



**BARBARA FERRER, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.**  
Director

**MUNTU DAVIS, M.D., M.P.H.**  
County Health Officer

**MEGAN McCLAIRE, M.S.P.H.**  
Chief Deputy Director

**DEBORAH ALLEN, ScD.**  
Deputy Director, Health Promotion Bureau

**ANNA LONG, Ph.D., M.P.H.**  
Director, Children's Medical Services  
9320 Telstar Avenue, Suite 226  
El Monte, CA 91731  
TEL (626) 569-6001 • FAX (626) 569-1909

[www.publichealth.lacounty.gov](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov)

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1234 Elm Street  
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Dear CCS Paneled Providers, Approved Facilities and Special Care Centers and Vendors,

In the past month, many of the staff in California Children's Services (CCS) and other public health programs at Children's Medical Services (CMS) in the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health have returned from their deployments in the COVID-19 response. As a result, CMS has re-opened the CCS Call Center for normal operations, and Call Center operators and nursing agents are now able to resume their normal scopes of responsibility responding to patient and provider caller inquiries.

While the Call Center was closed, staff at CMS launched innovative methods for streamlining Call Center responsiveness, optimizing its effectiveness, and improving the quality of the caller experience. We made changes to the Call Center in preparation for its re-opening, which you will likely notice when you call.

Both patients and providers can reach the Call Center by calling **800-288-4584**. We have prioritized patient and family questions and queries, and now triage them to informational recordings or live operators as soon as they call. For providers, clinicians and other professionals, we have provided more precise instruction designed to expedite responses to provider queries, reduce the need for providers to call repeatedly with the same questions, to make Call Center assistance more efficient, and to link professionals and clinicians to the staff who are best able to answer their questions.

In particular, callers to the re-opened Call Center should note the following:

1. Providers are expected to continue submitting SARs, with supporting current medical documents, electronically through the Children's Medical Services Network (CMS Net) Provider Electronic Data Interchange (PEDI).
2. Call Center Operators and the State's Helpdesk are not able to answer questions from providers about SARs. Providers are expected to check the PEDI system to query the status of Service Authorization Requests (SARs), not call the Call Center.

3. If you have a PEDI account but need assistance logging into PEDI, please contact your organization's PEDI liaison.
4. If you do not have access to PEDI but your organization is an authorized PEDI user, you will need to work with your organization's PEDI liaison to obtain access.
5. To apply for PEDI online please visit <https://cmsprovider.cahwnet.gov/PEDI/login.jsp>. For assistance please contact the State's Helpdesk at [cmshelp@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:cmshelp@dhcs.ca.gov).
6. Do not FAX duplicate SARs once they have already been submitted electronically simply because you do not see a prior authorization in the system.
7. Providers who have not heard back from CCS after ten business days about a SAR that they have submitted, or when they identify discrepancies in the service authorization process (for example, an error made on the SAR by CCS staff), providers will be directed to select Option 3 (provider queries) and, then, Option 3 again.
  - When prompted, the caller will be asked to leave a detailed message which will allow a nursing agent to research the issue and return the call. Repeated messages on the same issue, requesting the same information, will only delay system responsiveness and hinder the providers' requests for information.
8. Direct email or phone requests by providers to individual CCS staff members regarding SARs will not be accepted. Providers are not permitted to bypass the Call Center in this manner.

We are grateful for your continued patience and understanding with the evolution of care and services to the children and families of CCS this past year—especially as CMS staff have shouldered dual responsibilities ensuring continuing services to vulnerable pediatric patients and their families, and to the residents of Los Angeles County requiring a comprehensive COVID-19 response during our public health emergency. We are enthusiastic about turning our full attention back to improving quality care and services to children and youth with special healthcare needs.

Cordially,



Anna L. Long, PhD, MPH  
Director, Children's Medical Services  
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health



Edward A. Bloch, MD, FAAP  
Medical Director, Children's Medical Services  
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health