



ASSEMBLYMEMBER JOAQUIN ARAMBULA, M.D. 31ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

AB 2680 – Community Health Navigators

Summary

AB 2680 advances health equity by connecting trusted community messengers with historically excluded low-income Californians in order to help enroll, retain, and encourage the utilization of Medi-Cal benefits in these vulnerable populations.

Background

Medi-Cal currently serves about 13 million Californians, the majority of which are people of color or speak English as their second language. This number will soon increase to approximately 14.6 million Californians according to California’s Department of Health Care Services (DHCS).¹ This growth is partly due to efforts to help people stay enrolled during the COVID-19 public health emergency, as well as the upcoming Health4All Medi-Cal expansion to all income-eligible Californians regardless of immigration status.

In 2019, California passed AB 74 which established a pilot program for Community Health Navigators. Community Health Navigators (“Navigators”) are a critical and effective community-based tool for removing obstacles to health care for many low-income communities of color, immigrants, and other Limited English Proficient (LEP) groups. They serve as an invaluable resource to communities who have often gone without health care coverage for generations due to lack of awareness or ability to navigate complex enrollment systems. The funding from that pilot project will be ending on June 2022, leaving a gap for the thousands of Californians that have come to rely on the expertise of Navigators.

The state needs to establish a new program to ensure that Navigators can continue to provide life-saving services to enroll, retain, and encourage utilization of Medi-Cal benefits. With the expected influx of people that will be eligible for Medi-Cal, either due to the COVID-19 pandemic or efforts to expand benefits to undocumented Californians, it is critical now more than ever to ensure the State has the infrastructure to readily serve the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse communities.

¹ [DHCS 2022-23 Governor’s Budget Highlights](#)

Addressing the needs of low-income Californians requires utilizing Navigators through Community Based Organizations (CBOs), who are uniquely positioned, trained, and experienced in the community. Most importantly, they have well-established, trusting relationships and a sociocultural understanding of the populations they serve.

Current Law

Stats 2019, Ch 23, the 2019 Budget Act allocated funds toward Community Health Navigator pilot programs.

Stats 2021, Ch 76 established a similar program for Community Navigators assisting connections between families and generic services as well as community centers.

This Bill

AB 2680:

- 1) Creates the Community Health Navigator Program within DHCS to make direct grants to qualified CBOs to conduct targeted outreach, enrollment, retention, utilization, and access activities for individuals and families eligible for Medi-Cal;
- 2) Prioritizes CBOs that can serve the following populations: immigrants, LEP groups, homeless, seniors, disabled, pending release from incarceration or formerly incarcerated, and LGBTQ+.
- 3) Provides training and technical assistance to grant recipients;
- 4) Requires evaluation and reporting of reaching state and regional outreach and enrollment goals;
- 5) Requires coordination between CoveredCA, state, and local entities to ensure a seamless approach to enrolling all Californians in health care coverage.

AB 2680 has a companion 2022-23 Budget proposal.

Support

California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (Sponsor)
AAPI Equity Alliance
Abrazar, Inc.
Access Reproductive Justice
API Equity-LA
Asian Pacific Health Care Venture, Inc.



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Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement
Asian Resources, Inc.
Association of Regional Center Agencies
Be Smooth, Inc.
California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies
California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Medical Association
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc.
California School-Based Health Alliance
Centro La Familia Advocacy Services
Child and Family Guidance Center
Children Now
City of Long Beach
Clinica Monseñor Oscar A. Romero
Coalition for Human Immigrant Rights
Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County
Crystal Stairs, Inc.
Cultiva La Salud
Dignity Health – California Hospital Medical Center
Dignity Health St. Mary Medical – Families in Good Health
East Los Angeles Women’s Center
Emanate Health
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities
Having Our Say Coalition
Health Access California
Healthy San Gabriel Valley
Jovenes, Inc.
Justice in Aging
Korean American Coalition – Los Angeles
Korean Community Center of the East Bay
LAC+USC Medical Center Foundation, Inc.
Maternal and Child Health Access
Mi Familia Vota
Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project
Multi-Ethnic Collaborative of Community Agencies
National Association of Social Workers, CA Chapter
National Health Law Program
Pacific Asian Counseling Services
Prime Healthcare Services – St. Francis Medical Center
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention
South Asian Network
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
Tarzana Treatment Center
Thai Community Development Center
The Cambodian Family Community Center
The Children’s Partnership
The Fresno Center

Valley Community Healthcare
Venice Family Clinic
Vision y Compromiso
Western Center on Law & Poverty
Women’s Foundation California
Worksite Wellness LA

For More Information

K. Jones, Ph.D. (they/them/theirs)
Office of Assemblymember Dr. Arambula
K.Jones@asm.ca.gov or (916) 319-2031