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Call us at (800) 863-4155 for any changes to your private health insurance plan through your work, private pay, or Senior Advantage health plan.

Changes that are not reported could cause a delay when filling prescriptions or seeing your doctor.

Has your address changed?

New phone number? Let us know.

PARTNERSHIP



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Together for your
HEALTH

The Affordable Care Act and You

Since there has been so much in the news about health care these days, it's important that you hear from us about your health care coverage. It is a top priority that our members have access to high quality health care.

There are many changes to the Medi-Cal (also called Medicaid) program. These changes are being considered by President Trump and federal legislators. The attempts to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (the ACA or Obamacare) so far have not occurred. About 30% of our members receive Medi-Cal benefits due to the ACA. We are working hard to show why our members should be able to keep their coverage. Studies show that our

members use the emergency room much less because they have access to primary care. It is vital to the overall health of our members to have access to:

- Primary care providers
- Hospitals
- Pharmacies
- Specialist physicians and other services

The first step to getting these services is to have health care coverage, which you do as a PHC member.

We will continue to monitor possible changes to the Medi-Cal program. If and when these changes become final, we will keep you informed about how they will affect you. Until then, if you have questions or concerns about your health coverage, please call us at **(800) 863-4155**. ❖

Changes for the CCS Program are Being Postponed

In our last newsletter, we shared that Governor Brown signed a bill to form a new program. It is called the Whole Child Model (WCM) for California Children's Services (CCS). Under this model, we will be responsible for the health care for CCS children. The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) plans to start the WCM in **January 2019**. This will involve all fourteen counties we serve.

CCS is a state program for children with certain health problems. Children up to 21 years old can get the health care and services they need through this program. The program for each county varies greatly by geography, size and funding.

We are committed to working with our counties to give the best care to our CCS children and their families. Please call us for more information at **(800) 863-4155**. ❖



HEALTH AWARENESS CORNER

AUGUST:
Immunization Month



OCTOBER:
Prescription Month



Vaccines Will Protect You and Your Family

Vaccines help protect you from diseases. It lowers your chances of getting certain illnesses and even dying. School begins soon. As a reminder vaccines are required for kids to attend either a private or public schools. Parents who homeschool may not be held to these rules. If a child just started receiving vaccines that require a series of doses, they will be allowed to attend school. However, the child must receive the next dose when it is due. Talk with your child's doctor and school nurse about vaccines.

It is the law that all children entering the seventh grade receive a Tdap vaccine.

Flu vaccines are recommended for everyone each year. It is safe. It is very important for pregnant women to get a flu shot. Pregnant women who get the flu are at risk for serious health problems and may need to be hospitalized.

Newborns can die from whooping cough. It is a disease that is easily spread to newborns. It is spread from person to person, mostly by coughing or sneezing. Infants most often get whooping cough from family members. Pregnant women should get a whooping cough booster shot (Tdap) with each pregnancy, even if they had one before. They should get their shot between 27 and 36 weeks of pregnancy. This will help protect their unborn baby.

Make sure that everyone that comes in contact with your newborn is protected against whooping cough. This should be done at least two weeks before close contact with the infant.

Talk with your doctor about getting the flu and Tdap shots. ❖

October is "Talk About Your Prescription" Month

When you see a doctor, you are likely to leave the office with a prescription. The doctor may spend 30 seconds to a minute telling you how to take the medication and what side effects to expect. Most will nod their head, thank the doctor, and go to the pharmacy. The pharmacist may spend the same amount of time to explain the medication before you hurry out of the pharmacy to go home because you are sick and tired. You may wonder what the main thing the doctor and pharmacist said about the medicine. Were you supposed to take it with food? Will the medicine make you sleepy?

Taking medicine will help you get better but only when taken the right way. It is vital that you take the time to talk to your doctor and pharmacist about your medications. This is true when you are taking the medicine for the first time. Talking about your medications will help you take them correctly and safely. Here are some questions you should ask your doctor and pharmacist.

- What am I taking this medication for and how will it help me?
- How and when should I take this medication?
- Where and how should I store the medication?
- How long will I need to take this medication?
- What should I do if I forget to take the medication?
- When should I expect to feel better?
- What are the side effects of this medication?

