

September 23, 2021 | Maryland Medicaid Advisory Committee

# Maryland's MANAGED CARE ORGANIZATIONS

Partners in the Fight Against COVID-19



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# Introductory Remarks

Jennifer Briemann  
Executive Director, MMCOA



# Managed Care Organizations: Partnering with the State to Fight the COVID-19 Pandemic

Maryland's Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), who coordinate the care for over 1.4 million Marylanders enrolled in the Medicaid HealthChoice program, have partnered with the Maryland Department of Health, health care providers, and other public health stakeholders throughout the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency to ensure that those entrusted to our care continue to receive access to high quality care while prioritizing their safety and well-being.

- Aetna Better Health
- Amerigroup Community Care
- CareFirst Community Health Plan Maryland
- Jai Medical Systems
- Kaiser Permanente
- Maryland Physicians Care
- MedStar Family Choice
- Priority Partners
- UnitedHealthcare Community Plan



**1.4 million Marylanders are enrolled in a HealthChoice Managed Care Organization (MCO)**




**24% of Marylanders have health care coverage through an MCO**




**47% are children age 0-18, 31% are children age 0-11**



**46% are female**



# Utilization of Existing Operations to Support COVID-19 Testing & Vaccination



Presented By Lesley Wallace,  
MedStar Family Choice



# COVID-19 Testing

**Over 1.3 million** Emails sent by MCOs to members sharing MDH messaging on COVID-19 testing, safety measures, and flu vaccinations

**Over 1.2 million** COVID-19 tests administered to MCO members as a result of MCO outreach and education

**1.8 million** Text messages - in English and Spanish- sent by MCOs to members in 2020 to educate on MDH COVID-19 testing sites and procedures

**1.15 million** Text messages, emails, and calls made to MCO members in Fall 2020 emphasizing the importance of receiving the flu vaccine and providing information on how to be vaccinated

# MCO Operational Support

- COVID-19 Dedicated Call Centers- promoting testing, vaccinations, assist with scheduling appointments, second dose reminder texts/calls.
- Offer and arrange for free transportation services for our members to and from vaccination locations.
- Use of CRISP data reports for member outreach.
- Provider Outreach, Education, Vaccine Registration Assistance (ImmuNet).
- Risk Stratification to Identify High-Risk Members.
- Development of dedicated Member and Provider COVID-19 Resource web pages with MDH and CDC materials and most recent guidance from State and Federal authorities and links to locate nearest testing/vaccination sites.







# COVID-19 Vaccinations

12-17 year-olds: 69,094 members are fully vaccinated.

18 years and older: 314,916 members are fully vaccinated.


- Ongoing text message, email, live agent call campaigns to educate and schedule 1st dose appointments and arrange for transportation.
- Development of vaccine hesitancy PSAs used on social media.
- Targeted outreach by case management associates to members who have not completed or begun their COVID vaccine, especially to those members who are at higher risk for complications from COVID.
- Active outreach to Primary Care Providers and pediatric providers, as the best resource for our vaccine hesitant members, to bring them into care. Outreach is completed monthly and involves phone calls, letters, text messages, and automated calls.
- Working with providers to assist with enrolling in ImmuNet and troubleshooting issues with acquiring vaccines after enrollment.



**MCOs:**

**Collaborating with the State, our  
Communities, and Healthcare  
Partners to Vaccinate our  
Members Against COVID-19**

Presented By Angelo Edge, CEO  
Aetna Better Health





## MD GoVax Grant Awarded to Kaiser Permanente, one of Maryland's MCOs

Kaiser Permanente has been awarded a 9-month Grant:

- To collaborate with Maryland's Department of Minority Health and Health Disparities on establishing a working relationship to get COVID-19 vaccine education to the grassroots level.
- To target specific Maryland communities (Baltimore City, Prince George's County, Montgomery County) to reach minority and vulnerable populations by using a network of relationships and infrastructure with barbershops, salons, and other trusted community organizations.
- To distribute GoVAX messaging as a part of a broad-based marketing and outreach strategy to the barbershop and salon clients and participants in community-based programs and events.
- To identify and train a broad network of 75 trusted voices across the 3 targeted areas.
- Report on metrics to include the number of partner sites, the number of outreach encounters, and number of pieces of collateral distributed.



