, M.D.**  
Family Medicine

**Dizon Medicine Copper,**  
A Member of Community Health Partners  
2066 East Copper Ave., Stes 104 and 105  
Fresno, California 93730  
Office: (559) 299-2997 Fax: (559) 701-2357

Board Certification: American Board of Family Medicine  
Residency: Contra Costa Regional Medical Center Family Medicine Residency  
Medical School: New York University School of Medicine



**Ogochukwu Molokwu, M.D., PharmD**  
Internal Medicine


**Community Primary Care – Herndon**  
1570 East Herndon Avenue  
Fresno, California 93720  
Office: (559) 603-7241  
Fax: (559) 603-7242

Board Certification: Internal Medicine  
Residency: UCSF – Fresno Medical Education Program, Internal Medicine  
Medical School: American University of Antigua College of Medicine

Other Spoken Language: Igbo



GROWING OUR TEAM & NETWORK TO DELIVER OUTSTANDING SERVICE



**Khampha Thephavong, D.O.**  
Internal Medicine

**Copeland Medical Healthcare Partners,**  
*A Member of Community Health Partners*  
7145 North Chestnut Avenue, Suite 101  
Fresno, California 93720  
Office: (559) 299-1178 Fax: (559) 326-2170

Board Certification: Internal Medicine  
Residency: University of California, San Francisco-Fresno Internal Medicine Program  
Medical School: Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine

Other Spoken Language: Laos




**Karthy Thiagarajan, M.D.**  
Family Medicine

**Community Primary Care – Milburn**  
7005 North Milburn Avenue, Suite 101  
Fresno, California 93722  
Office: (559) 603-7400  
Fax: (559) 603-7649

Board Certification: Family Medicine  
Residency: St. Luke’s Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown, Pennsylvania  
Medical School: Madras Medical College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

Other Spoken Languages: Hindi, Tamil



**Carissa Wilkins, D.O.**  
Internal Medicine

**Community Primary Care – Halifax**  
585 North Halifax Avenue, Suite 101  
Clovis, California 93611  
Office: (559) 603-7420  
Fax: (559) 603-7410

Board Certification: Internal Medicine  
Residency: Franciscan Health  
Medical School: Liberty University College of Osteopathic Medicine

For more information about our new providers, and others in our network, please visit <https://www.communityhealthpartners.org/our-providers/>

CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

# Case Management Services: Here to Assist You in Managing Your Care

As a valued member of Community Care Health (CCH), you have an added advantage of accessing our case management services to assist you in managing your care. Nurse Case Managers are experienced, licensed health care professionals who provide support and guidance.

A Registered Nurse (RN) Case Manager can assist with the following, but not limited to what is listed:

- Answering questions and providing information about the condition, illness, or injury.
- Serving as an advocate by helping navigate the health care system.
- Working with your doctor and supporting you with your treatment plan.
- Acting as a liaison and making referrals to available community, commercial and/or social services.
- Assist in identifying healthcare barriers.
- Assist with medication reconciliation.
- Support with transition of care from hospital to home.
- Coordinate and assist the need for durable medical equipment.

Case management services are part of your health plan and **free of charge**. Participation in this service is voluntary, and you can opt-out at any time.

Contact member services at 1 (855) 343-2247 and let the team know you are interested in Case Management Services.



FRIENDLY REMINDER



If you receive a bill from a provider and **it does not appear that CCH has been billed**, contact CCH Customer Service at **1 (855) 343-2247** for assistance.

# Reduce Out-of-Pocket Expenses Ensure Your Provider Is In-Network

Community Care Health (CCH) wants to ensure that members minimize any out-of-pocket costs and maximize their CCH benefits to the best of their abilities.

CCH members should be utilizing participating providers – except for emergencies and urgent care. Participating providers can be found on our CCH provider finder, <https://www.communitycarehealth.org/find-a-provider/>, or by calling customer service at 1 (855) 343-2247. When a provider refers a member to another provider, they should be referring to one that is in our network. However, this is not always the case.

As a member, you should always confirm that the provider is in network. If the provider is not in the CCH network this could impact your benefits and you could incur out-of-pocket costs. If you are referred to a non-participating provider, please let us know so we can educate our provider. For example, if a provider sends a member to a non-participating laboratory, i.e., Labcorp, a member may have to pay out-of-pocket. All members should be utilizing Quest Diagnostics, the participating laboratory services provider.