Many of us take one or more medications every day. It is vital for you to talk with your doctor and pharmacist about all the medications you take including the ones you get over-the-counter. Understanding your medications and taking them correctly will help you live longer, better, and healthier. ❖



PHC Drug Formulary

The formulary is a list of drugs that are covered by us. The drugs are chosen by doctors and pharmacists. They are part of our Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Committee. This committee makes sure that the drugs chosen are proven effective, safe, and are cost-effective.

The P&T Committee meets every three months. They talk about any drugs that should be added or taken off the list. All drugs on the list are covered by us. Some drugs are special and are covered only under certain reasons. For example, in order for Victoza to be covered, you must have filled metformin and a long-acting insulin in the past 90 days or the Victoza must be prescribed by a specialist. These reasons are vital. It helps our doctors use the most safe and cost-effective drugs.

There are some drugs on the list that are covered but only at certain limits. For example, some drugs like Victoza are

covered only when the patient is older than 18. Another example of a limit, is the amount of medication that we cover. The drug Celebrex has limits. We cover only 2 pills of Celebrex per day. Taking more than two pills per day is not appropriate. It can be harmful. The limits that are put in place for certain covered drugs help make sure your medication treatments are safe and appropriate.

If a medicine is not on the list or not covered, your pharmacy can send a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) form to us asking that the drug be covered. The form must give reasons why you need it. The pharmacy will work with your doctor to get the reasons on the form.

To see what drugs are covered and for more formulary information, please visit our website at <http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Pharmacy/Pages/Formularies.aspx>. ❖

Healthy Recipe to Try

Baked Honey Mustard Chicken

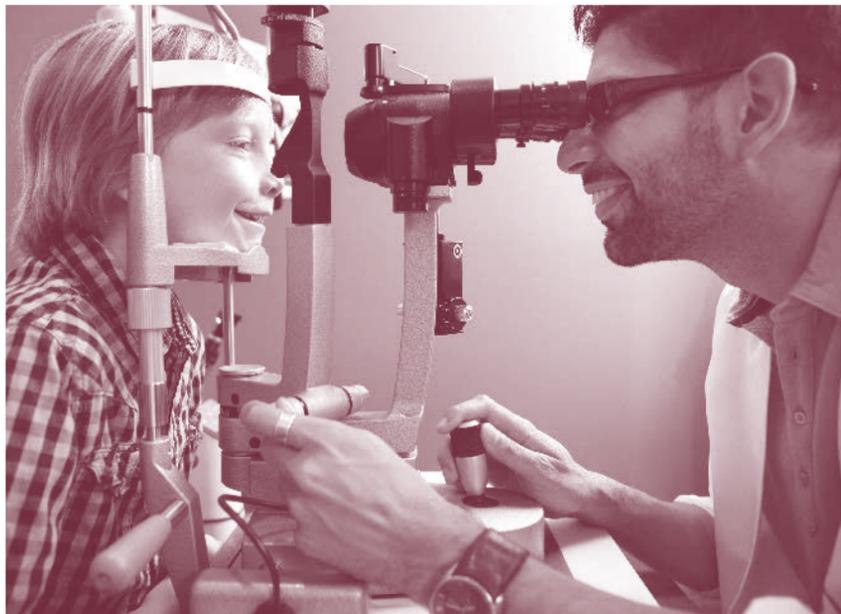


Ingredients

- 6 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ½ cup honey
- ½ cup prepared mustard
- 1 teaspoon of dried basil
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- ½ teaspoon dried parsley

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Sprinkle chicken breasts with salt and pepper to taste, and place in a lightly greased 9x13 inch baking dish. In a small bowl, combine the honey, mustard, basil, paprika, and parsley. Mix well. Pour ½ of this mixture over the chicken, and brush to cover.
3. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes. Turn chicken pieces over and brush with the remaining ½ of the honey mustard mixture. Bake for an additional 10 to 15 minutes, or until chicken is no longer pink and juices run clear. Let cool 10 minutes before serving.



