



Pension and Health Benefits Committee

Agenda Item 6a

November 19, 2019

Item Name: Mental Health: An Update on Challenges and Innovations

Program: Health Benefits

Item Type: Information

Executive Summary

This item provides an update to the August 2019 Pension and Health Benefits Committee (PHBC) presentation that focused on the challenges and innovations of mental health access and treatment among the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) members and in California. This update will have three parts, including a program update from CalPERS team members, a presentation from the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) regarding its role and responsibility to ensure timely access to mental health services, and from Kaiser Permanente (KP), which will provide an overview of its activities to address mental health access and services for CalPERS KP members.

Strategic Plan

This item supports the CalPERS 2017-2022 Strategic Goal "Transform Health Care Purchasing and Delivery to Achieve Affordability."

Background

On August 20, 2019, CalPERS team members presented an overview of mental health disorders, their social, financial, and physical impacts and discussed barriers to achieve mental health wellness, including stigma and a shortage of mental health care providers. The presentation also addressed CalPERS' role in ensuring members receive high-quality mental health care, and how CalPERS is working strategically and innovatively with our health plans and other stakeholders to achieve mental and physical wellness for our members. The PHBC requested that the large CalPERS health plans orally report their own challenges and innovations regarding mental health access and treatment in future PHBC meetings. The PHBC also requested that the DMHC describe their responsibility to protect CalPERS members' health care rights and ensure a stable health care delivery system through their enforcement of the Knox Keene Act and the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (MHPAEA).

Analysis

CalPERS is committed to ensuring its health plans deliver the right mental health care at the right time, and is involved in several activities to continually improve mental health care for its members. CalPERS has been engaging the health plans through their Quarterly Business Reviews, ad hoc meetings, a set of guidelines to present to the PHBC (see Attachment 3), and a set of written questions regarding plan challenges and solutions to mental health access and high-quality treatment. CalPERS will be utilizing this information gathered to inform future performance measures and quality improvement activities. KP will be presenting to the PHBC using the guidelines developed by CalPERS staff; other large health plans will be presenting using the guidelines at subsequent PHBC meetings.

In addition to our work with health plans, CalPERS has engaged other statewide entities and partners to ensure we coordinate and align our efforts to improve mental health care and access not only for our CalPERS members, but also for all Californians. To this end, CalPERS has been collaborating with Covered California and the Department of Health Care Services to work toward alignment of mental health performance measures, quality improvement activities, use of telehealth, and workforce development. Additionally, we continue to work together with other statewide partners such as DMHC, Integrated Health Association, and Pacific Business Group on Health to ensure that our efforts to ensure high-quality mental health care are aligned and effective. With Smart Care California, CalPERS is collaborating to ensure effective depression screening and treatment in the primary care setting.

Budget and Fiscal Impacts

Not applicable

Benefits and Risks

CalPERS must continue to stay focused on mental health and its deleterious effects, and ensure that screening and early detection continues to occur. CalPERS staff will continue to analyze and monitor trends in the mental health care of our members and hold its plans accountable. There are financial and societal risks of not caring for the mental and physical health of our members.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – CalPERS presentation – Mental Health: An Update of Challenges and Innovations

Attachment 2 – Kaiser Permanente presentation – Mental Health & Wellness

Attachment 3 – Health Plan Guidelines for PHBC Mental Health Presentation

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