# Services at a Glance

- CCH Customer Service:** Monday – Friday, 8am-5pm, 1 (855) 343-2247
- Pharmacy Questions:** Call MedImpact 1 (844) 348-8510 or visit [medimpactdirect.com](https://medimpactdirect.com)
- Halcyon Behavioral:** 1 (888) 425-4800 or visit [halcyonbehavioral.com](https://halcyonbehavioral.com)
- PhysMetrics:** 1 (877) 519-8839 or email [info@physmetrics.com](mailto:info@physmetrics.com)
- CCH’s website:** For more information, visit [www.communitycarehealth.org](https://www.communitycarehealth.org)



# Important Updates to Your 2023 Evidence of Coverage

Provided below are some important updates to your Community Care Health 2023 Evidence of Coverage (EOC). If you have any questions regarding these updates, please call Customer Service at 1 (855) 343-2247.

**Contraception and Family Planning:** Clinical services related to the provision or use of contraception, including consultations, examinations, procedures, device insertion, ultrasound, anesthesia, patient education, referrals, and counseling, are covered services. These services do not require the approval of your primary care physician (PCP). There is no member cost-sharing for abortions and abortion-related services, including pre-abortion and follow-up services. Community Care Health covers termination of pregnancy without cost-sharing.

Covered services include FDA-approved contraceptive drugs, devices, and other products for all genders, including all FDA-approved contraceptive drugs, devices, and products available over-the-counter, when prescribed by the member’s participating provider. However, please note that a prescription will not be required for these over-the-counter items effective January 1, 2024.

**Crisis Services:** Services from 988 call centers and other crisis services providers are covered services. This includes the medically necessary treatment of a mental health or substance use disorder, including behavioral health crisis services, provided by a 988 center, mobile crisis team, or other provider of behavioral health crisis services, whether in-network or out-of-network, at the in-network benefit level. “Behavioral health crisis services” means the



continuum of services to address crisis intervention, crisis stabilization, and crisis residential treatment needs of those with a mental health or substance use disorder crisis that are wellness, resiliency, and recovery oriented.

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988 or chat <https://988lifeline.org/>. 988 offers 24/7 access to trained crisis counselors that provide free and confidential support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.



**CARE Court Services:** Health plans are required to cover services specified under the Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment (CARE) Act. The CARE Act authorizes certain persons to petition a court to create a voluntary CARE agreement or a court-ordered CARE plan. The CARE agreement or plan provides for behavioral health care, including stabilization medication, housing, and other services, by county behavioral health agencies to adults who are experiencing a severe mental illness and have a diagnosis of schizophrenia or another psychotic disorder. Covered services include the cost of developing a CARE evaluation, and all health care services when required or recommended pursuant to a CARE agreement or plan. More information on the CARE Act can be found at <https://www.chhs.ca.gov/care-act/>.



## American Cancer Society Recommendations for the Early Detection of Breast Cancer

Finding breast cancer early and getting state-of-the-art cancer treatment are two of the most important strategies for preventing deaths from breast cancer. Breast cancer that’s found early, when it’s small and has not spread, is easier to treat successfully. Getting regular screening tests is the most reliable way to find breast cancer early. The American Cancer Society has screening guidelines for women at average risk of breast cancer, and for those at high risk for breast cancer.

### What are screening tests?

Screening refers to tests and exams used to find a disease in people who don’t have any symptoms. Early detection means finding and diagnosing a disease earlier than if you’d waited for symptoms to start.

Breast cancers found during screening exams are more likely to be smaller and less likely to have spread outside the breast. The size of a breast cancer and how far it has spread are some of the most important factors in predicting the prognosis (outlook) of a woman with this disease.



### American Cancer Society screening recommendations for women at average breast cancer risk:

These guidelines are for women at average risk for breast cancer. For screening purposes, a woman is considered to be at average risk if she doesn’t have a personal history of breast cancer, a strong family history of breast cancer, or a genetic mutation known to increase risk of breast cancer (such as in a BRCA gene), and has not had chest radiation therapy before the age of 30.

- **Women between 40 and 44** have the option to start screening with a mammogram every year.
- **Women 45 to 54** should get mammograms every year.
- **Women 55 and older** can switch to a mammogram every other year, or they can choose to continue yearly mammograms. Screening should continue as long as a woman is in good health and is expected to live at least 10 more years.
- **All women** should understand what to expect when getting a mammogram for breast cancer screening – what the test can and cannot do.