# MCO Partnership with Vaccine Equity Task Force (VETF)

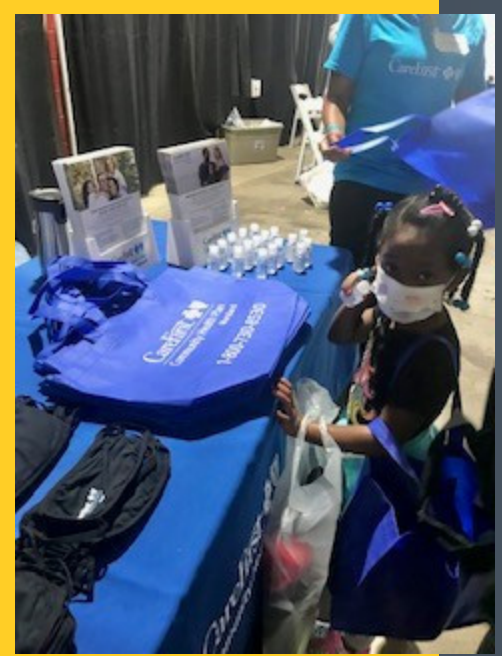
- Ongoing meetings with VETF/Office of Health Disparities throughout Spring/Summer 2021 to identify needs of VETF and possible partnership opportunities.
- MCOs partnered with MDH/VETF to build the "Educators and Collaborators" Vaccination Event at FedEx Field into a large Prince George's County Vaccination outreach event.
- All nine MCOs participated in the planning and execution of the August 17, 2021 event, with outreach to HealthChoice members throughout Prince George's County.
- Event grew from 100 participants to 700 participants, with 150 vaccinations administered.

*"We owe a great amount of the (event) success to you and your team."*

*-Major Elise Dent, Maryland Army National Guard*

*Vaccine Equity Task Force*

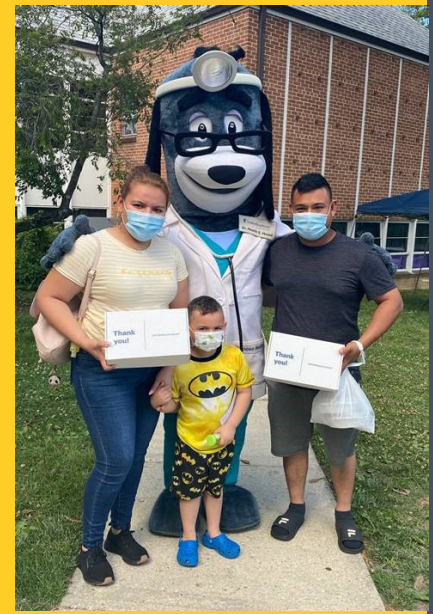
*In an email to MMCOA after the August 17th COVID vaccination event*



# Collaboration with Health Care Partners

## School Based Health Centers

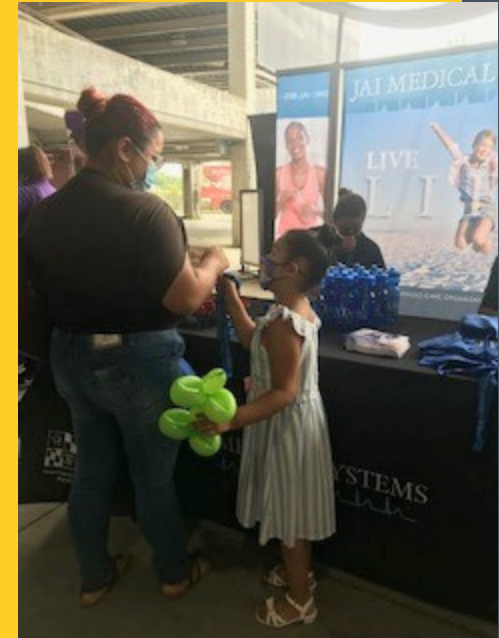
- Soon after the Pfizer vaccine was approved for the 12-17 year old population in May, outreach was made by the MCOs to SBHCs re: partnering to outreach to students for COVID vaccinations and childhood immunizations upon returning to school.
- In advance of school re-opening, the MCOs created a resource for the SBHCs to use to communicate with the MCOs re: COVID vaccine questions and assistance for their student members.
- Beginning October 2021, Regional SBHC/MCO Collaboration Meetings will be held to narrow the scope of the planning and focus the regionally appropriate serving MCOs with the SBHCs in that geographic area.
- Focus will be on bringing students up to date on childhood immunizations as well as administering the COVID-19 vaccine.