American Academy of Pediatrics (AAPs) Bright Futures

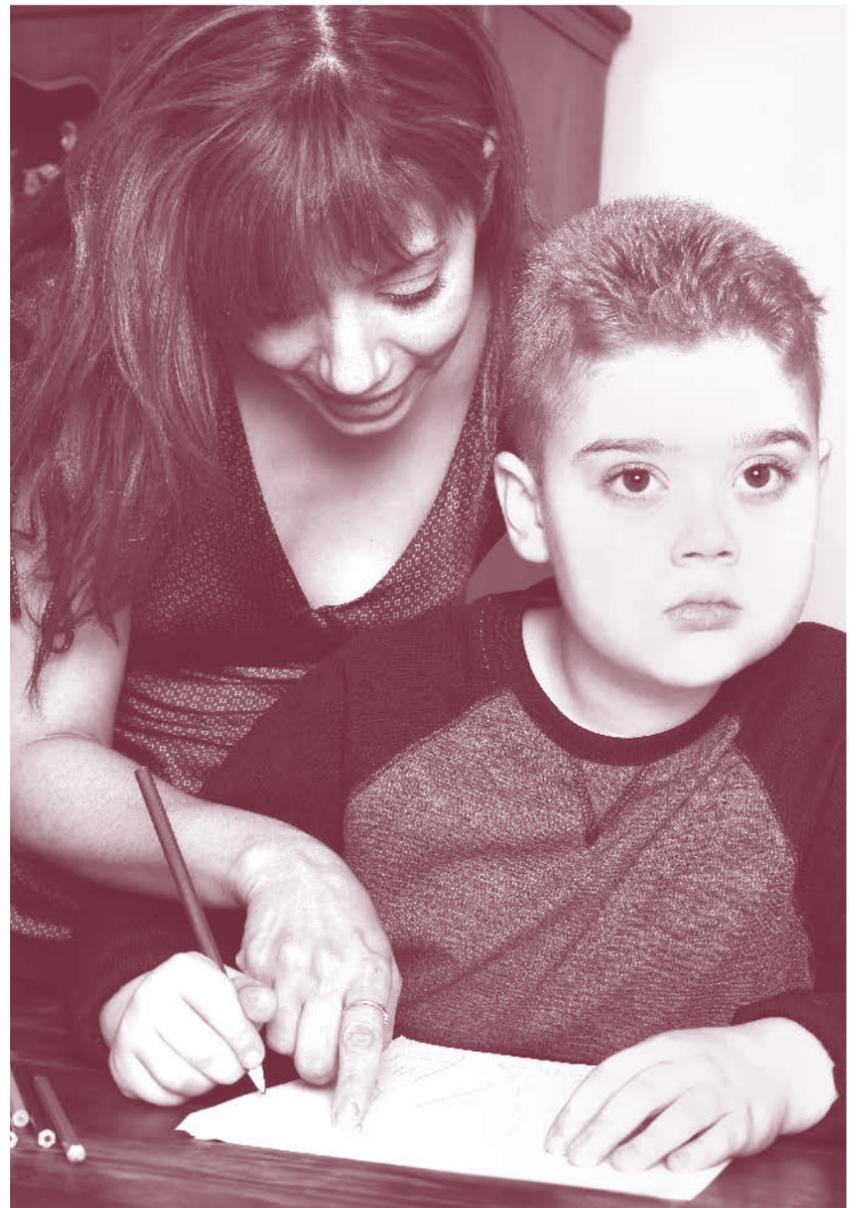
One of the most important tests your child can get growing up is one they cannot study for: a vision test. The AAPs Bright Futures guidelines recommend yearly vision screening from 3-6 years old. This is typically done with the familiar letter chart, or one with pictures for younger children unfamiliar with the alphabet. These tests will need the child to cooperate.

From testing the ability to follow light, focus on faces, and checking for crossed eyes, eye exams start in infancy. Early identification of conditions called amblyopia are vital to treating the problems as early as possible. One type of amblyopia is commonly known as lazy eye. This condition has an eye (or eyes) out of normal position which can lead to vision loss. The earlier the treatment the better the result.

There are new devices to screen younger or uncooperative children. These devices test infants as young as 6 months of age. They require very little cooperation and are useful for children with developmental delays. This provides early discovery of some problems that may not be found during routine well-child exams.

For school-aged children normal vision is necessary for them to learn properly. It has been estimated that 80% of learning relies on vision – from reading textbooks to computer screens.