Source: <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/screening-tests-and-early-detection/american-cancer-society-recommendations-for-the-early-detection-of-breast-cancer.html>




# CDC Recommends Updated COVID-19 Vaccine for Fall/Winter Virus Season

The Center for Disease Control recommends everyone six months and older get an updated COVID-19 vaccine to protect against the potentially serious outcomes of COVID-19 illness this fall and winter.

Vaccination remains the best protection against COVID-19-related hospitalization and death. Vaccination also reduces your chance of suffering the effects of Long COVID, which can develop during or following acute infection and last for an extended duration. If you have not received a COVID-19 vaccine in the past two months, get an updated COVID-19 vaccine to protect yourself this fall and winter.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is always changing, and protection from COVID-19 vaccines declines over time. Receiving an updated COVID-19 vaccine can restore protection and provide enhanced protection against the variants currently responsible for most infections and hospitalizations in the United States. Last season, those who received a 2022-2023 COVID-19 vaccine saw greater protection against illness and hospitalization than those who did not receive a 2022-2023 vaccine. To date, hundreds of millions of people have safely received a COVID-19 vaccine under the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2023/p0912-COVID-19-Vaccine.html>



## It's Flu Season

We encourage our CCH members to get their flu vaccine at in-network pharmacies or with your CCH PCP. There is a \$0 co-pay when utilizing these in-network benefits. The flu shot is available at most pharmacies near you. To find an in-network pharmacy in your area, please visit <https://www.communitycarehealth.org/find-a-pharmacy/>

MEMBERS CORNER

# Access to Care Made Easier

## No Cost Interpreter/Translation Services



-  Get the **Interpreter Services you need**. If you need help talking to your doctor, understanding medical information or obtaining care, please call our **Customer Service Department**.
-  We have **representatives who can access Interpreter Services in over 100 languages**.
-  You may also be able to **get written materials in your preferred language**.

**Call Us at 1 (855) 343-2247**

Let us know your preferred language when you call. We're glad to help.

# Medical and Behavioral Wait Times and Timely Access to Care

## Timely Access To Care

Health Plans in California must ensure that you have timely access to their physicians and other providers when seeking care. This means that there are limits on how long you have to wait to get an appointment and telephone advice. The wait times are shown in the chart below. Some exceptions to the wait times apply. Sometimes waiting longer for care is not a problem. A provider may give a you a longer wait time if they determine it would not be harmful to your health. In this event, the provider will note in your record that a longer wait time will not be harmful to your health. If you have questions, please call Community Care Health's Member Services Department at 1 (855) 343-2247.



Appointment Type	Standard
Access to non-urgent appointments with a Primary Care Physician (PCP) for regular and routine primary care services	Appointment is offered within 10 business days from time of the request
Access to Urgent Care services with a PCP that do not require prior authorization - includes appointment with a physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant in office	Appointment is offered within 48 hours from time of the request
Access to after-hours care with a PCP	Ability for Member to contact an on-call physician after hours; return call within 30 minutes PCP provides appropriate after-hours emergency instructions
Access to non-Urgent Care appointments with a Specialist	Appointment is offered within 15 business days from time of the request
Access to Urgent Care services that require prior authorization with a Specialist or other provider	Appointment is offered within 96 hours from time of the request
Telephone triage and screening	Provided within 30 minutes Available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week
Non-urgent appointments for ancillary services for the diagnosis or treatment of an injury, illness or other health condition	Appointment is offered within 15 business days from time of request
Non-urgent appointments with a mental health or substance use disorder provider (who is not a physician)	Appointment is offered within 10 business days from time of request
Non-urgent <b>follow-up</b> appointments with a non-physician mental health or substance use disorder provider for members undergoing a course of treatment for an ongoing mental health or substance use disorder condition	Appointment is offered within 10 business days <b>of the prior appointment</b>

**Timely Access to Care:** When a covered service is not available from a network provider within geographic and timely access standards, Community Care Health will arrange for you to get services from an out-of-network provider, including any necessary follow-up services. You will pay no more than the same cost-sharing that you would pay for the same covered services received from a network provider

## Other Regulatory Requirements:

**After Hours Care:** You should be able to reach a recorded message or live voice response providing emergency instructions and for non-emergent (urgent) matters information when to expect to receive a call back.

