



101 8th Street, Suite 100
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ASIAN HEALTH SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2017

Open Enrollment & Annual Renewal for 2018

By Vanessa Fong Quach, *Member Services Manager*



CEO Message

Dear Patients and Friends,



Asian Health Services is so proud to be working on behalf of our patients and community. Even with the challenges to the progress we have made to get everyone on to insurance coverage and the threats to

the immigrants among us, AHS remains steadfast in our commitment to our mission-- to serve and advocate for health care and to provide health care without prejudice.

Our most recent fundraiser Gala was entitled "Honoring the Immigrant in Me." From the multigenerational to recent immigrants and refugees, we celebrated our contributions to this country. We had a record- breaking attendance of 900 supporters and raised thousands of dollars for a whole new clinic floor. Earlier in May, 500 patients attended our meeting, raising important questions about insurance coverage, and receiving benefits without jeopardizing their immigrant status. AHS will protect the rights and safety of our patients.

In October, we will open our new Dental Clinic at 11th and Jackson. The first six months will address the back-

log of patients on the waiting list. Our administrative office has moved to the first floor of the BART building at 101 8th Street, across the street from the Lake Merritt BART station. The entire area: including the new BART Plaza and Madison Park will be part of our campaign for improved community use, health and wellness.

The latest Federal review of Asian Health Services demonstrated the highest level (100%) of performance in quality, governance, financial management and program achievement. We know that you deserve no less.

Thank you,

Sherry Hirota
Chief Executive Officer

Covered California 2018 Open Enrollment is from 11/1/17 to 1/31/18

Covered California 2018 Annual Renewal is from 10/11/17 to 12/15/17

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires most people to have public or private insurance or pay "Individual Shared Responsibility Payments (penalties)." Covered California is the health insurance marketplace in California. It enables individuals and small businesses to purchase private health insurance at federally subsidized rates.

Open Enrollment: The annual Covered California Open Enrollment period for this year is November 1st, 2017 through January 31st, 2018. If you want your health insurance coverage to start January 1st, 2018, you need to enroll by December 15, 2017.

Renewal: Renewal notices will be sent to consumers in September and October. If you do not renew your insurance, Covered California will automatically re-enroll you into your current health plan between 11/11/2017 and 12/15/17 if you remain eligible and your plans are still available. If your health plan is not available, you may need to choose a new plan. If you do not choose a new plan by 12/15/17, Covered California will enroll you into a similar plan with your current carrier, if available.

If not available, Covered California will enroll you into a similar plan with a different carrier. This is a "Passive Renewal."

Renewal is a great time to update your information with Covered California, as you may qualify for a different amount of financial help – and shop for a new coverage. Covered California announced the statewide average weighted increase of 12.5 percent for its health plans in the individual market for 2018. This increase is more significant in the lowest-priced Silver and Bronze plans than in the last three years. However, at last year's Open Enrollment, we assisted many people using the Shop & Compare Tool, which helped to identify affordable options for each consumer. As before, our staff will work with you to identify affordable options to meet your needs.

We would like to assist you to keep or shop for affordable coverage. Our office hours are Mondays - Fridays from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, and Saturdays from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Please call us at (510) 986-6880 to make an appointment with our staff before the time runs out.

INSIDE P2 *Mental Health, New Dental Clinic, Pediatric & Family Care Center*
P3 *Flu Season, Importance of Keeping Your Appointments*

P4 *CEO Message*



Understanding Mental Health

By Kao Saechao, LCSW
Specialty Mental Health Division Director

A mental illness refers to a wide range of mental health conditions that causes mild to severe disturbances in an individual's thought and/or behavior. Symptoms may include changes in mood, personality, personal habits and/or social withdrawal and negatively affect a person's ability to function in life's daily routines. Examples of mental illness can include depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, addictive behaviors, and eating disorders.

Most people believe that mental illness are rare and "it won't happen to me." The reality is that mental illnesses are common in our communities. In the United States, it estimated that 43.8 million experience mental illness in a given year. That means 1 in 5 adults experience a mental illness in America.

When people are affected by mental illness, it can be difficult to cope due to the physical and emotional strain, and can make us feel vulnerable to the opinions and judgments of others.

With proper care and treatment, individuals are able to recover and live a full and rich life. Contact your local health care provider if you think you or someone you know may have a mental or emotional problem.