Early vision testing is a way to know that the doctor is looking out for your child's vision health. ❖



Early Interventions for Developmental Delays in Children

What should I do if my child is less than 3 years old and is not meeting his/her milestones or may have a disability? If you are worried about your child's progress, start by talking to your child's doctor. Your child's doctor can test to find out if there are issues that need follow-up, monitoring or treatment. If your child has been diagnosed with a developmental delay or disability he/she may qualify for support and services. These services are offered through your local Regional Center. The Regional Center provides specialized services and support for children and adults with disabilities. There is no cost to you. Services provided through the Regional Center includes: Early intervention for children less than 3 years old includes:

- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Feeding Therapy
- Parental Support
- Skills Training
- Independent/Supportive Living/ Vocational Training
- Medical Consents

If you believe your child might need these services, call your local Regional Center:

- Yolo County: Alta California Regional Center **(916) 978-6400**
- Lassen, Modoc, Shasta, Siskiyou, Trinity Counties: Far Northern Regional Center **(530) 222-4791**
- Marin County: Golden Gate Regional Center **(415) 546-9222**
- Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino and Lake Counties: Redwood Coast Regional Center **(707) 445-0893**
- Napa, Solano, and Sonoma Counties: NorthBay Regional Center **(707) 256-1100**

What is Behavioral Health Treatment (BHT) for Autism?

How do I find out if my child needs it? BHT provides therapy to children that have been diagnosed with autism. If you feel your child might have autism, or may benefit from BHT services, please talk to your child's doctor. You can also call our Care Coordination Team at **(800) 809-1350** and ask for help getting your child tested for autism or BHT services. ❖

Protect Your Child from Lead Poisoning

Lead is a **very** toxic metal, mostly for young children. It can affect nearly every system in their bodies. Small amounts can cause learning disabilities and major health problems. High levels can cause harm to their brain and even death.

Tips to Protect Your Children from Lead Poisoning:

- Tell your doctor if your child lives in, or spends a lot of time in a place built before 1978 that has peeling or chipped paint or that has been remodeled lately.
- Tell your doctor if you have recently immigrated or adopted a child from a country with high levels of environmental lead, such as: Egypt, China, India, Thailand, Mexico and Peru.
- Do not allow your children to put car keys into their mouths.
- If anyone in your house works where lead dust could get on their clothes be sure that the person changes clothes before hugging your child.
- Keep your children away from peeling paint.
- Be careful when using items from other countries such as clay pots and dishes.
- Some candies, spices, health remedies and cosmetics made outside of the United States can have lead.
- Candies that have tamarind, chili powder, or salt from mines in certain parts of the world, may have high lead levels. Be alert. A high level of lead was found in a jar of La Tia Mana skin cream.
- Wash toys, pacifiers, and window sills often.
- Wash your children's hands before eating.

If You are Pregnant

- Do not use imported spices, snack foods, health remedies, cosmetics or clay pots.
- Never eat non-food items such as clay, pottery, soil, or paint chips.
- Get a blood test if you think you may have been exposed to lead. Your unborn baby will have the same lead level as yours.
- Children born to mothers with lead poisoning may have learning and behavioral problems

Lead has been removed from many household products and supplies in recent years. Still, it is a good plan to get a simple blood test at your doctor's office that can detect lead poisoning. It is recommended that children ages 12 months and 24 months get screened for lead. If testing is not done at these ages, then your child should be screened up to age 72 months. Sometimes older children can be tested as well. If lead is found in the blood, the doctor might do a second test. Other members in your home might need to be tested too.

It is vital to know that high levels of lead need urgent medical treatment. Lead poisoning doesn't end there. You will need to find the source of the lead and get rid of it. Your doctor can help with this.

To learn more, call the National Lead Information Center at **(800) 424-5323**. Also, lead detection kits may be available at your local hardware store. ❖

Source: State of California Department of Public Health



Well-Child Visits – Infants to Teens

Even when your child is healthy, check-ups are important. They will help to keep your child healthy. During check-ups you can discuss any concerns that you have. Your child's doctor will review your child's routine health, growth, and progress and will give your child needed health services, such as:

- Health visits (head to toe physicals)
- Vision, hearing and TB skin testing and lab services
- Shots
- Tracking your child's growth
- Sending your child to other doctors if needed

If you are new to PHC, it is very important for your child to see a doctor soon. This is a time to get to know each other and review your child's health status.

For infants, many well-child visits during the first and second years of life should happen. Children and teens should get a well visit once a year. With the help of on-going well-child visits, your child's doctor can often find and address health problems before they become worse.