**Emergency Care:** Providers should instruct their after-hours answering service staff that if the caller is experiencing an emergency, the caller should be instructed to dial 911 or to go directly to the nearest emergency room. Answering machine instructions must also direct the member to call 911 or go the nearest emergency room if the caller is experiencing an emergency.



# Central California Women’s Conference

Community Care Health was once again a proud sponsor, along with Community Health System, of the Central California Women’s Conference (CCWC) serving women of all generations, ethnicities, and backgrounds. The forum educates and facilitates idea sharing about how to succeed personally and professionally in life while juggling the increasingly complex and diverse demands of family and community. Now in its 34th year, CCWC is the largest gathering of women in Central California, drawing crowds of 3,500+ women. It is one of the largest women’s conferences in California. For women who are struggling, CCWC has donated more than \$1,350,000 to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that support women and children. These nonprofits provide resources to Central Valley residents through services such as emergency and homeless shelters; domestic violence and sexual assault assistance, treatment and prevention; and parenting classes and family counseling.



The mission of the Central California Women’s Conference is to empower and transform women in all stages of their lives.

# CCH Supporting the Community with Educational Scholarships

## Janessa Ramirez Scholarship Program

In 2015, a memorial scholarship was launched to honor Janessa Ramirez, a 4th-grade student who lost her life to gang violence. In April of 2016 the first annual Janessa Ramirez Scholarship Awards took place, and six outstanding Central Unified Seniors were each awarded a \$2,500 scholarship. Since then, the Foundation for Central Schools has grown the program to now award ten scholarships annually. Her story has inspired so many people within our community, especially many students in the class of 2022, which Janessa would have been a part of. Community Care Health (CCH) has proudly been a part of this scholarship program. In each of the last three years, CCH has donated \$7,500, which enabled a significant increase in scholarship awards. To date \$137,500 has been awarded to honor the memory of Janessa Ramirez and the power of education and change.



# What’s Happening

... around town and at Community Medical Centers



NOV 23, 2023

## TURKEY RUNS FRESNO & CLOVIS

Run or walk Fresno’s Annual Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning and your entry contributes to local charities. The 5K is chip-timed with cash awards to overall male and female winners, and unique awards for those who place in age groups. The walk is not timed.

**Fresno:**  
<https://www.bikesignup.com/Race/CA/Fresno/SierraChallengeExpressTurkeyTrot>

**Clovis:**  
<https://www.bikesignup.com/Race/CA/Clovis/ClovisTurkeyDayRun>



## THE NUTCRACKER

**A MUST-SEE VALLEY TRADITION!** Central California Ballet’s highly entertaining Nutcracker Ballet has been recognized in Dance Magazine for its resurrection of the vengeful Mouse Queen from E.T.A. Hoffmann’s original Nutcracker fairy tale. The whole family will delight in the festive Party Scene, the Battle of the Nutcracker General and the Mouse King, and Marie’s Journey to the Land of Sweets where she meets the Sugar Plum

Fairy and all the other beloved Nutcracker characters dancing to the beautiful Tchaikovsky music.

For more information, visit <https://events.fresnoconventioncenter.com/central-ca-ballet-the-nutcracker>



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For tickets and hours visit  
<https://fresnochaffeezoo.org/experiences/kingdoms-of-asia/>



Community Care Health  
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Fresno, CA 93718  
1 (855) 343-2247  
[communitycarehealth.org](http://communitycarehealth.org)

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Committed to Providing  
Quality Health Care Services  
for the Central Valley



## Have a Question? CCH Is Here to Help

As your local health plan, CCH is available to provide assistance, whether you have a billing question, need help finding a provider - or any other issue you may have.

There are a number of ways to get in touch.  
Choose the one best for you.

**Phone:** 1 (855) 343-2247, Monday - Friday, 8am-5pm,  
excluding Federal Holidays

**Email:** [customerservice@communitycarehealth.org](mailto:customerservice@communitycarehealth.org)

**Mail:** P.O. Box 45026, Fresno, California, 93718

Your Voice  
Matters

**Have a story to share, questions or comments?**

Please contact customer service at 1 (855) 343-2247 or  
email: [CustomerService@communitycarehealth.org](mailto:CustomerService@communitycarehealth.org)