

# PROVIDER PULSE

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## ALLIANCE PROVIDER SPOTLIGHT: A WORLDWIDE JOURNEY OF COMMITMENT & COMPASSION – DR. JACOB EAPEN'S STORY



**M**any people may travel around the world with their family and friends to go on a fun vacation, see Mother Teresa, visit the Statue of Liberty, or to move to a new country. Our Alliance provider partner, Dr. Jacob Eapen, M.D., MPH, has traveled around the

world from sea to shining sea, to live in other countries and help people live healthier. He has even met Mother Teresa and received an award from her for his work. He has also been a ferry ride away from the Statue of Liberty while receiving the Ellis Island Medal of Honor for his work. Dr. Eapen enjoys partnering with the Alliance to take care of our members because he gets to continue his lifelong commitment and compassion of giving back to the community and serving others.

Born and raised in India, Dr. Eapen's personal mission to bring health to all has taken him to places he could only dream of as

a young boy. He has spent over half of his life giving back to others in our local community and around the world. He has journeyed to many countries to serve the tired, the poor, the weak and the sick. Dr. Eapen has dedicated his career to pediatric care and services for the underprivileged.

In pursuit of his passion to helping others live healthy, Dr. Eapen received his medical degree and pediatric training

in India. After arriving to the United States, he received his master's degree in public health at UC Berkeley, where he also previously served on the advisory board. He completed his residency at Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford.

Dr. Eapen has lived in Fremont for more than three (3) decades and has served on many boards and committees throughout Alameda County. Dr. Eapen previously served on the Board of Directors at Kidango – a private nonprofit agency providing child development programs in Alameda, Santa Clara, and San Francisco Counties. Dr. Eapen has been on the Washington Hospital Board for the last 15 years. According to Health Grades and

*In the same year, Dr. Eapen received the Mother Teresa Award – Humanitarian of the Year by the Friends of the South Asian American Communities (FOSAAC).*

US News and Review, Washington Hospital is ranked among the top 100 best hospitals in the country and California. Dr. Eapen is currently the Medical Director at the Alameda Health System (AHS) - Newark Wellness Center, where he has been a pediatrician for 25 years. AHS is one of the largest public health systems in California and it acts as a safety net for the residents of Alameda County. Dr. Eapen is also an advisor to the Every Child Counts Commission in Alameda County. He received the first physician recognition award by the Medical Board of California and was profiled as one

of the 40 most distinguished Stanford Medical School Alumni of the last 60 years.

While working in the Philippines, Dr. Eapen was the Health Adviser to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). There he was responsible for overseeing the health of 60,000 Indo-Chinese refugees.

In 1994, Dr. Eapen helped set up the first school-based clinic at James Logan High School in Union City, CA, while he was the Medical Director of Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center. The school-based clinic currently provides health education, services, and resources to high school students.

In 2007, Dr. Eapen was a recipient of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. This medal celebrates the immigrant experience and seeks to honor Americans for their positive and lasting imprint on our society. In the same year, Dr. Eapen received the Mother Teresa Award – Humanitarian of the Year by the Friends of the South Asian American Communities (FOSAAC).

Dr. Eapen believes that “preventive medicine [is] the best way to tackle health issues. That good medical practice comes in many different forms, but good doctors share one (1) trait: they are present in their clinics, engaged with their patients, and dedicated to their area of specialization.” This is why the Alliance is proud to partner with Dr. Eapen and Newark Wellness Center, a federally-qualified facility within AHS. Together, we are creating a healthier community for all.



# DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM (DPP) - PROVIDER FAQs

This FAQ explains the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) health benefit that we offer to eligible Alliance members.

## **Q: What is the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP)? What do participants get?**

**A:** DPP helps participants adopt healthy habits, lose weight, and significantly decrease their risk of developing type 2 diabetes. The year-long program follows an approved curriculum by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The curriculum teaches participants to make lasting changes by eating healthier, increasing physical activity, and managing the challenges that come with lifestyle change. Alliance members can choose from in-person or digital program formats.

There are many versions of the lifestyle change program, but most include the following components:

- 16 weekly lessons, followed by monthly sessions for the rest of the year.
- A lifestyle health coach to help set goals and keep participants on track.
- Small groups for support and encouragement.
- Helpful tools, like wireless scales and fitness trackers. Members who enroll and complete four (4) weeks of activity will be able to receive a Fitbit\*.