# Collaboration with Health Care Partners

## Baltimore City Health Department

- MCOs meet as a collective group on a regular basis with the CMO and Vaccination team of BCHD.
- Support has been given to help them build a Citywide vaccine provider database, troubleshoot pharmacy vaccination issues experienced by residents, and distribute their provider resources to our networks.
- This partnership continues, and the MCOs continue to serve as a resource to Dr. McDow and her team as we outreach to many of the lowest vaccinated areas of the City and work to overcome vaccine hesitancy.
- This model of outreach will be replicated with other County Health Departments, with meetings scheduled in the coming weeks with Health Department leadership and vaccination teams.





# Collaboration with Health Care Partners

## Pharmacies and Providers

- Members and providers are educated on the use of the MDH vaccination locator that includes both pharmacy chains and independent pharmacies.
- MCOs identify pharmacies that offer COVID testing and vaccinations via walk-in and by appointment.
- MCOs alert our provider community to refer patients to pharmacies as an additional resource for testing and vaccination, as they are an easily accessible option for many HealthChoice recipients.





# Mobile Vaccination Units and Community Vaccination Events: Meeting Our Members Where They Are

**Aetna Better Health** has implemented 26 COVID-19 vaccination events since July 2021 in collaboration with various community partners as well as offered free transportation services to members to and from vaccine locations.



**Amerigroup** remains committed to testing and/or vaccination outreach to our members. Active engagement through emails, calls, and texts with members to educate and encourage COVID vaccination, assist with accessing vaccination and updates on events for 1st and 2nd dose, including partnering with CBOs and FQHC's on vaccine events to improve access to care. Identification of members who have received part or full vaccination is key to Amerigroup efforts.

**CareFirst** continues to support community partners with resources, volunteers, and donations to assist with getting education and vaccines to the communities we serve. CareFirst continues to promote vaccinations among our associates with our "Better Together Pledge". For each associate who pledged to be vaccinated, CareFirst contributed \$100 to a community partner to further vaccination efforts. CareFirst will be acquiring mobile units to better support community health and vaccination.



# Mobile Vaccination Units and Community Vaccination Events: Meeting Our Members Where They Are

Jai Medical Systems, in conjunction with our Community Health Partner, Jai Medical Center, has hosted more than 50 Vaccine Events for our members and the community at large. Through our efforts with this partner, more than 5,000 vaccines have been administered to our members.



Kaiser Permanente hosted 10 COVID-19 vaccination events in communities in Prince George's and Baltimore Counties from August to October 2021.

Maryland Physicians Care participated in 42 vaccination clinics in various counties statewide and sent over 60,000 multilingual text/email vaccination outreach messages.





# Mobile Vaccination Units and Community Vaccination Events: Meeting Our Members Where They Are

**Priority Partners works with local taskforce community partners, faith-based organizations, partner FQHCs and MDH to educate members on COVID-19 testing and vaccination opportunities via text messaging outreach and community events.**



**MedStar Family Choice supported over 30 COVID vaccination events provided by MedStar Health mobile unit and multiple community partners and sent over 40,000 outreach messages.**



**UnitedHealthCare hosted 39 COVID testing and vaccination events since March 2021 in collaboration with various community partners such as FQHCs and faith-based organizations.**



## COVID-19 Vaccinations: Ongoing Collaboration

- Since May of 2020, all nine MCOs serving Maryland's HealthChoice program have met weekly as a group with the Maryland Department of Health to discuss COVID-19 strategy. The discussions began with testing outreach strategy, then included flu vaccination outreach efforts, and now include COVID-19 vaccination strategy, messaging, and outreach discussions. The MCOs brief the Department weekly on our internal and external efforts in all of these areas and continue to implement messaging and strategy as directed by the Maryland Department of Health.
- The MCOs share their community-based COVID vaccination events with one another and the MCOs promote each other's vaccination events. This has led to increased turnout for all events, resulting in increased vaccination rates across the HealthChoice program, which is the shared goal of all of the managed care organizations.

# Closing Remarks

Cynthia M. Demarest  
CEO, Maryland Physicians Care  
President, MMCOA Board of Directors

Thank you for your time and attention!

## Questions?