Make your child's appointments in advance. Write down questions you want to ask and talk about. Well-child visits are the time to ask and get facts about:

- Health and safety
- Nutrition and diet
- Physical fitness and general health care
- Sleep habits
- How well your child is growing
- Problems such as learning, or concerns about teen years

A visit when your child is sick focuses on a problem and the doctor will not have enough time to do a full exam and cover all important preventive health and education topics. To get your doctor's full attention, your child will need a well-child visit. Please make your child's appointment right away. ❖

Protect Yourself and Your Children from Cervical Cancer

HPV (human papillomavirus) is a very common infection. It spreads through sexual activity. About 79 million Americans currently have HPV. However, many people with HPV don't know they are infected. HPV is also a major cause of cervical cancer. Each year, more than 12,000 women in the United States get cervical cancer.

The Good News:

- The HPV shot can prevent HPV
- Cervical cancer can often be prevented

Regular screening tests, sometimes called pap tests are the best way to detect any changes. Always follow-up care with your doctor.

Partnership HealthPlan Encourages:

- Women to start getting regular pap tests at age 21
- Parents to make sure pre-teens get the HPV vaccine at age 11 or 12

Teens and young adults also need to get the HPV vaccine if they didn't get it as preteens. Women up to age 26 and men up to age 21 can still get the vaccine.

Taking small steps can help keep you safe and healthy.

For more details about cervical cancer screening, ask your doctor at your next visit.

For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/index.htm>. ❖

*Source: Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

Intimate Partner Violence

Also known as Domestic Violence

- Are you worried about your relationship?
- Are you ever afraid of your partner?
- Does your partner tell you what to do and who to see?
- Has your partner ever threatened to harm you?
- Has your partner ever pushed or hit you, thrown things at you, or forced you to have sex?
- Does your partner threaten to have you deported?

You Are Not Alone

Abuse happens in all cultures, every country, all age groups, and it may be happening to you. If you are being abused, you may feel:

- Frightened
- Disappointed
- Ashamed
- Hurt
- Angry
- Hopeless
- Confused

Your partner might make it worse by blaming you. No one deserves to be abused or threatened. You may not be able to stop your partner's abuse, but you can find help and get support for yourself.

What You Can Do

Talk with someone you trust; a friend, family member, or a member of the clergy.

Put together an Emergency Kit of things you would really need if you had to leave quickly, such as your ID, medicine, keys, and money.

Call the **National Domestic Violence Hotline at (800) 799-SAFE (799-7233) or (800) 787-3224 (TTY)** to find out about domestic violence shelters and programs in your area. **Call 911 if you are in immediate danger.**

Remember, you are the expert about your own life. Don't let anyone talk you into doing something that is not right for you. There is no excuse for intimate partner violence. ❖

PHC Member Services (800) 863-4155

If you have problems or questions about your medical care you should call us. We are available to help you Monday – Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm. We can help you with issues such as:

- General information about medical benefits
- Selecting or changing your doctor or medical group
- Requesting a new PHC ID card
- Problems with medical bills
- Problems or complaints about your medical care
- Problems getting appointments
- Problems getting your prescription filled
- Requesting interpreting services

PHC Offers Interpreter Services

If you need an interpreter for your health appointments, one will be available for you. Just ask your doctor. We also offer face-to-face interpreting services. **However, it must be approved by PHC in advance.** You do not need children, friends or family members to interpret for you. There is no cost to you or your doctor for this service.

We translate all written materials in many languages. It's easy, just ask. If your language needs have not been met, you have the right to file a complaint or an appeal. You can also go to our website titled "File a Member Complaint, Appeal or Hearing information." Call us at **(800) 863-4155** for more information. ❖



Tips for You to Quit Smoking

Smoking is the largest preventable cause of illness and early death. It doesn't matter how old you are or how long you've smoked, it is important to quit. Quitting smoking reduces your risk of lung cancer, heart disease, stroke and lung disease. The health benefits start as soon as you quit smoking.

- **After 20 minutes** your blood pressure starts to decrease
- **After 24 hours** your chance of having a heart attack is less
- **After 1 year** your risk of heart disease is decreased
- **After 5 to 15 years** your risk of stroke is reduced

There are many ways to quit smoking. You may even have to try different ways before you succeed, but don't get discouraged. The important thing is that you quit. Keep in mind that it's never too late – especially if you're living with a chronic disease.

Tips for You to Quit:

- Admit the problem to yourself and those around you.
- Keep track of when and why you smoke.
- Set a quit date.
- Limit the time you spend with people who smoke.
- Write down the list of reasons to quit smoking.
- Keep the list with you to remind yourself of the reasons you want to quit.
- Talk to your doctor about treatment options.