Alliance members will also be eligible for a maintenance year if they achieve attendance and weight-loss goals.

## **Q: How effective is DPP in reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes?**

**A:** DPP has been proven by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the CDC to decrease the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 58% for those who lose 5 – 7% of their body weight via changes in diet and exercise.

## **Q: Is there a cost to Alliance members for participating?**

**A:** There is no cost to this program. DPP is a covered preventive benefit.

## **Q: Who can participate in the program?**

**A:** The Alliance will cover this benefit for both Medi-Cal and Group Care (IHSS) members. Members with Kaiser or Medicare can enroll in DPP through their respective plan.

ALL participants must be:

- 18 years of age or older;
- BMI  $\geq$  25 ( $\geq$  23 if Asian American);
- Not pregnant;
- No previous diagnosis of type 1 or type 2 diabetes; AND
- Identified as having prediabetes or score as high risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

- There are three (3) options to meet this requirement:

**Option A:** Blood test within the past 12 months (one (1) of the following):

- Hemoglobin A1c of 5.7 – 6.4%
- Fasting plasma glucose of 100 – 125 mg/dL
- Two-hour plasma glucose (after a 75 gm glucose load) of 140 – 199 mg/dL

**Option B:** Previous diagnosis of gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM)

**Option C:** Positive screening for prediabetes on the American Diabetes Association Type 2 Diabetes Risk Test (score of 5 or higher). This test can be found online at

**[www.diabetes.org/are-you-at-risk/diabetes-risk-test](http://www.diabetes.org/are-you-at-risk/diabetes-risk-test)**.

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\*For participants who complete four (4) weeks of activity according to Diabetes Prevention Program guidelines.

Applies to certain activity tracker models. Limited to one (1) per person. Solera Health reserves the right to substitute an alternate activity tracker.

**Q: How can my patient sign up for DPP?**

**A:** The Alliance is partnering with Solera Health to help administer the program. Solera will help identify qualified Alliance members and enroll them in a program that best fits their needs.

Health care providers or staff can refer qualified patients using a referral form.

Provider Referral Form:

**[www.alamedaalliance.org/providers/medical-management/dpp](http://www.alamedaalliance.org/providers/medical-management/dpp)**

*Your patient will receive a call from Solera Health (calling from **1.877.486.0141**) within one (1) week to let them know if they are qualified and to help them choose and enroll in a DPP program.*

Alliance members can also self-refer by calling the Alliance Member Services Department or using the online link.

Toll-Free: **1.877.932.2738**

Online Member Quiz:

**[www.alamedaalliance.org/live-healthy/dpp](http://www.alamedaalliance.org/live-healthy/dpp)**

*The link will direct members to either take a 1-minute risk quiz online or call Solera to complete the quiz over the phone.*

Eligible Alliance members will then be matched to a program. Once enrolled, participants will receive a welcome email or letter from Solera with instructions on how to complete the registration process with their matched DPP provider. Members must complete the registration process with their DPP provider to begin the program.

**Q: What information will I receive on my patient's progress in the program?**

**A:** Solera will regularly fax reports to physicians who refer Alliance members. This includes engagement, weight loss, and physical activity outcomes.

**Q: What if my patient can't make all the sessions?**

**A:** This depends on the digital or in-person program that the patient signed up for. Each program determines if there are opportunities to make up missed classes and sets a number of sessions that the participant can miss and still complete the program.

Before a participant completes nine (9) sessions, they are allowed to switch programs once and can call Solera to do so. They will need to restart the program.

If the participant misses too many sessions or drops out of the program, they may need to restart the program. During the first year of enrollment a participant may restart the program as many times as they wish.

**Q: Can my patient reenroll after the first year?**

**A:** In order to reenroll, the doctor must fax a request with clinical notes to Alliance Health Programs to **1.877.813.5151**. Your patient's medical record must indicate that their medical condition or circumstance warrants repeat or additional participation, such as:

- Member switched health plans.
- Member moved to a different county.
- Member experienced a lapse in Medi-Cal enrollment.
- Member has or had medical conditions that hinder DPP session attendance.