A couple of helpful tips:

- Stay close to your support network. Engage family, friends, teammates and your faith community. Think about joining an online community.
- Find a routine that works for you that includes a healthy diet, exercise and regular sleep patterns.
- Be realistic and mindful of your needs and know your limits.
- Try staying away from drugs and alcohol. This is not always easy, so find ways that work. Using drugs or alcohol to feel better is harmful to you.
- If you use alcohol or drugs, be honest and tell your doctor or therapist because it affects your health care plan.
- Stay positive. Surround yourself with positive messages, people and activities. This will help you to feel better.

Here are some online resources:

National Alliance on Mental Health
<https://www.nami.org/>

Alameda County Behavioral Health Services



New Dental Clinic is Now Open

By Huong Le, DDS, Chief Dental Officer

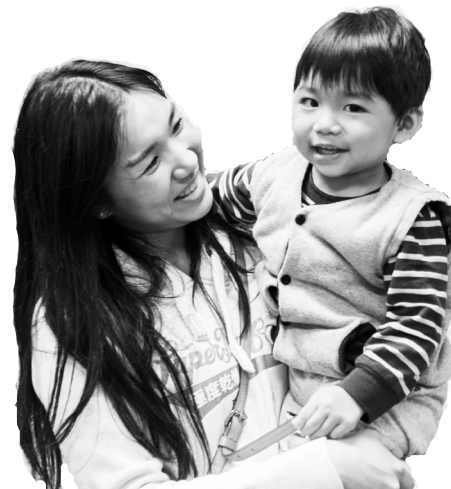
We are very excited to announce the opening of our new dental clinic, named the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Dental and Wellness Center. We want to thank our Asian Health Services members for your patience as we have worked on the expansion in the last year.



Building a New Pediatric and Family Care Center of Excellence

By Julia Liou, Director of Program Planning & Development

Asian Health Services just started on a \$2 million campaign to build a new Pediatric & Family Care Center of Excellence. This new center will have 16 exam rooms and serve up to 8,000 patients. The Pediatric and Family Care Center will not only provide quality medical services to our patients, but also provide new and important education programs, workshops and social support services. It is also a place where we can understand and address social issues that can often affect our patients' health. We are excited to build this new center so that we ensure that our children and families can be healthy individuals that thrive and reach their highest health potential.



Keep Your Appointments to Maintain Your Health

By Judy Nguyen, Patient Care Manager

As Asian Health Services' patient population expands to over 28,000 members, we want to ensure ongoing access to care for all our patients.

In order to achieve our goal of providing ongoing access to care for our valued patients, in May 2017, Asian Health Services approved a policy to address patients who consistently miss their scheduled appointments with their providers. From January 2017 - July 2017, Asian Health Services had 6,420 missed appointments from patients who missed their appointment time and/or did not notify us 24 hours in advance to cancel or reschedule their appointment.

Effective immediately, for every missed appointment, patients will receive a letter to inform them of their missed appointment date and time. The letter also educates these patients about Asian Health Services' missed appointment policy, cancellation policy, and late policy, and encourages patients to better manage their scheduled appointments.

Please be advised, after 3 missed appointments within the last 12 months, patients may no longer be able to schedule any future appointments with any of the providers and services offered at Asian Health Services.

Below are helpful tips to help you in your effort to keep your scheduled appointments:

1. Write down your appointment date and time in a visible area
2. Update your telephone number and address to ensure you receive our courtesy appointment notifications
3. Call at least 24 hours in advance of your scheduled appointment to cancel and/or reschedule it
4. Arrive at least 15-30 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment time

Asian Health Services' wants to continue to serve our patients and to ensure all your health care needs are met in a timely manner. Please make sure to keep your scheduled appointments in order to manage your health care. After all, health care is a partnership.



Flu Season is Here!

By Kimberly Woo, AMC Nurse Manager



The influenza ("flu") viruses typically spread widely from the late fall through early spring. Those most at risk for developing serious illness or even death are very young children, pregnant women, older adults and those with chronic medical conditions.

How can you protect yourself?

- Get immunized with the flu vaccine. Everyone over 6 months should get the flu vaccine. At your next provider's visit, ask your doctor for the flu vaccine. It is also available at many local pharmacies. Public Health nurses are also going to certain elementary schools to vaccinate students. Please remember to let your doctor know if you have gotten the flu vaccine somewhere other than our doctor's office.
- Protect yourself from getting sick by washing your hands with soap and warm water often especially after being out in public spaces.
- Stop the spread of germs that make you and others sick!
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.