To learn more about tobacco and classes, call **1(800) NO-BUTTS**. ❖

TOPS (Take off Pounds Sensibly)

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), is a common sense approach to managing weight. TOPS also promotes maintaining good health. Enrolled members attend weekly meetings. They share tips on losing weight. They also exchange recipes. They encourage and support each other. The staff is all volunteers. The TOPS weight loss program is non-profit and non-commercial.

This program is offered to all eligible PHC members. Are you ready to stop dieting and start making real life changes?

We will pay your membership for one year. Some TOPS locations charge a chapter fee (on average \$5.00 per month). We do not pay chapter fees.

To join TOPS or get more facts, call us at **(800) 863-4155**. ❖



How to Help Yourself After a Traumatic Event

Most people like to be in control of their lives. Many people make plans. They feel prepared for the future. They are secure in the present. When something like a natural disaster or traumatic event wrecks their plans, it can take a while to feel safe and secure again.

There are steps people can take to build resiliency and regain control:

- Find support
- Re-establish your routine
- Educate and prepare yourself
- Limit media
- Practice self-care

If feelings of helplessness, despair, or anxiety don't ease, or if it is difficult to get through your day, consider seeing a mental health specialist.

Having healthy fear is a positive in many situations. For example, fear keeps you from making life-threatening decisions or straying from important life choices. But sometimes fear can hold you or a loved one back from what you really want out of life.

Do you feel you have too much fear? Learning how fears take shape can help you release them a little. ❖

Beacon Health Options provides mental health services for Partnership HealthPlan of California members. To access these services, please call (855) 765-9703.

Are You Struggling to Keep Your Commercial Health Insurance?

Are you between jobs and need help paying for your COBRA premium?

- Do you need help paying for your commercial health insurance coverage?
- Do you or a family member have a serious illness?

If you answered Yes to both questions, **we may be able to help pay for your health insurance premium.** Please call us at **(800) 863-4155** and ask about the Continuation of Insurance Premium program, formerly known as the HIPP program. ❖

Lab Services

PHC and some of our doctors contract with specific lab vendors for lab services. When your doctor refers you for lab work, make sure to ask your doctor which lab you should use. If your doctor doesn't know, you can always call us at **(800) 863-4155.** ❖

Medi-Cal Fraud

Medi-Cal fraud costs taxpayers millions of dollars each year. This prevents us and the state from providing more services.

All of the PHC family (members, doctors, and PHC staff) need to help lower this costly issue. When members let family and/or friends use their Medi-Cal ID card for care it raises the cost for Medi-Cal. It is a crime to let someone else use your Medi-Cal ID card. To reduce fraud, your doctor's office staff will ask for a picture ID. If you think fraud is occurring, you can call our fraud hotline number at **(800) 601-2146.** The state also has a fraud hotline number **(800) 822-6222.** Both handle anonymous information. You don't have to give your personal information to report suspected fraud. Remember, with your help we can stop this high taxpayer cost. ❖

You can Change Your Personal Information Online

Did you know you can change your address, phone numbers, or other information online? You can update most of your information at one time.

If you live in Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Siskiyou, Shasta, or Trinity County, use the website C4Yourself at www.C4Yourself.com.

If you live in Solano, Sonoma, or Yolo County, use the Benefits Cal website at www.benefitscal.com.

For either, go to their website and follow the steps to change your information. If you don't already have an account, you will need to set one up. The service is free.

If you change your information online, call your providers' offices and ask them to update their files for you.

By using these websites, your information will be updated with the State. Having your most up-to-date information will help us reach you and ensure you receive the care you need. ❖

Some PHC Meetings are Open to the Public

We have monthly and bi-monthly meetings with our Board Members, staff, contracted providers and members like you. Some of these meetings are open to the public. If you would like to attend one of these meetings, call us at **(800) 863-4155** for information about meeting times and locations. ❖

PHC Member Handbook

Your Member Handbook is a great source of information. It explains the services and benefits that are available to you as a member. It also has information about your rights and responsibilities. It gives details on how to file complaints and appeals, and how to request a second opinion and much more useful information.

All new members receive a copy of the Member Handbook when they are first enrolled with us. If you would like another handbook call us at **(800) 863-4155** or visit our website at www.partnershiphp.org. ❖



To follow the latest news and information from Partnership HealthPlan of California