**Q: Who should I contact if I have questions about the program?**

**A:** If you have questions about DPP, please call:

Solera

Monday – Friday, 6 am – 6 pm

Toll Free: **1.877.486.0141**

For other questions, please call:

Alliance Provider Services Department

Monday – Friday, 7:30 am – 5 pm

Phone Number: **1.510.747.4510**

# ALL ABOUT HEALTH HOMES - THE ALLIANCE HEALTH HOMES PROGRAM (HHP)

*HHP works to coordinate care for physical health, behavioral health, and social services for Alliance Medi-Cal members with complex needs and empower them to play an active role in their own care.*

We officially launched our Health Homes Program on July 1, 2019. This program is an example of our commitment to improve the quality of life for our members. The federally-funded Health Homes Program, authorized through the Affordable Care Act (ACA), is designed to serve Medi-Cal members who have complex medical needs and multiple chronic conditions – such as asthma, diabetes, or heart failure – who may benefit from member-centered and team-based care coordination. The program provides six (6) core services: comprehensive care management, care coordination (physical health, behavioral health and community-based long-term services and supports), health promotion, comprehensive transitional care, individual and family support, and referrals to community and social support services, like food and housing.

As a part of our efforts to prepare for the program launch, we self-funded a health homes pilot at the beginning of 2017. Our \$1.5 million investment was designed to serve Alliance members who struggle with multiple chronic conditions and would benefit from enhanced care management and coordination. In July, the Alliance transitioned from the self-funded pilot into the federally-funded Health Homes Program with a primary focus on members who struggle with housing instability, those experiencing homelessness, and individuals in need of palliative care.

“The Alliance’s pilot has been instrumental in helping us understand the complexity of our member’s health outcomes and allowed us to create a stronger system of care,” said Alliance Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Steve O’Brien. “As our traditional health care system continues to evolve towards treating both the physical health and supporting individuals in addressing negative social factors that impact their lives, we anticipate that the Health Homes Program will further our ability to improve the health of our members.”

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We have expanded both our internal case management infrastructure and partnerships with community-based care management entities. These care teams can consist of nurse case managers, behavioral health managers, care coordinators, community health workers, and local system navigators. Their primary role is to create plans with Alliance members to meet their physical, mental health and social service needs, as well as to help them better understand and manage their health

conditions. Today, the Alliance has contracts with dozens of organizations at nearly 30 sites throughout Alameda County that are providing care coordination to hundreds of Alliance members.

“The Health Homes Program started with a vision to establish linkages between the Alameda County Care Connect Program, administered by the county’s Health Care Services Agency, and to integrate a variety of health services to improve our member’s experience and quality of life,” said Alliance Chief Executive Officer, Scott Coffin. “The Alliance has been transforming for the past 5 years into a whole person care organization, and we stand committed to investing in community-based partnerships and services that fully integrate physical health, mental health, substance use, housing, and other types of social determinants of health. Our network of more than 7,000 physicians and caregivers are better aligned to deliver coordinated services, and advance our mission to improve the quality of life for every resident in the county.”

The Alliance Case and Disease Management Department, and Provider Services Department are currently reaching out to members who may qualify for the Health Homes Program, and community providers who may identify and refer individuals.



## HEALTH HOMES PROGRAM (HHP) **FAQs**

**Q:** Why would eligible Alliance members need HHP?

**A:** Eligible Alliance members need HHP because the treatment process for certain health care needs can be very stressful and hard. Communication and care coordination can be challenging for members who have multiple providers and specialists in different locations, especially for members without stable housing options or other social supports. Sometimes people may rely more heavily on the Emergency Department (ED) to manage their health care needs. This can be more expensive and could also lead to even more health problems.

**Q: Is HHP covered by the Alliance?**

**A:** Yes, HHP is a Medi-Cal benefit covered by the Alliance. However, to be eligible, Alliance members must have a certain health care needs and meet other specific criteria.

**Q: How does the program offer extra support?**

**A:** The HHP care team may consist of a community health worker or health navigator, a nurse, or a social worker who work closely with the member's primary care provider and health care and mental health care specialists. The care team can support the member by phone, in person, and may even visit the member in the hospital or where the member lives, if necessary.

**Q: Will any of the member's existing benefits change or expire because of the new services in this program?**

**A:** No. HHP will not affect any existing benefits. Eligible Alliance members can keep their current doctor and providers. Members may also start or stop HHP services at any time without any change in their benefits.

**Q: Where will the HHP care team serve Alliance members?**

**A:** The HHP care team will mostly meet with members at their primary care provider's (PCP) office and over the phone. The HHP care team may also meet with members anywhere within the coverage area, including where they live.

**Q: How long can members be in HHP?**

**A:** A member can be in HHP as long as they are eligible for the program.

**Q: How do members enroll in the program?**

**A:** The Alliance or HHP provider may contact eligible members directly. Alliance members may also call the Alliance Member Services Department to self-refer.

**Alliance Member Services Department**

Monday – Friday, 8 am – 5 pm

Phone Number: **1.510.747.4567**

Toll-Free: **1.877.932.2738**

People with hearing and speaking impairments (CRS/TTY): **711/1.800.735.2929**



# TELEHEALTH AT THE ALLIANCE

In 1996, the California legislature passed the Telemedicine Development Act – making it one of the first telehealth laws in the country. However, since then, technology has outpaced California’s telehealth legislation. Over the recent years, the Alliance has been working with our contracted provider Beacon Health Options (Beacon) to explore the efficacy of telepsychiatry. Beacon is working to provide Alliance members with telehealth counseling and telepsychiatry services through video conferencing. Our goal with this partnership is to improve access to certain mental health services through camera-ready devices such as computers, tablets and smart phones.

Through telepsychiatry services, Alliance members can access psychiatrists, psychiatric nurse practitioners, psychologists, therapists, and counselors. This network of mental health professionals can provide behavioral and mental health services using technology for conditions such as anxiety and depression, bipolar disorder, eating disorders, personality disorders, obsessive-compulsive

disorders, autism spectrum disorder, substance use, and trauma and abuse. They can also assist with topics related to parenting, marriage and relationships, life coaching and career guidance, LGBT+ issues, and grief.

According to the California Health Care Foundation, nearly 1 in 6 adults statewide experience a mental illness of some kind, while 1 out of every 13 children has an emotional disturbance that limits participation in daily activities. We believe that better access to tele-mental health services can help provide a real solution to a growing need, and improve timely treatment with a behavioral health specialist and treatment adherence, reduce missed appointments, and decrease hospital readmissions and emergency room visits. It is through these services that we hope to continue to improve the overall health and wellbeing in our community. We look forward to reviewing the impact of these services on our member experience, and how they will play a larger role in our long-term system of care delivery strategy.



## PROVIDER TRAINING CORNER

### COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR PROVIDER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

To learn more about upcoming training opportunities in our community, please visit the new Community Resources for Providers Training Opportunities section of our website [here](#).

# EARLY SCREENING AND TREATMENT SERVICES FOR CALIFORNIA'S YOUNGEST RESIDENTS

On June 27th, Governor Newsom signed his 2019-2020 "California for All" budget with a big focus on our state's youngest residents. Much of the Governor's inaugural budget focuses on supports and services for California's children, including improving the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment services (EPSDT) benefit. The EPSDT benefit is designed to ensure that children covered by Medi-Cal receive early detection and preventative care, in addition to medically necessary treatment services, to help improve health outcomes.

The Budget includes approximately \$53.9 million in ongoing federal and Proposition 56 funds for developmental screenings and \$40.9 million for trauma

screenings for children and adults covered by Medi-Cal. The Budget also includes \$50 million in federal and Proposition 56 funds for provider training on trauma screening.

Along with increased funding for screenings, the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is also increasing oversight on the delivery of the EPSDT benefit. The increased oversight aims to ensure that required services are being performed, and that health plans are strengthening their coordination with local providers to deliver EPSDT services. Collectively, we are working on our pediatric strategy and internal processes, and with our providers to ensure timely access and delivery of EPSDT services for our members.



## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

If you would like to be featured in the Alliance newsletters, have a story idea or a topic that you would like to see covered in the Alliance Provider Pulse newsletter, please contact us.

Alliance Provider Services Department  
Phone Number: **1.510.747.4510**  
Email: [providerpulse@alamedaalliance.org](mailto:providerpulse@alamedaalliance.org)

**ALL FEEDBACK IS WELCOME!**

# Season's greetings

from Alameda Alliance for Health

The Alameda Alliance for Health (Alliance) office will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

## 2019

Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 28th
Day After Thanksgiving	Friday, November 29th
Christmas Eve	Tuesday, December 24th
Christmas Day	Wednesday, December 25th

## 2020

New Year's Day	Wednesday, January 1st
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Monday, January 20th
President's Day	Monday, February 17th
Memorial Day	Monday, May 25th
Independence Day	Friday, July 3rd
Labor Day	Monday, September 7th
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 26th
Day After Thanksgiving	Friday, November 27th
Christmas Eve	Thursday, December 24th
Christmas Day	Friday, December 25th



*Best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season to you and your family and friends.*

